

DSBC DISCOVERING MY MISSION - CLASS 401

PART 1: JESUS' MISSION IS MY MISSION

As followers of Jesus, His mission is our mission. We do what He did.

John 19:10 *For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.*

Luke 4:43 . . . *"I must preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God in other towns, too, because that is why I was sent."*

In this class, you'll learn about fulfilling the Great Commission. Jesus says something similar in all four Gospels and in Acts.

Matthew 28:18-20 *"I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

We should adopt these words of Paul:

Acts 20:24 *But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus – the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.*

People are dying daily without Jesus and they can't believe in someone they don't know about.

Romans 10:13-15 *For "Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved." ¹⁴ But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? ¹⁵ And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, "How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!"*

Romans 10:17 *Yet faith comes from listening to this message of good news—the Good News about Christ.*

God wants to save everyone:

1 Timothy 2:3-4 *This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.*

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.*

Survey

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much fun is it for **YOU** to share Jesus with others? _____

2. Do you think it's your **RESPONSIBILITY** to **PURPOSEFULLY** share Jesus with others?

Yes No

Why or why not? _____

3. How many times have you **PURPOSEFULLY** shared Jesus with someone?

Never Once or Twice A Few Times Occasionally Regularly

4. If you don't share Jesus with others often, why don't you? _____

5. How long has it been since you **PURPOSEFULLY** shared Jesus with someone? _____

6. How often would you **LIKE** to share Jesus with someone? _____

7. How prepared/equipped do you feel you are to share Jesus with others? _____

8. On a scale of 1-10, how observant are you about what's going on in the world and **IN THE WORLD AROUND YOU?** (Be honest. Most people aren't very observant of either.)

In the world - _____ In the world around you - _____

PART 2: HOW TO GET STARTED WITH YOUR MISSION

1. BECOME AWARE

We have to know what's going on around us to make a difference for Jesus. Get in the habit of **GREETING** people as you go. It doesn't take any longer to walk with your head up than with your head down. Most of us go to the same places week after week and see many people time after time. **BECOME AWARE** – these people may not know Jesus. God can use our smallest acts of obedience to bring powerful results.

- **Identify** the unbelievers in your life and list them by name.
- **Determine** their level of spiritual interest. What is their **FAITH SYSTEM?** Everybody has one.
- **Recognize** your common interests and build upon them.

2. PRAY

- Use your list and pray for the unbelievers in your life daily.
- Pray that God will give/show you an opportunity to share your faith story.
- Pray that God will give you wisdom for what to say.

3. CARE

Be a friend. Be a good listener. Don't discard someone because they reject Jesus or because they reject your attempt to share Jesus. Don't see people as a "notch in your Christian belt."

And as we get in the habit of **GREETING PEOPLE**, we can show them that we care. (**My list of names of employees at restaurants I frequent.**) When we see someone more than once, we're more aware of how we act – even if we're having a bad day, or a long wait, or they messed up our order. **JUST ACTING LIKE WE CARE** can open a person to our faith.

4. BE INTENTIONAL

Generally, sharing the Gospel is an **INTENTIONAL** activity. If we do it, we do it **ON PURPOSE**. We have no choice about some things, but other things we do **INTENTIONALLY**. Nobody **MAKES** us do them. We do them because they're **IMPORTANT** to us.

Don't hide your Christianity. Let everyone know that you find your identity in Jesus. Be **JOYFUL** about Jesus. **TELL** people why you do or don't do certain things. Don't just secretly do things or secretly abstain from things. **Use every opportunity to share the Good News about Jesus.**

5. FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS

1 Thessalonians 2:8 We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too.

Christianity is **RELATIONAL** - *concerning the way in which two or more people or things are connected*. Our lives impact the **EFFECTIVENESS** of our message.

SALVATION STATS are very revealing:

- Only 15% of Christians came to know Jesus because of an **EVENT**. What's an event? **A YOUTH RETREAT**, Sunday worship, and friendship Sundays are all events.
- **However, 85% of Christians came to know Jesus after hearing the Gospel an average of 7.6 times.** Usually, they heard the Gospel through a continual relationship with a Christian(s).

Evangelism is a **PROCESS**, not a one-time job. Very few people surrender to Jesus the first time they encounter Him. Expect this **PROCESS EVANGELISM**, not **MICROWAVE EVANGELISM**.

- Identify the people or person who influenced you to become a Christian.
- Did/do you have a relationship with those people or that person?
- What did they do to make Christianity appeal to you?
- Did they **FORCE YOU** to surrender to Jesus? (No! It's a **PERSONAL** choice!)

But with **RELATIONAL WITNESSING**, **the facts of the Gospel have to be shared**. Modeling Jesus with your lifestyle is an important part of sharing Jesus, **BUT BY ITSELF**, it generally doesn't lead to other people being saved.

Even if you have a relationship with a friend or family member, if you never share the facts of the Gospel with them, don't expect them to be saved. **THERE CAN BE NO SALVATION WITHOUT THE FACTS OF THE GOSPEL BEING PRESENTED AND UNDERSTOOD.**

Romans 10:17 Yet faith comes from listening to this message of good news—the Good News about Christ.

6. HAVE THE RIGHT MOTIVE

Sharing our faith is offering **JESUS** to someone, not ourselves. A **WITNESS** doesn't make an offer to be accepted or rejected, he simply **TELLS WHAT HE'S SEEN AND HEARD**.

We shouldn't feel **PERSONALLY REJECTED** when someone rejects the Gospel. Jesus isn't ours to offer! Salvation isn't ours to offer! So don't look at it like that!

7. LEARN

We can only talk **INTELLIGENTLY** about things we're knowledgeable about. If I love Jesus, I'll have the desire to **LEARN ALL ABOUT HIM** – no matter the cost.

1 John 1:1-5 We proclaim to you the one who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw him with our own eyes and touched him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. ² This one who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen him. And now we testify and proclaim to you that he is the one who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then he was revealed to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy- ⁵ This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all.

John's emphasis is on telling about that *"which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched."*

We can't share Jesus if we don't **KNOW** Him. The more we know, the more we can share.

Every Christian can share the Gospel with someone, just by explaining **WHAT WE DID** to receive Jesus as Savior. If we understand what we did, we can explain it – even if the terms are simple.

8. GROW

If we love Jesus, we'll learn more about Him - just like kids do their heroes. Learning more about Him will result in **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**.

Spiritual growth means progressing, moving, maturing, changing into the image of Christ.

What are some basic Christian disciplines in your life RIGHT NOW? _____

Since most **WITNESSING** is done **RELATIONALLY**, when we **GROW** and **MATURE**, people who know us will **RECOGNIZE** it. If we're growing spiritually, we'll **THINK** about God, **TALK** about God, fill our heads with music that is **PLEASING** to God, etc. People will take notice and **ASK US QUESTIONS**. (**Why did you turn it to THAT station? Why don't you _____, anymore?**)
God can use our growth to spark another person's interest in Jesus.

9. HAVE INTEGRITY

Integrity means honesty. When we have integrity, our lives become **POWERFUL WITNESSES** because people know they can trust us. They may not believe what we believe, but they'll be more willing to listen to us if they know us to be **HONEST** and **UPRIGHT**.

2 Timothy 2:15-16 "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly."

Integrity doesn't mean **PERFECTION**. When you sin, **ADMIT IT**. **PERFECTION** isn't a key to effectively sharing our faith. **INTEGRITY** is.

10. BE COURAGEOUS

Sharing the Gospel can be scary. We don't like rejection, confrontation, messing up, not knowing all the answers, being laughed at or other possible outcomes of sharing Jesus.

How do we overcome these fears? We should ask God for courage and then **SHARE OUR FAITH!** When I started trying to **catch fly balls, snow ski, lift weights**, and **preach**, I **STUNK**. I got better at each of them by **DOING THEM**.

It also helps to look at things realistically. **WHAT'S THE WORST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOU SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH SOMEONE?** _____
WHAT'S THE WORST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH SOMEONE? _____

As for not knowing all the answers, **BIG DEAL!** Nobody knows all the answers. But you do know the basics of the Gospel. Ultimately, they're all that matter.

Furthermore, let your fear of not knowing all the answers inspire you to **LEARN ALL YOU CAN!** Read! What are you scared to be asked? There are a few common questions people ask. Read a book like ***The Case For Faith*** or ***Tactics: A Game Plan For Discussing Your Christian Convictions*** and prepare yourself to share the **GREATEST NEWS EVER**.

PART 3: EASY WAYS TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

A. Your Personal Testimony

Your testimony is your **STORY OF SALVATION**, what Jesus did for you. Your story may be long and complicated, or short and simple, but it's your story. God can use **YOUR STORY**, or at least, elements of it, to connect with other people.

GUIDELINES TO MAKE YOUR TESTIMONY EFFECTIVE

1. **KNOW IT and OWN IT. WRITE IT OUT and PRACTICE TELLING IT.**
2. **KEEP IT TO 3 MINUTES MAX.** Stay focused on the goal – sharing **JESUS**, not your story. Shorter is better. If someone cares to know more, they'll ask.
3. **Don't glorify in your pre-Christian sins.** Remember, you're talking to a non-Christian who is currently enjoying some of those same things. Don't make those things the focus/hero.
4. **Use SIMPLE WORDS**, not "Christian lingo."
5. **Be real about your continued struggles.**

FOUR PARTS OF YOUR TESTIMONY

1. WHAT MY LIFE WAS LIKE BEFORE I MET JESUS (30 SECONDS)

What parts of your past would the person possibly identify with? What were your attitudes, goals, actions, and priorities?

What gave your life meaning? (success, alcohol, fun, hobbies, family, sex, friends, etc.)

2. HOW I REALIZED MY NEED FOR JESUS (45 SECONDS)

What was significant in leading you to Jesus?

What needs, hurts, problems, etc. made you dissatisfied with your life without God?

How did God speak to you/get your attention?

3. HOW I COMMITTED MY LIFE TO JESUS (45 SECONDS)

What did you do? Who helped you make the decision? Where was it?

Be specific.

4. THE DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE SINCE I MET JESUS (1 MINUTE)

What are the benefits?

How has God helped you deal with your problems?

How has God helped you change?

How have your relationships with family/friends changed, for good, and even for worse? Give an example.

B. The Five Key Questions

This is a way to **BEGIN** talking to **ANYBODY** about the Gospel. It's non-confrontational and low-pressure because you're not presenting facts that need to be judged: you're just asking for an opinion. Most people have opinions on **EVERYTHING**, even things they know nothing about.

These questions can reveal what a person believes, without you trying to change them, shame them, or make them feel stupid. If a person has some weird or wrong belief, don't try to correct them, just move to the next question. If they're unwilling to discuss, drop it. Let the person's willingness to talk be your guide. **YOU'RE NOT LOOKING FOR AN ARGUMENT, SO DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT ARGUING.**

If the person just gives responses, leave it at that. If they start to ask questions about what **YOU** believe, great. Tell them. That's the hope. If they give responses that contradict, point it out to them, and ask them to clarify their beliefs. For example, *"I don't believe in heaven or hell."* *"I think I'll go to heaven when I die."*

The person may not be willing to respond to God at that moment, but He can still use your encounter with a person to soften their heart.

You can ask any or all of the questions, in any order:

1. Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?
2. To you, who is Jesus?
3. Do you believe there is a heaven and a hell?
4. If you were to die right now, where would you go? If heaven, why?
5. If what you believe were not true, would you want to know it?

Don't get tied up with a question you can't answer. **IF SOMEONE ASKS YOU A QUESTION YOU HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT OR HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED YOURSELF, JUST SAY, "I DON'T KNOW. I'll have to do some research, or ask my pastor."**

You don't have to be a Bible expert to show someone how to be saved. The essentials of the Christian faith can be understood by children. The deeper doctrines of Christianity come through time, maturity, and study.

Some people will just want to trip you up with impossible questions. **Don't be afraid that you're going to be asked something you can't answer.** For almost 2,000 years, men and women have been examining the Bible, people a lot smarter than you and me. And not a single one of them has ever known all the answers.

Some of the very best minds have made attempts to refute Biblical truth. No one has proved it false. Every time someone **THINKS** they've proven the Bible false, time eventually tells the truth. **THERE WILL NEVER BE A DAY THE BIBLE WILL BE FOUND TO BE IN ERROR.** Just because you don't know the answer to a question, it doesn't mean there's not one.

C. The Roman Road to Salvation

Mark the following verses in the front of your Bible. Keep them in your wallet/purse. Send them to yourself in an email and **SAVE IT**, and you can always access it with your phone.

This is known as **“The Roman Road to Salvation.”** I’ve added a few extra verses for clarity.

John 3:3 Jesus replied, "I assure you, unless you are born again, you can never see the Kingdom of God."

John 14:6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard.

We have all done things that are displeasing to God. Nobody is innocent.

Romans 3:10-18 As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous – not even one. 11 No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. 12 All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one. 13 Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies. Snake venom drips from their lips. 14 Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness. 15 They rush to commit murder. 16 Destruction and misery always follow them. 17 They don't know where to find peace. 18 They have no fear of God at all.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

The punishment that we have earned for our sins is death; not just physical death, but spiritual and eternal death.

Romans 5:8 But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of our sins.

Romans 10:9 If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:13 For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.

Romans 8:1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:38-39 And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Revelation 3:20 "Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.

Helping A Person Choose Jesus

If you're sharing with a person and they are obviously interested, give them a chance to surrender to Jesus. Ask them if they'd like to ask Jesus to forgive them and save them. If they say yes, simply lead them in the basics of the Gospel.

Are you a sinner? Do you want to be forgiven of your sins? Do you believe that Jesus died on the Cross and rose from the grave to give victory over your sins? Do you want to surrender your life to Jesus now and ask Him to be your Savior, and your Lord (Master, decision maker, priority)?

Here's a version of "**The Sinner's Prayer**" you can lead a person to pray:

"Dear God, I know that I've sinned against You and that I deserve punishment. But on the cross, Jesus took the punishment that I deserve so that I can be forgiven. I trust Jesus for my salvation. I surrender my life to You, and I want to live my life for You. Thank You for saving me."

Between You and God

Think back on the last few weeks. Where have you seen God at work in your life? Where was God trying to show you something and you didn't notice it at the time? Name someone you know God can use you to minister to.

Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The Lord protects me from danger— so why should I tremble?

Part 4: Taking the Gospel to the World

Living in the USA, we have no real perspective on just how massive and difficult the responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission actually is. For us, choosing to follow Jesus is a matter of personal choice. That's it. Generally, everyone here has **SOME KNOWLEDGE** of Jesus, and can learn as little or much about Him as they choose.

This isn't reality for most people in the world. Some people still don't have the Bible (or a part of it) in their own language, so how can they have saving faith in Jesus? (**Romans 10:10ff**). Some people are forbidden by their government from having anything to do with Jesus.

We're going to close Class 401 by examining some stats about **GLOBAL EVANGELIZATION** – a true perspective of what fulfilling the Great Commission involves.

From the International Mission Board, 2022

7.8 billion people in the world.

About 12,000 people groups in the world. About 5,000 of them are unengaged by Christian missionaries/churches.

Estimated that 157,690 people die without Jesus every day - 2 people every second.

What Can We Do to Assist the **Global** Missions Effort?

Those stats can leave us overwhelmed and cause us to think, *“Why should I even try to do anything when the job is so big?”*

First, I’m thankful that missionaries like William Carey, Adonirum Judson, Luther Rice, and Lottie Moon didn’t have that attitude! And second, we can accomplish more as a **CHURCH** than we can as **INDIVIDUALS**, and a **LOT** more as a **GROUP OF CHURCHES** than as an **INDIVIDUAL CHURCH**.

For example, your family might give 1, 3, 5, or 10 shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Each one matters, but **TOGETHER**, our church collects two to three **HUNDRED**. But when we take them to Joshua’s Way, our local collection site, **THOUSANDS** of shoe boxes are collected and loaded into trailers. When those trailers are delivered to Charlotte, **ONE OF EIGHT MAJOR PROCESSING CENTERS IN THE U.S.**, those thousands become a million. And when all eight processing centers shoe boxes were counted in 2021, U.S. gave 10.5 million shoe boxes!

There are many established organizations like Samaritan’s Purse (Operation Christmas Child) that are taking the Gospel to the world. **The best thing most individual Christians can do is support these organizations with money and supplies.** DSBC contributes to the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering of the International Mission Board (www.imb.org) and the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering of the North American Mission Board (www.namb.net). Every cent collected goes straight to missionaries on the field. We give to the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention to support state and national agencies and our foreign and domestic missionaries.

But missions isn’t just something that’s done **“ACROSS THE OCEANS.”** We can and should be on mission every day **AS WE GO**. There are lost people from all over the world living in the USA. While the USA still **SENDS** more missionaries than any other country, we also **RECEIVE** more missionaries than any other country. **IMAGINE THAT! CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD LOOK AT THE USA AND SAY, “WOW, THAT COUNTRY NEEDS JESUS!”**

Short term mission trips (foreign and domestic) are effective when done through an established group that’s already **ON THE FIELD - both in the USA and abroad.** **Anything less is probably a waste of time and money,** because it takes time and effort to build meaningful relationships and to earn the chance to be heard by the people you’re trying to tell about Jesus. You can find countless articles from missionaries on the field addressing this subject.

If you feel a calling to full-time missions, you need to talk to someone who has served as a missionary. Three Rivers Baptist Association is the first place to call. They can put you in touch with people who have served and people who are currently serving. They will tell you what kind of education and training is necessary. Learning how to share the Gospel in a foreign culture is not a quick or easy thing! Pray for missionaries and for missionaries-in-training. Three Rivers also has multiple short-term missions options for anyone in our association - foreign, U.S., and local.