

Hello and welcome to this Course entitled “Mission, Mercy and Me”. Our prayer is that you’ll be personally challenged and encouraged as you study what God’s word has to say about your call to Mission, expressed in Mercy. There are five Studies in this Course, one to be done each study-week. Each Study is divided into Two Parts. If you like, you can do these Parts on separate days of the same study-week.

PART 1

A. Mission — An Order, not an Option.

1. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

(John 3:16-17)

Our word “Mission” comes from the Latin “Missio” which means “a sending”. This being the case, and taking into account the above verses, who initiated mission by sending his Son? _____

2. God sent Jesus on a saving mission and in turn Jesus sends us. Let’s refresh our minds of this by carefully reading Jesus’ great mission statement for the church in Matthew 28:16-20, known as the “Great Commission”.
 - a) Does Jesus, when speaking to his followers, make a simple request or give a direct order or command? _____
 - b) What authority did he declare he had which gave backing to this command?

 - c) What two great events had just taken place to give further credence to this claim? (see Matthew 27:50 and Matthew 28:5-6)

3. We see that the “Great Commission” is the mobilisation of Christ’s Body, the Church, in the continuation of God’s loving, saving mission to the world.

From Jesus’ words and the surrounding events, is Mission a “must” or an “option” for his follower?

By the way, have you been checking your answers with the “Feedback” on page A-49? It is useful to do so, even if you are sure of your answers.

4. To understand this passage better, look up the four action words (verbs) in Matt.28:19:20, that give sense to Christ’s command. What are they?
- Therefore _____
 - _____ disciples
 - _____ them
 - _____ them.
5. So we see the goal of the “Great Commission” is to **MAKE DISCIPLES** who in turn are to make more disciples, and so on, and so on ... There is urgency in the air, it is God’s saving mission. It isn’t a passive situation, it is a great active wave of blessing that should cover the world and we can’t fulfil it just sitting around. So, you and I must get up and obey the first action word, which is _____.
6. The verb “**GO**”, although not the main action word for the passage, gives the dynamic so frequently lost in our current concept of mission. How often, as respectable Christians, we just sit around in our comfortable churches, praising God and at best give some money for the “professional” pastors, evangelists or missionaries to do the “**GOING**”.
- Is that what Jesus had in mind on that hill in Galilee? _____
7. To complete the idea of what we are expected to do when we “**GO**” to “**MAKE DISCIPLES**”, we can submit verses 19 and 20 to two more questions:
- What are we meant to do with the new disciples?
B _____ them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and ... t _____ them to o _____ everything that Jesus has c _____.
 - Where must we “**GO**” to make disciples? To _____ nations.

8. This last answer, “all nations”, is a rather large area! However, Acts 1:8 explains how to go about this. If necessary, read the verse and notice the ordered progression:

J _____ (home city or town, **first**)
J _____ (**then** the surrounding area)
S _____ (**then** the neighbouring countries)
Ends of the e _____ (and **finally**, *far-off* countries)

9. Another misconception we frequently have of “Mission” is that it is only carried out by “missionaries” in far off lands. However, in the previous verse we see clearly that mission begins on our doorstep.

- Mission began when _____ sent _____.
- Jesus, in turn, gives us a direct command to _____ (i.e. take action and physically move) and make _____.
- This task begins on our doorstep and proceeds to the _____ of the _____.

By the mere fact that you are in this course, you realise that it is not enough just to pay evangelists and missionaries to preach the gospel, but that **you personally** also have a duty to fulfil. However, have you yet come to grips with the full demands this command implies?

B. Mission without Mercy is a Body without a Soul.

10. The “Great Commission” is associated with matching verses in Mark, Luke and Acts.

Read the following verses and fill in the answers.

- “Go and _____ of all nations.” (Matthew 28:19)
- “... _____ the good news (the gospel) to all creation.” (Mark 16:15)
- “... repentance and forgiveness of sins will be _____ in his name to all nations.” (Luke 24:47)
- “... you will be my _____ ... to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

11. Dr. John Stott says, regarding these verses:

“The cumulative emphasis seems clear. It is placed on preaching, witnessing and making disciples, and many deduce from this that the mission of the church, according to the risen Lord, is exclusively a preaching, converting and teaching mission.”

Dr. Stott then goes on to show that, perhaps because of the cost involved, we frequently neglect a key verse: John 20:21. This verse explains **HOW** we are sent to go and make disciples. As the second part of this verse is so important, memorize it and then write it out here: “As _____” (John 20:21b)

12. According to this verse, who does God make to be our model of **HOW** to minister?

13. Let’s take just one classic example of how Jesus ministered. Read Luke 5:17-26 and then write “Yes” or “No” by each of the following statements:

- _____ In this passage Jesus **only** helps the paralytic **spiritually**.
- _____ In this passage Jesus ministers to the **whole person**, body and spirit.
- _____ In this passage Jesus **only** heals the paralytic’s **body**.

14. Jesus **always** dealt with the specific needs, both spiritual and physical, of those who came to him. For a few moments, think of all the people Jesus dealt with: Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the lepers, Lazarus, Zacchaeus, the rich young ruler, the woman caught in adultery, the 5,000 and the 4,000, etc., the list is unending. In all these cases, can you think of **ONE** where Jesus didn’t minister to the whole person?

15. So a frequent misconception of the concept of mission is that it is **only** to cater to man’s **spiritual needs**. To grasp the full weight of this error, now read carefully Matthew 25:31-46.

a) According to verse 31, who is the judge?

The _____ of _____, in other words _____ himself.

b) Who is being judged? (v.32) A _____ the _____.

c) Into how many groups will the human race be divided? _____.

d) What will be the final destiny of these two groups respectively?

The _____ prepared... since the creation of the world. (v.34b)

Eternal _____ prepared for the _____ and his angels. (v.41)

16. Here (in verses 35-36 and 42-43) surprisingly judgment is given on the basis of:
- giving f_____ to the hungry.
 - giving _____ to the thirsty.
 - giving sh_____ to strangers.
 - giving _____ to the naked.
 - I _____ a _____ the sick.
 - v_____ those in prison.
17. The reason given in this passage as to why the “sheep” will inherit heaven is that: (Write “Yes” or “No” accordingly)
- _____ they had taken care of their friends.
 - _____ they had preached, witnessed and taught the gospel.
 - _____ they had helped those in need.
 - _____ they had believed in Jesus as Saviour.
18. This seems incredible — where does the gospel come in? What about the Great Commission: preaching, witnessing and teaching? Surely the whole basis of our biblical faith is that according to Ephesians 2:8-9 it is by _____ we are saved, through _____... **NOT** by w_____ so that no-one can _____. How is it then that Jesus uses deeds of mercy, rather than faith, to distinguish between the “sheep” and the “goats”?
19. Have we found here a place where the Bible contradicts itself? Let’s turn to James 2 to see if we can find an answer. Read verse 17 (and then keep your Bible open at that passage).
Just as “mission” without “going” is nonsense, James explains that faith without action (good works or deeds) is _____. This means that a living faith will produce _____. It will for example, lead a true believer to take care of the _____ as Jesus teaches in Matthew 25.
20. Now read James 2:18.
- James offers to show his true faith by his d _____.
 - In other words, for a real Christian, taking care of the needy:
(Tick the correct answer)
 a. is **evidence** of his true faith.
 b. is **not necessary** if he has true faith.

21. James 2:21-24 helps clarify the important relationship between faith and good deeds or works. Abraham’s actions were evidence of the faith he had in God. What did Abraham do which showed his faith? (v.21b)

22. Read Isaiah 1:10-17. Here, we see the same principle.

a) Why did God reject the religious ceremonies of the Jews even though he had ordered them himself? (vs.15-16)

b) What did he want instead? (v.17)

23. Now turn again to Ephesians 2:8-9.

Good deeds alone can never make us worthy of the salvation God provides freely in Jesus. However, as verse 10 explains, we have been created in Christ Jesus **for**

_____.

24. Now we can see the relationship between good **deeds** such as taking care of the needy, and **salvation** by **grace** through **faith**.

Good deeds don’t make us worthy of _____, but they are evidence of a living _____.

25. As 1 John 3:18 sets out clearly: *“Let us not love with words and tongue but with _____ and in _____.”*

26. So returning to Matthew 25, the fact that the “sheep” took care of the needy served as e_____ that they had a living _____.

27. Why were the “goats” condemned?

Because they **DID NOT** _____.

28. So, in this description of Judgment Day, we have from Jesus the clear and sobering truth that the way in which we help those in need is proof of whether or not we are true Christians.

Good deeds do not make us worthy of _____, but they are _____ of our living _____.

29. Suppose, as often is the case, there are some who do good deeds, but have rejected Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

a) Are they saved by their good deeds? _____

b) Why not? _____

30. Read Matt. 25:35-40 and 42-45 to see again the vital importance of doing deeds of mercy.

- a) When we help the needy it is service to _____.
- b) When we don't help the needy it is rejecting _____.

31. Jesus says that our service to the poor, the hungry, the sick, the imprisoned, etc. is service to him. Compare Matt. 25:40 and 45 with Proverbs 14:31 and 19:17. How can God use service to the poor to judge whether we have true love for him?

32. Going back to where we read in John 20:21 that we are sent even as Jesus was sent, we realise that serving the needy with love at the same time as we preach, teach and witness, is simply serving as Jesus did - by word **and** by deed.

So we have two reasons for doing deeds of mercy as an integral part of our obedience to the Great Commission. (Write "Yes" or "No" accordingly)

- a) _____ It earns our salvation.
- b) _____ It is serving as Jesus did — by word and by deed.
- c) _____ Some day, somebody will help us in return.
- d) _____ It is service done to the Lord himself.

33. Let us review briefly what we have studied up to now.

- a) Mission began when _____ sent _____.
- b) Jesus, in turn, has given us a direct command to _____ (i.e. move and take action) and _____ in _____ nations.
- c) We are to serve the Lord unto the _____ of the _____.
However, our mission always begins on our own _____.
- d) We are to serve in mission as Jesus did — by _____ and by _____.

34. In your own words, explain the relationship between deeds of mercy and salvation by faith.
