

JOINING JESUS ON HIS MISSION

SESSION 7: Chapters 17-19

Warm Up: What is the biggest insight or learning you have had in this study?

Dear Friends,

For the last couple of sessions we have been working through the five missional practices that when lived out help position us to join Jesus on his mission. This week our study comes to an end and we start looking at how we can encourage each other to take what we have learned and live it out in the “real world.” As in previous weeks, let’s begin by considering a few Bible passages

Considering Those God Has Put Before Us

5 “When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ 6 If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. 7 Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.” (Luke 10:5-7 NIV)

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” 12 On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matthew 9:10-13 NIV)

27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” 36 “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” 37 The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.” (Luke 10:27-29, 36-37 NIV)

Spurring One Another On

19 Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.²³ Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10.19-25)

Discussion Guide: Chapters 17-19

“Let’s make the most of this beautiful day, since we’re together, we might as well say; would you be mine, could you be mine, won’t you be my neighbor?” – Fred Rogers

1) Do you tend to hide out in your home (after school, work, etc.)? Why? Why do you think this has become such a trend in our society?

2) How can you share what is going on in the lives of your neighbors? What do you know about your neighbors; what do they know about you?

3) Finke writes: 53% of people have almost no one to talk to; 30% know none of their neighbors. How can we make a positive impact on those realities?

4) Respond to Finke's quote on page 137, "believe it or not, God put you in your current neighborhood for the same purpose; ... either way, it is not too late to join what Jesus is up to in your neighborhood.

5. What do you think of Finke's neighboring formula on page 139? Put this in your own words:
Unhurried time + Proximity + Activity (usually involving food) = Conversation x Over Time =
FRIENDSHIP

6. Here are the missional questions that this approach gets to:

- a. Who are these people?
- b. What is Jesus already up to in their lives?
- c. How can I join Him?

Who are some of the people around you that you can start applying these questions towards?

7. Look at the Neighborhood Prayer Map (in back of the book) Take time to briefly sketch out your immediate community and to the extent that you can describe your neighbors. Start praying for them. What are some steps you can take to better fill out your map?

8. Look over the lists of Intentional and spontaneous neighboring suggestions on pages 149–151. Pick three or four that you think you could do in your own community

9. Read and respond to how Luther approaches the need for Christians to gather and encourage one another, "*As in other matters that have to do with faith, love, and patience, it is not enough just to teach and to instruct, but there must also be daily exhortation, so that on this subject we must be persistent in preaching, lest people become indifferent and bored. For we know and feel how the devil always sets himself against this and every other Christian activity, hounding and driving people from it as much as he can.*" (Book of Concord; page 471)

10. On page 154 Finke defines "missional communities" as, "a smaller group of people who gather regularly in order to support each other as they learn to seek, recognize and respond to what Jesus is doing around them every day as he carries out his redemptive mission." Based on this definition how would you feel this group is a missional community?

11. Consider the following from page 178: "*Joining Jesus' mission is not so much about changing the whole church as it is about changing our own mind-set and practices and inviting a few friends to come with us*". What is Jesus inviting you to do in response to what you learned in this book and these studies?

Now let's conclude by taking another look at the scripture passages from the beginning of this lesson: How do the Passages under the heading "*Considering Those God Has Put Before Us*;" describe what a neighbor looks like? How do they show the importance of simply being a neighbor to others in Following Jesus on His Mission? According to the Hebrews passage God's word encourages us to stir up one another; to push each other into love and good works. Do you feel that happens enough at our church? How might we do this better?