



Community Group Discussion Guide

Love Jesus, Live Sent – Mission – Oct 31, 2021

I. Introduction:

- Last week, Elbert helped us understand the new VISION for our church and how we can be personally connected to it going forward. For your convenience, here is HHBC's new vision as stated on the church website:

To glorify God by becoming a hub for an all-ages disciple-making movement—seeing lives transformed in Edmond, building a network of neighborhood churches in the OKC metro, planting churches in our nation, and sending everyday missionaries to gateway cities among the nations.

- Today, we are going to examine the new MISSION STATEMENT for HHBC – what it means, what its biblical basis encompasses, and what it looks like to be on mission individually and corporately. The new mission statement is:

Equipping one another to love Jesus and live sent

- First of all, let's consider what we mean by "mission" and "mission statement."\
 - Think of an example of a mission that you've been on in the past that wasn't related to the church, spiritual endeavors, or ministry trips. *For example, one of my "missions" this week was to learn how to support Joyce in her recovery as she transitioned from the inpatient rehab facility to home-based care. Another was to go to the grocery store to find certain items to restock the pantry. An "ancient" example was to convince companies in Wichita, Kansas to change from using competitors' mainframe computers to using IBM computers.*
 - Share some of your examples and note them here on your outline if you wish.
 - Why would you call these examples missions? *In both of my examples, there is an objective to be achieved given where I was, what resources were available, and personal commitment and effort to accomplish the objective*

- What do you think of when it comes to the missions you have been a part of in the context of being God’s people? Why did you or your church at the time get involved in those particular endeavors?
- Now, what comes to mind when you hear the term “mission statement?”

We are defining the term “mission statement” to mean WHAT WE DO NOW, GIVEN THE UNIQUE SETTING, ENVIRONMENT, GATHERING, CONTEXT, and ORGANIZATION THAT GOD HAS GIVEN US at HHBC. In other words, this is how our LOCAL church takes part in God’s GLOBAL, ETERNAL STORY. If a local church is walking faithfully with the Lord, guided by the Holy Spirit, discerning how the Lord wants this particular church to live out ITS story, it supports His LARGER story.

II. Biblical Basis and Application:

1. What mission has God ordained for the His church? Or, how would you describe the GLOBAL church’s mission?

- What we typically refer to as the Great Commission may be seen as the great “co-mission” – a joint, co-laboring that we share in together as the global church.

Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV)

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

- These three verses in Matthew comprise the mission statement of the global church. They were given by Jesus himself who had the authority to produce this as an assignment to the body of believers wherever they are to be found.

2. What might the purpose be of having a LOCAL church mission statement?

- Just as individuals are unique in their God-given talents, abilities, and opportunities, we can think of each local church as being UNIQUE in its God-given SETTINGS, RESOURCES, GIFTINGS, OPPORTUNITIES, and even its CHALLENGES. Local churches function and operate with the same end goal in mind, to glorify God and enjoy him forever,” but may be called of God to focus on specific opportunities in ways that are not common to every other local church.
- Also, consider the uniqueness of Paul’s letters to the churches in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica...each had unique challenges and settings, and therefore his instructions to each differed in emphasis and focus. Praise God for how He uniquely gifts local churches to share the Gospel, make disciples, and glorify Him – including HHBC!

- Here are some examples of the uniqueness for a local church or a para-church ministry:
 - Sending American missionaries to evangelize and make disciples in other countries
 - Reaching out to international students at American universities with the Gospel
 - Sending short-term mission teams to other countries who need helping developing English-language skills in their schools
 - Teaching English as a second language to residents in U.S. communities where there are large numbers of immigrants or ex-patriot workers from other countries
 - Teaching pastoral counseling skills to seminary students planting churches in India
 - “Radical mentoring” for men and women who didn’t have adequate discipleship previously
 - Others?

God clearly can use us wherever we are “planted,” both as individuals and as local churches or ministries.

III. Explanation of Our New Mission: **Equipping one another to love Jesus and live sent**

1. A new clarity or focus – EQUIPPING ONE ANOTHER

Ephesians 4:1-16 (ESV)

¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit--just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call-- ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the

head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- **What do you see in this passage about the manner in which the body of Christ should walk as we equip one another?**
 - To display and walk in humility, gentleness, patience, and forbearing
 - Endeavoring to maintain unity within the Body
 - With grace and respect for the unique gifting and calling of one another
- **What does Paul say is the end goal of “equip(ping) the saints for the work of ministry”?**
 - We are to build up the church to fulness in
 - Unity of the faith
 - Knowledge and understanding of the Son of God
 - Maturity in our faith and personhood
 - Attaining the stature of the fulness of Christ
- **In what way should the church go about equipping and building one another up, according to Ephesians 4?**
 - We should build one another, speaking truth in love. A friend once told me there are two ways to “violate” Ephesians 4:15 – either by speaking truth in a hurtful, disrespectful manner, or by hiding the truth, perhaps fearing its consequences.
 - Becoming a body of believers who are both interdependent and giving mutual love and support
- **In addition, the following Scripture reinforces what is implied in Ephesians 4:15 and clearly indicates where we get our truth:**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- **What does Paul say one of the primary means of being equipped is?**
 - Through the anchoring truth of Scripture (one of our new “values”)

2. A New Emphasis for Equipping One Another – TO LOVE JESUS

- The Great Commandment – to go and make disciples – must be empowered by the Great Commandment – to love God and to love others as we love ourselves. All other commandments and instructions hang or depend upon the priority of the Great Commandment found in Matthew 22:37-40 and in comparable passages in other gospels.

Matthew 22:37-40 (ESV)

³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

- **Exactly how are we called to love the Lord?**

We’re called to love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind, and Mark’s gospel includes “with all your strength.” (Mark 12:30) Equipping people to love the Lord like this often benefits from examining how they “see Jesus,” or how they “see Jesus seeing them.” A mentor of mine, Dr. David Ferguson says that if we don’t see Jesus as He truly is, we cannot love with with our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength. That might be a lesson for another day.

- **What is tightly connected to loving Jesus, according to Matthew 22:37-40?**

We are commanded to love people as we love ourselves. Jesus said that an unbelieving world will know that we are his disciples by how we love one another (John 13:35). But this commandment in Matthew 22:39 is not limited to loving other believers. It extends to loving all people. Part of loving Jesus is to also love others. Again, a helpful and easy-to-recall admonition from Dr. Ferguson is this: If we don’t “see” people the way Jesus “sees” them, we cannot love them the way He loves them. He can see the condition of their hearts in addition to seeing their outward behavior and sin. We/I may still be in a process of learning to love people in spite of their behavior.

- **What are some ways we can equip one another to love Jesus more and to love others more? Share your thoughts about these two foci for loving. Another day, we might also include how God wants us to love ourselves as well, for many times failure to do so hinders our capacity to love and serve others.**

- Loving God – listening, yielding, sitting at his feet, honoring ...
- Loving others – examine the “one anothers” of Scripture for specific, practical ways

3. Another New Emphasis for Equipping One Another – LIVE SENT

John 20:21 (ESV)

²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

(Also refer to Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 10:13-17, and Matthew 9:35-38)

- **Why are we called to live a sent life?**

Because of what Jesus has done for us! The amazing thing is that God chooses to involve us in His mission to bring everyone to salvation through Christ. He could simply write the

Gospel in the sky so that no one could miss it, but instead, He has chosen to engage us in the process. It is a privilege and a blessing to show His love and share what He has done for us as we are going through our journey on planet Earth.

- **How can you live sent in your daily life?**

The following scripture has been a favorite of mine and has encouraged me to be open to how the Lord might be crossing my path with that of other people who need Him in their lives. It is consistent with something Pastor John shared in his message last Sunday about being on mission “as we are going” through our daily lives in addition to taking part in a mission trip.

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ...

We can build margin into our lives to recognize opportunities to love others in tangible ways (bringing a meal to a lonely neighbor, taking time to have a conversation with someone in the grocery store, asking a mom at the park how you can pray for her, etc.).

We can purposefully ask God to give you opportunities to share the gospel and be in tune with the Holy Spirit’s prompting to do so. Keep the gospel at the forefront of your mind so when conversation lends itself to sharing why you have hope in this life, you are ready. “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction. (2 Timothy 4:2 NIV)

- **What are some ways we can equip one another to live sent?**

Examples: Partner together as a CG to host a block party, share ideas with one another and celebrate and encourage one another in those endeavors, serve together (both inside and outside of HHBC), pray for opportunities at work, home, and with friends to live a sent life.

IV. Personal Application Questions:

1. **How do you see this mission statement applying to you as a member of HHBC?**
2. **How does it bring a renewed sense of clarity and/or focus to your involvement within HHBC?**
3. **How does our mission statement fit within our vision of “glorifying God by becoming a hub for an all-ages disciple-making movement”?**

V. Responding in Prayer:

- Pray for God to use each of us in His Great Commission for His glory (Global Mission)
- Pray for God to use HHBC in a unique way to equip one another to love Jesus and live sent (HHBC Mission)

- Pray for an all-ages disciple-making movement to be ignited by God through this mission (HHBC Vision)
- Pray for wisdom for our elders and staff as they lead and care well for our church as we work toward our vision and mission