

CONVINCED!

A BIBLE STUDY ON THE SIM PURPOSE & MISSION STATEMENTS



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INTRODUCTION

SIM's new Mission and Purpose Statements took effect on January 1, 2016, following a wide-ranging and collaborative process. But what are their moorings in the timeless pages of Scripture? What are their moorings in the broader, lively dialogue on missions today? And how are these statements rooted in our DNA as a global mission in the early decades of the 21st century? This is what this Bible study is all about. Whether you just heard about SIM ten minutes ago, or have been a member or friend of SIM for 50 years, this study will enlarge your understanding of the particular calling that God has been leading SIM to fulfil.

Organisations often change over time, and their statements evolve with them. But this is not the sense in which our statements have changed. In our journey to craft these words, we carefully examined Scripture; we revisited why our founders went out; we observed changes in the world; and we concluded that we must remain faithful to our founding purpose, our founding call and our founding commitments. While strategies, methods and protocols evolve, our statements remain anchored in the original vision God gave to our pioneers.

Now in the season of our 125th anniversary celebrations, there is no better time to return to the simple 'why' of our existence, captured in these statements. It is with great pleasure that we present the following Bible study, a complement to our statements. A multi-ethnic team has contributed to this work, and we hope the final result will support you to flourish spiritually and in ministry.

We invite you to engage with it individually, and together as ministry teams, offices, and countries. It can also be printed and given as a gift to friends, family, supporters and ministry partners. New workers in SIM will benefit from this study as well, as they learn about the community of SIM with whom they are serving.

As we have done for more than 125 years, so we do today: we seek the lost who are living and dying without Christ behind diverse barriers to the gospel. *By Prayer*, we cross these barriers to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this way, may the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea!

HISTORICAL NOTE: A review of SIM's statements was mandated in 2014 by the International Board of Governors. A review process began the same year, with the assistance of a Working Group who undertook the huge task of developing multiple options for consideration. A proposed statement was discussed by the Board in February 2015, with further input from the Global Assembly in March. This statement went on to all SIM entities for review by their boards and councils. Their comments and input contributed to the final wording, submitted to the International Board of Governors in August 2015, and then unanimously approved by all signatory entities. The new Mission & Purpose of SIM took effect January 1, 2016.

PURPOSE AND MISSION

Why we exist and what we exist to do

Convinced that no one should live and die
without hearing God's good news,
we believe that he has called us
to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ
in communities where he is least known.

Therefore, compelled by God's great love and empowered
by the Holy Spirit...

- we cross barriers to proclaim the crucified and risen Christ, expressing his love and compassion among those who live and die without him.
- we make disciples who will trust and obey Jesus, and will become part of Christ-centred churches.
- we work together with churches to fulfil God's mission across cultures, locally and globally.
- we facilitate participation in cross-cultural ministry by those whom God is calling.

OBJECTIVES

- to communicate the Purpose and Mission of SIM, and why these matter
- to affirm from Scripture why all people need to hear God's good news
- to effectively present God's good news through the biblical story
- to build confidence in our biblical calling to cross barriers to make disciples
- to celebrate our partnership with the global church in cross-cultural mission
- to encourage collective commitment to being and making disciples



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Lesson 1

GOD'S GOOD NEWS

Convinced that no one should live and die without hearing God's good news.



DISCUSSION:

WHY do we affirm this statement?



Read and discuss together:

John 3:18; Romans 10:9-17; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Matthew 25:41-46

Scripture indicates that without hearing and believing in Jesus Christ, people are lost and eternally separated from God.

To affirm the SIM Purpose is to be *convinced* of two things:

- 1)** the uniqueness of salvation only through Jesus Christ, and
- 2)** that human sin eternally separates humanity from God and each other.

God's good news proclaims that Jesus Christ, the Messiah, fulfilled God's promise with his people to bring blessing to all nations (Genesis 12:1-3). Through his death for our sins, and through his resurrection from death, Jesus Christ establishes new life and his reign as Lord and King over all creation, which is groaning under the curse of death due to human sin (1 Corinthians 15:1-6 and 20-28; Romans 1:1-4; Colossians 1:15-20). On account of this good news, people of all nations who believe in Jesus have eternal life (John 3:16 and 5:24), which was God's original intention for humankind.



DISCUSSION:



WATCH this video by Jackson Wu, a theologian in China.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCfmNKOIZ3k> [9 minutes]

HOW does this video describe the gospel (God's good news)?

Dr. Wu explains how God’s good news in the Bible is a grand story for all peoples and cultures. The biblical gospel involves “framework themes” such as creation, kingdom, and covenant. It also includes “explanation themes” such as justification, light and darkness, adoption, and honour and shame.

WHY is it important to recognise various gospel themes in Scripture?

Dr. Wu’s main idea is that the Bible presents these themes in various forms because particular themes speak more clearly in one context than in another. For example, some cultures may respond more naturally to the concept of justification, while other cultures may respond better to the dynamics of honour and shame. Yet, all of these themes contribute to the whole, biblical gospel.

The wonderful blessing is that God’s good news speaks to all cultural contexts! So, it is our role as global gospel workers to learn about and apply the themes which fit best in our ministry contexts, rather than using ones which may be familiar to us from our home contexts.

For example, there is a tendency in some to preach a “human-focused” gospel that concentrates only upon **what we get** - “salvation” and/or “our problems solved”. This happens when we overemphasize certain gospel themes while neglecting other themes.

Conversely, we see from the Bible that God’s good news is about **what God has done**—keeping his promise to bless all peoples by sending his Son to die for our sins and then raising Him as Lord and King in order to restore all things (1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and 20-28; Ephesians 1:9-10; Colossians 1:13-20). As a result of what God has done, salvation and eternal life come as people believe in King Jesus as the Messiah of God.



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

HAS this study changed the way you think about God’s good news?
HOW?

WHAT difference will this make in your life and ministry?

For further study on how the Bible frames the gospel and how to apply the gospel in different cultures, read Jackson Wu’s book, [One Gospel for All Nations](#).

Lesson 2

CALLED TO MAKE DISCIPLES

“We believe that he has called us to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in communities where he is least known.”



DISCUSSION:

WHAT does it mean to be called to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ?

We are familiar with Jesus’s command to “make disciples”, but we may overlook our calling as the people of God.



Read and discuss together:

Genesis 12:1-3 and 18:18-19; Matthew 4:18-20

WHAT is the connection (or common denominator) between these passages?

As a community of Christ-followers, we are “the people of God”, a calling which began with Abram (later renamed Abraham, by God). He was “called out” from his land and people to go where God was sending him, so that through him “a people” would be formed who would bring blessing to all peoples.

The people of God are a “so that” people in both the Old and New Testaments, a people with a purpose. They are “called” (chosen) so that they (and we) would know and display God’s salvation and then invite all nations into it. (Compare Exodus 19:5-6 and 1 Peter 2:9-10)

Referring to Abraham, the Lord said, “For I have chosen him [CALLING], so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just [OBEDIENCE], so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him [MISSION].” (NIV) Genesis 18:19

When Jesus called Peter and Andrew, the Scriptures record it this way: “Come [CALLING], follow me [OBEDIENCE],” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people [MISSION].” (NIV) Matthew 4:19

The reason for our calling is so that we will form a witness community that shows (through faithful obedience) and tells (through faithful witness) others about what God has done (his good news).

In other words, we are called to be and to make disciples! (Mark 3:14) We are not just called to be “gospel proclaimers”, but also a “gospel community”, those who display the character of Christ in and through our lives together. This living testimony, being disciples together, is the foundation of all disciple-making.



DISCUSSION:

WHY is it necessary to make disciples?



WATCH this video by David Platt on “Why people don’t make disciples”.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZzhwbfcjK4 [7 minutes]

1. What thoughts have been raised through this video?

2. What is our abiding role as disciples of Jesus Christ?



Read and discuss together:

Ephesians 2:1-6

1. What does Paul mean by “dead”? (Read also Colossians 2:13-14.) What are some of the characteristics of someone who is dead physically? Spiritually?

2. People around us are “living and dying without hearing the good news.” Do you see “death” in these faces? Why is it sometimes difficult to see that they are “dead” or to act on the truth that we have the story of Jesus Christ who could bring them life?

This passage details the desperate condition of people without Christ. It also reminds every redeemed child of God of what they were before God saved them by his grace. Paul reminds us how God came to us, saved us by his grace, and adopted us into his family.

We are surrounded by the spiritually dead, people who are hostile to God and the gospel. We are also reminded that, at one time, we were also in that deplorable state, but, praise the name of Jesus, he came to us, called us to himself, and saved us by his grace!

This is why we are especially called to gospel ministry among communities where God's good news is not widely known.



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

ARE you convinced of SIM's Purpose?

HOW should we respond to the calling to make disciples?

HOW will this take shape in your life and context?

Lesson 3

LOVE AND POWER

“Therefore, compelled by God’s great love and empowered by the Holy Spirit...”



DISCUSSION:



Read and discuss together:

1 John 4:7-21; Galatians 5:22-26

WHAT is the relationship between God’s love and the Holy Spirit?

God is love. This may be the most important statement in the Bible. Love is the core of God’s character. It is why Paul affirms love as the most complete description of our life in Christ (1 Corinthians 13).

God is not just a lover, He is love (1 John 4:8, 16). Father, Son and Holy Spirit exist in perfect love, giving each other worth and value. This perfect love overflowed in creation, and humanity is the ultimate object of God’s love, created in his image (Genesis 1:26-27).

Note that the love of God and the Spirit of God are never separate (1 John 4:13). Abiding in love is the evidence of the Spirit in our lives. It is the first “fruit” of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). We have God’s love because of the presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5).



Read and discuss together:

John 13:34-35; 15:9-17

WHY is God’s love the foundation for mission?

We know God’s great love for the world (John 3:16). He sent his Son to die on a cross for humanity’s sin. This made a way for the restoration of all things and reconciliation with humans who believe in Him (Romans 5:8).

But, how does the world learn about God’s love?

The world hears about God's love when we proclaim his good news (1 John 4:10). But, our Lord also expects the world to see his love in us!

We love because He first loved us, but we cannot say we love God unless we love one another (1 John 4:19-21). Loving one another is the ultimate expression of being disciples together. In this way, others can actually see God in us, because His love is "perfected" in us (1 John 4:12). It works like this in John 15:9,12:

The Father loves the Son → the Son loves his disciples → his disciples love one another.

As followers of Jesus in the church love one another, in all our diversity, we display before the watching world that we are disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35).

Just as God's love flows to all creation, He expects our love to encompass all humanity, our "neighbours", whether near or distant (Matthew 19:19 and 22:39; Mark 12:31-33; Luke 10:27; Romans 13:9-10; Galatians 5:14; James 2:8).

HOW can we be confident of the Holy Spirit's presence?



Read and discuss together:

Matthew 12:28; Luke 1:35, 3:21-22 and 4:1; Acts 10:38

All of Jesus's life, from Bethlehem to Calvary, was empowered by the Holy Spirit, as the prophet Isaiah foretold (Isaiah 11:2-3). Likewise, the Spirit empowered the early mission of the apostles. (Acts 1:8, 2:16-17; 8:17, 10:44, 19:6)

Since those who are in Christ are sealed by the presence of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14), we have the same empowerment which Jesus experienced. (Romans 8:11)

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies, because of his Spirit who lives in you."

HOW does the Holy Spirit guide and empower us on mission?



Read and discuss together:

Acts 8:29, 10:19-20, 13:1,4, and 16:6-10

Our Lord promised that his followers would be his witnesses in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), and that He would guide them in his mission.

HOW does the Holy Spirit give us confidence when we are on mission?



Read and discuss together:

Mark 4:31, Luke 21:14-15, Acts 4:31 and 6:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 1 Peter 1:21

We enjoy the abiding promise that the Holy Spirit is always with us (John 14:16) to strengthen us and guide our witness.

REFLECTION & PRAYER:



HOW are you and your team compelled by God's love?

HOW has the Holy Spirit guided you and your team in gospel ministry?

Lesson 4

CROSSING BARRIERS TO PROCLAIM

“We cross barriers to proclaim the crucified and risen Christ.”



DISCUSSION:



WATCH this video by Omar Djoeandy, SIM Australia director, on crossing barriers.

<https://theglobalchurchproject.com/video/omar-djoeandy-crossing-barriers-proclaim-crucified-risen-christ/>



Read and discuss together:

Jonah 1:1-3; Luke 18:24-6; Acts 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:13-5; Revelation 5:9 and 7:9

WHAT barriers or boundaries do these passages reveal?

There are many sorts of barriers to gospel ministry. The expected ones include language, culture, customs, religion, ethnicity, economics, social status, geography, education, and generation gaps. The unexpected ones include immoral lifestyles, attitudes, prejudices, denominations, doctrine, and the status quo.

In order to effectively cross barriers in gospel ministry, we must willingly leave that which is comfortable, to “empty” and humble ourselves (Philippians 2:5-8). In this way, we can enter into the lives and stories of those around us. The apostle Paul crossed barriers in gospel ministry by using this principle of personal accommodation:

“Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews, I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law, I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law, I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak, I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people, so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.” 1 Corinthians 9:19-23



Read and discuss together:

Acts 10

In this passage, we see how Peter and his companions had to overcome the barriers of distance, prejudice, personal discomfort, religious practice, social tradition, and theology in order to minister to Cornelius and his household. In the same way that the Holy Spirit directed and affirmed Peter's steps of faith, we too can count on the direction of the Spirit in gospel ministry.

WHAT barriers do you and your team see and experience?

Take a few minutes to pray and invite God to reveal any personal or team barriers. As you reflect on these barriers, discuss ideas for crossing them. Are there barriers where confession and repentance are needed?

Suggestion: Review the strategy of your team/country/ministry.

1. Identify barriers that are not being crossed, but should be.
2. Does your strategy reflect the SIM Purpose & Mission?

The SIM Purpose and Mission focus on "making disciples in communities where Christ is least known." As individuals and teams consider the implications of this emphasis, it may be that the Lord is calling some to redirect their ministry focus and location. We shouldn't hold too tightly to our current ministries, but always allow God to move in us or move us if he so wills. As we consider the challenge of crossing barriers for the sake of the gospel, we can lovingly encourage each other to ask God if he wants us to change our ministry focus, or even venture out to a new location, country, or context.

WHY are we crossing barriers?

"...to proclaim the crucified and risen Christ."



Read and discuss together:

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

To the Jews, a crucified Messiah was a "stumbling block" because they were anticipating a victorious king who would deliver them from their suffering under the Roman empire. To the Gentiles, a crucified Christ was "foolishness", because such a death was considered the height of humiliation. But, the Spirit of God is able to overcome these barriers and reveal the truth of Christ in God - because Christ Jesus rose from the dead!



Read and discuss together:

1 Corinthians 15:12-17, 24-28

Because of the resurrection, Jesus is the beginning of New Life, the firstborn of the New Creation! Therefore, everything is now different. Death is defeated, and new life in Christ is possible for all people, because God re-established his reign and authority over all things in King Jesus. This culmination of the gospel story is what we proclaim. May the Lord strengthen and encourage us as we cross any barrier for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ!



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

HOW is the Holy Spirit speaking to you through this lesson?

WHAT changes do you envision for yourself and your team?

Lesson 5

LOVE AND COMPASSION

“...expressing his love and compassion among those who live and die without him.”



DISCUSSION:



Read and discuss together:

Psalms 86:15, 103:8; Isaiah 54:7-10; Micah 7:18-19

WHAT do these verses reveal about God’s love and compassion?

When we consider the long story of God’s relationship with his people and the nations in the Old Testament, we clearly see his steadfast, loyal, longsuffering love and compassion. Therefore, since Jesus Christ is God, he is our example (1 Peter 2:21), as the incarnation of God in the world.



WATCH this video by Dr. René Padilla on integral mission.

<https://theglobalchurchproject.com/video/c-rene-padilla-pursuing-integral-mission/>

WHAT main idea does Dr. Padilla share about love and compassion?



Read and discuss together:

Matthew 9:18-38

WHAT does this passage teach us about Jesus’s love and compassion?

Jesus is **present** among the people. He is there in the midst of their context. Too often, we view mission service as ministry “to” people rather than ministry “among” people.

Jesus **sees** the people as they are. He is aware of their lives and situations. He cares because he is integrated into their stories. We, too, must beware of viewing people as categories, as did the religious leaders of that day. Those leaders constantly labeled people as tax collectors, sinners and other names.

Jesus **identifies** with the people in their needs and suffering. Because he is there among them, and pays attention to what is happening in their lives, not only does he see them as they are (“without a shepherd”→), but also as they can be (followers). Remember, Jesus loves the oppressed and the oppressor equally. In our ministry, we, too, must enter into others’ lives with respect, not pity, because we are all broken people who need a shepherd.

Jesus **acts**. He pours himself out in ministry. He serves through healing, teaching, and proclaiming. This passage clearly demonstrates the ministry of heart, word, and deed.

What does it mean when we say “we proclaim the gospel in heart, word, and deed”?

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

We see in this verse two necessary aspects for the Father to receive glory — *letting our light shine and visible good works*. Note that the light is not good works. Rather, the light *illuminates* our good works. The “light” is the divine presence of Christ in the shared witness of the church and gospel teams. Good works are actions which display Christ’s righteous character. In order for God to receive glory through the good works of Christ-followers, **identifying the source of the shining light is required.**

Jesus **mentors**. His disciples are with him, and he helps them see what he sees. Jesus communicates his heart and perspective (“the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few”). He invites them to “pray to the Lord of the harvest... to send out workers.” Gospel ministry is always an opportunity to learn from others and teach others.

Jesus **shares** his ministry. He sees his disciples as fellow workers, and anticipates more workers joining the harvest. Gospel ministry is not a solitary task; rather, we share this role with many faithful followers, whether those are mission colleagues or local churches and believers. Ministry “with” is just as important as ministry “among”.



WATCH this video by Oscar Muriu on humility, the core of incarnational mission.

<https://vimeo.com/68861750>

WHAT does Rev. Muriu present as the four postures of humility?



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

WHAT is our response to those living and dying without Christ?

WHAT are three ways in which this lesson will impact your life and ministry?

Lesson 6

DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCHES

“We make disciples who will trust and obey Jesus, and become part of Christ-centred churches.”



DISCUSSION:

HOW do we “make disciples”? Remember in lesson 2, we learned why we are called to make disciples. Now we are asking, how?

Making disciples is the process of coming alongside people in their journey of obedience toward Christ (those who are discovering him) and in Christ (those who are already part of the Body of Christ).

In order to come alongside others, we need to be among and get to know them. See once again Paul’s example in 1 Corinthians 9:20. Also, coming alongside takes various forms, such as:

proclaiming (John 15:27, Acts 14:21),

reasoning (Acts 19:8-9),

baptizing and teaching (Matthew 28:19-20),

mentoring (2 Timothy 1:13-14 and 2:2; 1 Corinthians 11:1), and

nurturing (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

WHAT is the evidence of a disciple of Jesus Christ?

HEART:	loving and hoping in Jesus	worshipping our King
HEAD:	listening to and learning from Jesus	believing the Word of Truth
HANDS:	obeying and trusting Jesus	applying the Word of Truth
FEET:	taking action in the name of Jesus	moving toward the Body and mission

This list reflects on us (i.e. are we faithful disciples, and are we growing in these areas?), as well as giving us a pathway for encouraging others on their journey toward and in Christ. When we come alongside to help others grow in these areas, then we are making disciples. We will often have different roles, sometimes sowing, sometimes watering, but God always gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6).

Our hope and prayer is that all disciples are or will become part of Christ-centred churches.

WHAT does the Bible say about the nature and character of local churches?



Read and discuss together:

Philippians 1:3-11

WHAT does Paul celebrate about this local church?

The testimony of the church in Philippi demonstrates the character of “the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi.” How encouraging it is to read about the obedience and character of this local church. The church is a witness of humanity reunited in Jesus Christ, the manifestation of his gospel before the watching world. However, we also see in the Bible how the people of God, both in the Old and New Testaments, often fell short of God’s vision for their life and service.

WHAT is the relationship between disciples and Christ-centred churches?

As we embrace the mission to “make disciples” who will “trust and obey,” we recognize that churches will reflect the quality of those who follow the ‘way of Christ’. Living as a disciple and the life of the church are intimately linked. Therefore, ‘Christ-centred churches’ will be those whose members are following well the ‘way of Christ’.

Here are some other characteristics of Christ-centred churches, namely those whose members are faithfully following in the “way of Jesus Christ”:

Worship Faithful followers worship King Jesus because he is worthy of praise, glory and majesty! He is “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name.” This is why we offer ourselves as a “living sacrifice”. (Ephesians 1:17-23; Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 21:9; Revelation 5:1-14 and 19:1-8)

Love Faithful followers recognize that we may have a lot of ability, but without love we are just like a “noisy gong”. This is why Jesus gave his disciples a “new command” that we “love one another,” for love “binds everything together in perfect harmony.” (1 Corinthians 13:1-2; 1 John 4:8; John 13:34-35; Colossians 3:14)

Witness To be “in Christ” means that “new creation has come,” so disciples are Christ’s ambassadors with the “ministry of reconciliation”. In this way, Christ’s disciples are the actual presence of Jesus in the world. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

Unity Faithful followers of Christ recognize that His death and resurrection “destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” creating “one new humanity”. The church is the body of Christ, for “we were all baptized by one Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:14-16; 1 Cor 12:12-13; Galatians 3:26-28; John 17:20-23)

Obedience Faithful followers obey their Lord. This is a natural outflow of our love for him. To obey is to follow Christ in his obedience to the Father. “Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God.” This is why we are “doers of the word, and not hearers only”. (John 14:15; 14:31; 1 John 3:24; James 1:22-25)

Service Faithful followers serve as Christ served. In whatever we do, we are to “work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that...[we] are serving the Lord”. Above all we are to “serve one another,” because Jesus calls us to “be last of all and servant of all”. (Galatians 5:13; Colossians 3:23-24; Mark 9:35; 12:13)



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

WHAT other characteristics describe a Christ-centred church?

HOW can we encourage churches toward exhibiting Christ-centred character?

WHAT are the challenges of making disciples across cultures?

Lesson 7

WORKING TOGETHER WITH CHURCHES

“We work together with churches to fulfil God’s mission across cultures locally and globally.”



DISCUSSION:

SIM gospel workers, sent by local churches from all over the world, join together in gospel ministry with other churches in global contexts. Global mission is a dynamic global partnership between churches around the world.



Read and discuss together:

Acts 11:29-30; 13:1-3; 14:24-28; 15:36-41

WHAT do these passages teach us about mission in the local church?

The church in Antioch was the first church to display a culture-crossing mission vision. Prior to Antioch, evangelistic outreach was focused toward Jews and Samaritans. However, unnamed persons in Antioch began telling Jews and Gentiles about Jesus Christ, and many came to believe in Christ. In Antioch, Christ-followers were first called “Christians” by the local population because Jesus Christ’ was their observable identity; it is what others saw in them (11:26).

From this foundation grew a global mission vision. Here are characteristics which churches everywhere can learn from the Antioch church:

- God’s good news is for all people (11:20)
- All Christ-followers can witness about his gospel (11:20)
- Sharing the story of God’s good news (11:20)
- God’s grace is clearly evident (11:23)
- Godly, faithful leaders (11:23, 26 and 13:1)
- Biblical teaching (11:26)
- Fruitfulness (11:21, 24, 26)
- Compassion and generosity (11:29-30)
- Vision for sending and supporting mission outreach (13:3,15, 40-41)

It is important to point out that faithfulness in these practices produced an environment which cultivated mission-sending from Antioch. While Barnabas and Saul were ministering among the Christians in Antioch, their vision for mission was born. Because they were both teachers and learners, God used that experience to prepare them for global mission.

Working together with churches around the world requires a vision for and valuing of interdependence, which means we need each other because we complete each other. This is Paul's main point when he compares the church to a body (1 Corinthians 12). To depend upon one another requires that we trust one another and can then learn from one another.



WATCH this video by Daniel Bourdagné on how churches around the world can learn from each other.

<https://theglobalchurchproject.com/video/daniel-bourdanne-renewing-humility-mission-discipleship/>

WHAT main lessons does Daniel Bourdagné mention?

The Bible is brimming with examples and exhortations about partnering together in gospel ministry. To be in partnership means resisting the temptations of independence and self-sufficiency. The Lausanne Mission Movement presents some biblical promises related to working together in Christ's mission:

- We demonstrate the power of the gospel to change lives, thus producing open, trusting relationships (see Philippians 2:1-11).
- The Holy Spirit's power is released in ways only possible when we dwell in unity and work together (see Psalm 133; Galatians 5:16-26).
- We demonstrate good stewardship. Working together, we maximize our use of God's resources as costs drop and effectiveness increases (see Matthew 25:14-30).
- The credibility of our message is strengthened. Jesus says that, when we work together, those watching us are more likely to believe that He is who He says He is. This is particularly true in community-based cultures of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (see John 5:31-47; 10:38; 17:23).
- The Body of Christ becomes a powerful, unified community, demonstrating real love, commitment to each other, growth in Christ, and witness to the world (see Ephesians 4:1-16).

We harness of the full range of gifts and abilities distributed by the Holy Spirit among God's people (see Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12).

Source: <https://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/1333/10-2010>



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

WHAT are some barriers to partnership with churches and other organisations?

HOW can we overcome these barriers?

Lesson 8

FACILITATING PARTICIPATION IN MISSION

“We facilitate the participation in cross-cultural ministry of those whom God is calling.”



DISCUSSION:



Read and discuss together:

1. God sending out (Genesis 12:1, Jonah 3:1-2)
2. Jesus sending out (Matt. 11:1, Mark 6:7, John 17:18)
3. Holy Spirit sending out (Acts 13:2)
4. Paul sending out (I Cor. 4:17, 2 Tim. 4:11)
5. The reason for sending (Romans 10:15)

Throughout the Bible we see people being sent out on God’s mission. We can only imagine the logistics it took for a missionary journey back then. (Jesus sent out disciples by two and told them to take nothing, but this was probably for a brief period.) When Jesus travelled, women ministered to the group’s needs. He had obviously assigned some of the disciples to be in charge of logistics, finances, and others He was training in leadership. Participation in Christ’s mission involves all sorts of people in many types of roles. God calls and sends missionaries, but He relies on his church, his people, and mission agencies to do the work of “facilitating the participation.”

Review and comment on the Mobilizing New Harvesters Infographic (GMI)

https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/missio-graphics/Volume+3/missiographic_harvesters.pdf

Every missionary is a mobiliser. God has called us to make disciples who in turn are also called to make disciples. This is the mission mobilising process.

Mobilisation encourages Christ followers to live out their faith at home, in the workplace, in the community and to the ends of the earth. Involvement in his mission should include praying, giving, going, caring for his workers and mobilising others. Jesus was a mobiliser!

1. How can you be more involved in mobilising churches and people you know?
2. How might we better facilitate participation from newer sending areas?



REFLECTION & PRAYER:

HOW have these Bible studies on the SIM Purpose & Mission statements impacted you and your team?

Write or share your personal reflections about SIM's Purpose and Mission statements.

a. What do you understand these statements to mean?

b. What specific changes do they inspire in your life and ministry?

- PRAY for new workers for the harvest. Pray for wisdom in changing systems and for grace in changing attitudes that are not helpful in facilitating participation of new missionaries.
- PRAY for leaders and board members as they lead the mission, both locally and globally.