

OUTCOMES OF DISCIPLESHIP

An essential part of our mission at Missio Church is to equip people to live faithful lives of worship. What does this mean? What does it look like to live a faithful life? It is very helpful for us to work from a common answer to these questions. This is why we often refer to our “Five Outcomes of Discipleship” as a description of what it means to follow Jesus.

Below you will find a simple definition for each outcome, followed by a section titled “In Focus,” where we expand upon one of the outcomes, offering some questions to consider and a resource to check out. Our hope is that this brief reminder continues to instruct and unify us around who God has made us to be and what He has called us to do.

PURSUIT OF GOD

In light of God reconciling us to Himself, there is a detailed knowledge and understanding of God that comes from pursuing Him as our greatest treasure.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

The acting presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church that demonstrates the character of God and distinguishes His people from an unbelieving world.

GRACE STORY

Embracing the fullness of the Gospel and being transformed by it in such a way that we desire to live it out and share it with others.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Discovering who God has uniquely made us to be and surrendering ourselves to His purposes, serving both the Church and the world with the gifts He has given us.

STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE

Faithfully using everything that God has entrusted us with to reflect His glory.

IN FOCUS: GRACE STORY

It is very clear throughout the Scriptures that God intends for the gospel of Jesus Christ to spread throughout the entire earth *and* that His chosen instrument is all of Christ's people - the Church. In creation, God made mankind in His image so that He would be glorified as we represent Him. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:20, “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us.” To proclaim the gospel to those who do not yet know Christ is both an important activity and an essential part of our identity in Christ. As we tell others about the good news of Jesus Christ, we are participating in God's redemptive plan, cooperating with His design for our lives, and pointing to the greatest solution for the world's most desperate need.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Identify several people in the following circles who are not yet followers of Jesus:

Family // Friends // Co-workers/Classmates // Neighbors

Pray: How will you pray for them on a regular basis?

Engage: How could you serve them in a meaningful way?

Share: How could you tell them about the gospel of Jesus Christ?

FEATURED RESOURCE: ***EVANGELISM AS EXILES*** BY ELLIOT CLARK BOOK REVIEW BY KIM HALL

It's 2020 and the United States as we have come to expect it is changing. Christianity is no longer the dominant worldview and recent social trends reveal that Christians in the United States are losing political and cultural power. What are we, as the body of Christ to do? In his book, *Evangelism as Exiles*, Elliot Clark powerfully argues that being in the position of a political or cultural minority may be new to American Christians but is certainly not new to the global church. Using 1 Peter as a backdrop, he considers six essential qualities of a Christian who is living as a sojourner and exile in a world that rejects the gospel message. "With the help of God's Spirit, such believers will be simultaneously (1) hope-filled yet (2) fearful. They will be (3) humble and respectful, yet speak the gospel with (4) authority. They will live (5) a holy life, separate from the world, yet be incredibly (6) welcoming and loving in it" (pg. 23). While my copy of the book is heavily underlined and hi-lighted, the three things that keep coming to mind is the need to bestow honor and respect to others, proclaim the gospel boldly, and live differently.

Living as a minority means that as Christians, we will find ourselves having opposing viewpoints as our neighbor, co-worker, or friend on a wide range of topics. That's okay, but we can't let their opinion on a topic detract us from seeing them as an image-bearer of God. "Christians who are secure in their honor, who have their identity affirmed by God, confer that same dignity on others" (pg. 80). The day is likely coming when American Christians will face outright persecution. If we hope to be able to "bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them" (Romans 12:14) under pressure in the future, then our conversations need to be filled with honor, gentleness, and respect today. Particularly when those conversations are with people from differing social classes, religions, or orientations.

Clark also urges the reader to present the gospel boldly. A common phrase when discussing evangelism is "sharing the gospel." However, the Bible doesn't command believers to share but rather to preach, declare and proclaim the gospel message. "We share with others because they're asking for what we possess. But the reality is, few people are ever begging us to share the gospel with them" (pg. 96). Our message is urgent and true. Therefore, it needs to be told with authority.

Finally, Christian lives should look different. Sometimes we fool ourselves into believing that the more we behave like unbelievers, the more appealing Christianity may appear to the world. But, if we aren't different from the world, why would the gospel message matter? "Another critical and sometimes forgotten outcome of our conversion—and part of the message we proclaim—is that we've been transferred out of darkness and into God's glorious light. As such, an integral part of our evangelism is the visible demonstration of our new nature as those walking in the light. Gospel declaration is linked to life transformation" (Pg. 115).

Exhausted by the 24-hour news cycle and social media commentary, *Evangelism as Exiles* delivered a much-needed breath of fresh air. It reassured me of the truth, power, and hope of the gospel. As I consider culture and politics in 21st Century America, there is no reason for despair. The book was both encouraging and challenging, and I highly recommend it. I would give you my copy, but I've already passed it on.