

Week 8: Rooted in Mission – Fulfilling God’s Purpose for Your Life

Scripture References: 1 Peter 3:13–17; Matthew 9:36–38; Romans 1:16; Colossians 4:2–6

Focus: Christ has called us to more than just belief—He’s called us to represent Him in the world. This session helps participants understand and embrace their role as ambassadors of the Gospel in everyday life.

Opening Prayer: "Lord, stir in us a heart for the lost. Give us courage, wisdom, and love as we consider how to live on mission for You. Amen."

Icebreaker: "Outside of church, when was the last time you had a spiritual conversation with someone? What made it meaningful or difficult?"

Read: 1 Peter 3:13–17

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threat; do not be frightened." 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, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God's will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Teaching Summary: This passage reminds us that evangelism isn't about having all the answers—it's about having a heart that's available. Peter tells us to be ready to explain our hope with gentleness and respect.

Peter encourages believers to be prepared to give a defense for their hope—with gentleness and respect—even when facing opposition. Our bold witness comes not from arrogance, but from confidence in Christ.

Illustration:

Think of yourself as a lighthouse—shining not because the night is dark, but because you're anchored in something solid.

Recent Statistics:

- 60% of unchurched people would talk about faith if asked respectfully. (Barna, 2023)

- Only 52% of “practicing Christians” (people attend church at least monthly and say that faith is very important to them) strongly agree that they have a personal responsibility to share the Gospel. (Barna, 2023)
- 82% of unchurched individuals would “likely” attend church if invited by a friend. (Lifeway, 2023)

Discussion Questions:

- What fears hold you back from sharing your faith?
- What does it mean to give an answer “with gentleness and respect”?
- How can we prepare ourselves to be ready in everyday conversations?

Read: Matthew 9:36-38

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Jesus sees the crowds and is moved with compassion. He challenges His disciples to pray for laborers in the harvest. Evangelism starts with seeing people the way God sees them.

Illustration:

Imagine a massive harvest field ready to be gathered—but not enough hands. The opportunity is great; the call is urgent.

Discussion Questions:

- Who in your life is “harassed and helpless” like the sheep Jesus saw?
- What does it look like to be an answer to the prayer for laborers?
- How can we cultivate compassion instead of judgment?

Read: Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

Paul declares unashamed confidence in the Gospel’s power to save. Evangelism isn’t about cleverness—it’s about bold trust in God’s power to transform hearts.

Illustration:

Sharing the Gospel is like offering a life preserver to someone drowning. You don’t need eloquence—just urgency and love.

Discussion Questions:

- Why might Christians be tempted to hide or soften their faith?
- How can we reclaim boldness in a culture that often resists truth?

Read: Colossians 4:2-6

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Paul urges believers to be watchful, thankful, and wise—making the most of every opportunity to speak with grace and clarity. Mission-mindedness requires both prayer and presence.

Illustration:

Think of your daily routine; each interaction is a potential divine appointment.

Discussion Questions:

- What opportunities for Gospel conversations exist in your life right now?
- How can you pray intentionally for open doors and bold speech?

Potential Additional Discussion Questions:

- What holds you back from sharing your faith?
 - Take time to discuss each concern considering the promises and commands in scripture.
- Who has God placed in your life who needs Him?
- What does it mean to share the Gospel with love and respect?
- How does your daily life reflect Jesus?
- What role does prayer play in evangelism?
- What can you do to start spiritual conversations naturally?
- How do you prepare your heart to be a witness?
- What does Romans 1:16 teach about boldness?
- How does living on mission impact your priorities?
- How can we support each other in this mission?
- Have you had any spiritual conversations lately? If so, how did it go?
- How can the Holy Spirit help you share more boldly?

1 Peter 3:13-17 Commentary

3:13–16 Peter lays down a principle for his readers: in general, if you are devoted to what is good, no one will harm you (3:13). But even if you suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. God has you covered either way, so do not fear (3:14). Whatever response you receive from the world, be ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you (3:15). Christians must be a strong witness for Jesus with their lives so that they have opportunity to be a strong witness for Jesus with their words. God is not looking for spectators but “players” who live for their King with righteousness and then give testimony about Him with

gentleness and reverence (3:16). It's key that our message is one filled with the offer of hope. However, our hope must be communicated with the proper tone—not one of anger or resentment (Colossians 4:5–6).

3:17–22 In this fallen world, all people suffer. But it is better to suffer for doing good—if God wills it—than for doing evil (3:17; see 2:19–20). Again, Peter reminds them (see 2:21–25) that Christ is their supreme example of godly suffering. He suffered for sins—your sins and mine—to bring [us] to God (3:18). He visited the devil and his followers in the spiritual realm and proclaimed His victory over them (3:19). Then He was raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers subject to Him (3:22). And if you know Christ, you were raised with Him (see Ephesians 2:6). Your present suffering doesn't compare to the victory you have, and will have, through Christ.

Jesus spiritually spoke through Noah offering salvation to humanity as he built the ark, but only Noah and his family responded (3:20). The ark provided salvation and deliverance from judgment. Similarly, the believers to whom Peter was writing would be brought to safety through God's judgment by being united to Christ, the New Testament ark of safety. Deliverance does not come through water baptism but by testifying of entering the ark of safety (i.e., Jesus Christ), which is the basis of spiritual baptism (3:21; see Romans 6:1–7). Jesus now sits at the right hand of God where all authorities, human and divine, are subject to His control.

Matthew 9:36-38 Commentary

9:35–37 As he did earlier (4:23), Matthew emphasizes Jesus's ministry of teaching ... preaching ... healing throughout the towns (9:35). Jesus had deep sympathy for the spiritual condition of the people. They had no spiritual guidance. They were sheep without a shepherd (9:36). There was a need for spiritual workers. While the harvest of souls was abundant, few workers were available to do anything about it. Therefore, He called His disciples—including us—to pray for the recruitment of Kingdom-minded workers (9:37).

Romans 1:16 Commentary

1:16 Paul knows how to keep first things first: I am not ashamed of the Gospel. That should convict us. Though we say we believe the Gospel, in truth many of us *are* ashamed of it. Why? Because we don't really believe what Paul believed that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation. This salvation is not merely for deliverance from hell but also for the deliverance of believers from the temporal wrath of God against sin (1:18). If we're ashamed to share the Gospel, it's because we do not understand the power embedded in it. But how can you be ashamed of something with so much firepower? If you believe that the Gospel has power not only to save sinners but also to give victory to saints, you won't be ashamed of it.

Colossians 4:2-6 Commentary

4:2 Paul urges the Colossians to pray. Christians must take prayer seriously and not casually. Like a lookout watching for the enemy, we must stay alert in prayer. A believer who is outfitted with “the full armor of God” (Ephesians 6:11–17) but refuses to “pray” (Ephesians 6:18) is like a front-line soldier outfitted with the best weapons technology and protective gear but who has no communication with his command authority. He won’t last long.

4:3–6 Paul also requests prayer for the sake of his own Gospel ministry (4:3). This is a reminder that Christians must pray for pastors, missionaries, and themselves—that God would open doors with unbelievers so that they will hear the mystery of Christ (4:3). Behave wisely regarding non-believers (4:5), and don’t waste opportunities to share the Gospel. Combine tact with spice. Our witness should be crafted for each person in his unique situation (4:6) so that the Gospel message is applied rightly to those who need to know about the Christian faith.

Closing Challenge: Ask God to show you one person this week to serve, love, or invite into a spiritual conversation. Come back next week ready to share how the interaction went!

Closing Prayer: "Jesus, thank You for entrusting us with Your message. Empower us through Your Spirit to live on