



Sent by God: His People on His Mission

LESSON 2: Hopeful People Sharing Hope

Moving from Vision to Mission

Having a vibrant, alive vision helps a church in many ways. Such a vision serves to warn, guide, reveal, instruct, encourage, and bless. A biblical vision reflects a big view of God and a big view of what God wants his church to be. A compelling vision asks hard questions and drives the church to its knees in dependence on God. A vision worthy of our Lord will have powerful and sometimes uncomfortable implications for how this church accomplishes its ministry and mission.

A biblical vision will also reflect the core values of God's kingdom. (We will think about the core values of this church in a future lesson.)

Moving from Mission to Vision

When a church has an adequate vision, mission naturally emerges from that vision. A church understands what God wants it to do from its understanding of God's plan and purpose. When a church is seeking to redefine its vision, a helpful approach is to begin with the mission that informs the vision. That is what we did in Lesson One.

Emerging Mission Themes

This series is being developed for the specific situation of this church. Last week, several missional themes emerged from our discussions. This church has a heart for evangelism and missions. We desire to share the story of Christ as widely as possible. We also see ourselves as a community of worship and believe a high point of the life we share is the time we spend together each week before the throne of God. We are committed to assimilating believers into the local body of Christ through meaningful connections. We see the church as a place where people are

nurtured in faith and encouraged to grow spiritually. Finally, we believe God intends this church to touch and serve its community. Most of these items go beyond what we currently do when we gather on Sunday and Wednesday. That is not surprising since mission means "sent". These items reflect what we are called to do when we leave the building.

These concepts demonstrate that one role of mission is to flesh out the vision. Understanding our mission lets us become intentional, so the hope we share with one another spreads beyond us into our community.

The Bible and Our Hope

Our hope is in God. He alone is our hope (Ps. 71:5). Hope is not wishful thinking but confident expectation based on God's character and power (Heb. 6:13-19). The validation of hope is found in the resurrection. Christ's resurrection is our hope (1 Cor. 15). Faith and love spring from this hope (Col. 1:5). Hope expresses the mercy of God by which he gives new birth into living hope through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Pet. 1:3). Paul wanted the Ephesians to know and live by this hope (1:18). Hopeful people live pure lives as Jesus is pure (1 Jn. 3:3).

Hopeful People Sharing Hope

Sharing the story of Jesus sows hope in human hearts. God gives the increase when we sow in prayer and friendship. As hopeful people, we are ambassadors of reconciliation. God's love compels us to tell the story that "Christ died for all" (2 Cor. 5:20-21). Compelled by love, we are firmly rooted in faith, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God, which never disappoints us because God pours out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:3-5). To be God's person of hope is to believe and love, knowing that God is at work.

