

gospel

fall 2016: LIVING MISSIONALLY FROM 1TIMOTHY

GROWTH

sermon study guide



What do we mean by “missional living”?

To live missionally means for one’s life to be characterized by the mission of God. God has a mission to unify all creation under Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10) and to reconcile all of creation through the gospel (Colossians 1:15-20). God invites his redeemed people into this mission, commissioned as ambassadors of Jesus Christ to this world until he returns (II Corinthians 5:20).

Why a study guide?

This study is a companion guide to our Fall 2016 Sermon Series; Gospel Growth: *Living Missionally from I Timothy*. Our prayer is that this study will challenge you to think deeply about the implications of the gospel. Identify a group of family or friends who would be willing to work through this study with you. Ask them to join you.

What’s the format of the study guide?

Each study has an introductory question that gets you thinking about the topic, a couple of content questions based on the scripture passages, a “growth” question and a “mission” question. Our prayer is that these questions will help you apply what you are learning to your head (knowledge), heart (transformation), and hands (action).

As you meet together, take time to get to know one another. Create a safe place where you can share freely. Pray together. Encourage one another.

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Lesson 1: Missional Living

September 11, 2016

1. Take some time to introduce yourself to your group. As you introduce yourself tell the group an interesting fact about yourself.

Read I Timothy 1:1-11

I Timothy was a pastoral letter written by Paul to Timothy and the church of Ephesus in the mid 60's AD. This is referred to as a "pastoral letter" because Paul had much to say about the responsibilities of pastors as they led and ministered to their churches. However, this letter is not just for pastors. It has much to say about how Christians are to live missionally.

2. In verse 3, Paul refers to certain persons who were misguided. What were the elements of their false teaching? What caused them to wander away from the truth?

3. What needs to be central in teaching?

4. How does false teaching distract Christians from growing spiritually? What impact does false teaching have on our relationships with those who don't yet know Christ?

5. The church is facing many cultural changes today. What are some significant cultural changes that the church is confronted with today? What are you doing personally to guard the gospel?

Lesson 2: Bad People Make Good Missionaries

September 18, 2016

1. Our televisions are full of ads for personal improvement products (*hair restoration, weight loss, acne reduction, etc.*). All these ads include before and after pictures of satisfied customers. Why? Why not just show the after pictures?

Read I Timothy 1:12-17.

2. When Paul thinks about his salvation what does he credit himself with doing, and what does he credit God with doing? (*if time allows consider this question from I Corinthians 6:9-11 as well*).

3. Why did Paul, and by extension you receive mercy? (*Paul both states an answer and portrays an answer*).

4. Paul calls himself the “foremost sinner.” Many people have suggested that in our own eyes we are all the “foremost sinner” because we know our own sin more than anyone else’s. How might reflecting on our own sinful past and present help us to grow in our faith? (*Perhaps you should take some time to do that reflection. Consider rewriting verse 13 for your own life*).

5. How can you wisely make your sins known so that God’s mercy can be more clearly seen? (*Paul seems to indicate that this sort of sharing can and should be done*) Who is a person that has a perception that you are perfect and would benefit from knowing more of your story?

Lesson 3: Fight for the Gospel

September 25, 2016

1. Have you ever been given a charge or been entrusted to care for someone or something? What steps did you take to carry out your charge?

Read I Timothy 1:1-20

Paul has entrusted Timothy with the responsibility of opposing false teaching and guarding the gospel. He charges Timothy to fight for the gospel.

2. What did Paul say was the key to fighting for the gospel? in our own lives? in our churches?

3. Why does Paul mention Hymenaeus and Alexander? What was his warning?

4. What is the gospel? How would you explain it in one sentence?

5. How is the gospel under attack today? What are some practical ways that we, as believers, can guard the gospel?

Lesson 4: Praying Missionally

October 9, 2016

1. When you pray who do you talk about the most, God, yourself, or others?

Read I Timothy 2:1-7

2. Who should we pray for? What sorts of things (be general and specific) should we pray for them?

3. What is God's ultimate desire? How is this desire connected with prayer?

4. Who do you find it difficult to pray for? Why do you find praying for that person difficult?

5. How can you use prayer as a way to share the gospel with those you encounter?

Lesson 5: No Distractions

October 16, 2016

1. Think of a time when you were distracted from an important task. How did your distraction impact the completion of your task?

Read I Timothy 2:8-15

As we read and study God's Word, context is important in helping us gain a clear understanding. Paul is connecting these verses to his teaching about elders (3:1-7) and deacons(3:8-13). Paul reminds the church that we have a mission and exhorts against doing anything that would distract from the mission.

2. In I Timothy 2:8-15, what do both men and women do that distract us from the mission?
3. Is there anyone in my life with whom I need to be seeking reconciliation? Is there anger, quarreling, conflict? Make a plan today to deal with this sin.
4. What is the mission of EP Church?(see page 18). What are you consumed with that distracts you from the mission?

Lesson 6: Missional Elders

October 23, 2016

1. How well do you think the elders of Annapolis EP fulfill their calling?

Read I Timothy 3:1-7

2. While not everyone can or should be an elder, the fact that the calling is noble should cause us all to desire to live up to the standard. What are the standards for this position?

3. If you read this passage in light of I Timothy 2:4 what does it seem to say is the purpose for such a high standard of conduct? (The list of requirements are bookended with this same idea)

4. “Above reproach” doesn’t mean “perfect” (if it did we would have no elders). What does it mean to live “above reproach”? What are ways you need to grow so that you can be above reproach in the eyes of a watching world?

5. What are ways you can live as an example of the Gospel’s work in front of non-believers? Are there people whose forgiveness you need to pursue because you have set them a bad example of the Gospel.

Lesson 7: Missional Deacons

October 30, 2016

1. How well do you think the deacons of Annapolis EP fulfill their calling?

Read I Timothy 3:8-13

2. What does it mean to “hold the mysteries of the faith with a clear conscience?” How does this connect with the idea of the purpose of the church in I Timothy 2:4?

3. What is the reward for being a deacon serving well?

4. While not all are called to be deacons, the idea of “holding the mysteries of the faith with a clear conscience” seems like something we should all strive for. How can you more fully fulfill this requirement?

5. The word “deacon” means servant. In an informal sense we are all called to be deacons, or servants (I Peter 4:10) to others. How can you become more of a servant, especially to those who are outside the church.

Lesson 8: The Missional Church

November 6, 2016

1. What is your reaction to the following statement: *the Church is weak because it has exchanged the sensibilities of modern culture for the truth of Christ?*

Read I Timothy 3:14-16.

The Church is a home for God and his people and it is a place where God's truth is declared. In the letters written to Timothy, Paul describes the church as "pillar and buttress of truth." The church lifts up the truth for all the world to see.

2. What is the truth that the church must uphold?
3. What do we learn about Christ in verse 16? What role does the church have in the ongoing ministry of Jesus?
4. In what ways do you see the church today compromise the truth? How can you be prepared to speak truth into situations where truth is compromised?
5. Would an unbeliever visiting our church (our household of God) be convinced that God dwells among us?

Lesson 9: Leaving the Faith

November 13, 2016

1. Have you ever trusted someone, and then later found out that they had deceived you? What impact did that have on your relationship? On your willingness to trust again?

Read I Timothy 4:1-5.

In these verses, Paul is concerned about elders, leaders in the church, who had departed from the truth and were spreading false teaching. He wanted to warn believers to understand that these teachings were demonic and filled with lies.

2. What caused these church leaders to depart from the truth? to question the truth?

3. What are some tools that believers have to help detect and identify false teaching. (look at verses 1-5).

4. What false doctrine have you heard on TV, in social media, on the internet? Do you ever hear your Christian friends expressing these errors? your church leaders?

5. What should we do when we hear false teaching from our Christian friends?

Lesson 10: Missional Training

November 20, 2016

1. In what ways is exercise beneficial to you?

Read I Timothy 4:6-16

2. Why does the text say we toil and strive?

3. According to this text, what is Timothy to do and what is he to not do?

4. How does one train oneself for godliness? What are things you should be doing to more efficiently train yourself for godliness?

5. In verse 16, Timothy is encouraged to keep a close watch on himself and the teaching. The idea being that if he watches both, he will know if he is living in accordance to the teachings. What does the text say this leads to? How does your life compare to the teachings of Scripture?

Lesson 11: The Mission Requires the Weakest and Most Vulnerable

November 27, 2016

1. What does the saying “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link” mean? What is the solution to a chain with a weak link that can’t be removed?

Read I Timothy 5:1-16.

2. Who does the text seem to indicate is involved in the mission of the church? (consider verses 1-2 specifically and then the whole passage).

3. How does Paul suggest widows ought to be cared for? How does Paul suggest widows ought to care for others?

4. When Paul was writing I Timothy, widows would be considered the weakest among the church, and yet they were to be cared for and they had a role in the ministry of the church. Who do you think are the weakest among us today? How can we more fully care for them? How can we more fully involve them in the ministry of the church?

Lesson 12: The Caring Ministry in the Church

December 4, 2016

1. Can you think of a leader who has led you well, cared for you, loved you? What made that person a good leader?

Read I Timothy 5:17-25

Paul challenges us to consider how we treat our elders and pastors. He also reminds our church leaders of their responsibility to care for the church. As the elders and pastors care for the church, the church cares for the elders and pastors. The relationship is mutually beneficial.

2. In what ways should the church care for pastors?

3. In what ways should pastors and elders care for the church?

4. Have you ever been tempted to criticize your leaders publicly? How does this passage speak to that temptation?

5. What can you do to care for and encourage your pastor? How can you respect the other leaders in your church?

Lesson 13: Guard the Gospel

December 11, 2016

1. Why do you think people in the history of the church have created heresies?

Read I Timothy 6:1-21.

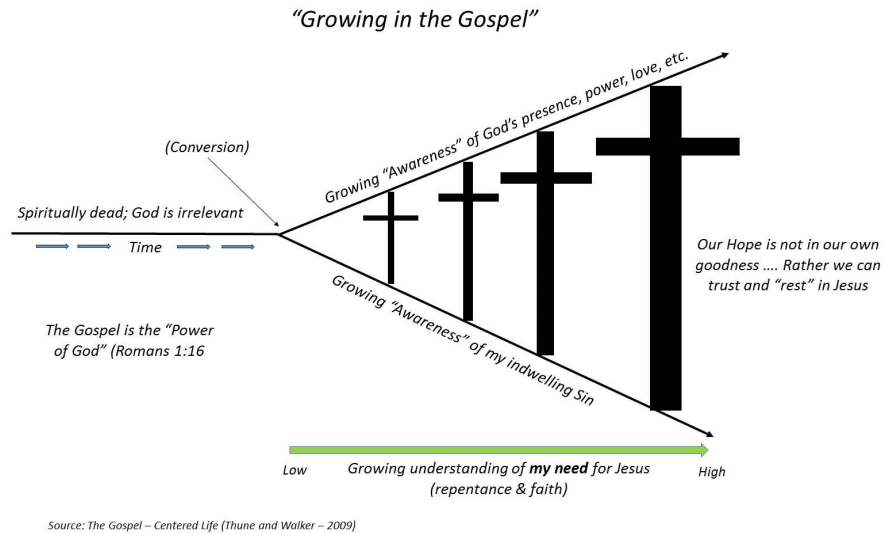
2. According to this passage what should we pursue and what should we not pursue?

3. Paul doesn't tell us that being wealthy is sinful, but he does have much to say in the passage about wealth. What should be our attitude towards wealth? What should be the disposition of the wealthy?

4. Paul gives here two ways that people have left the faith. What are they? Consider your own life, do you participate in these things? How can you avoid these things in the future?

5. According to our passage when we set our hopes on God we are free to be generous and rich in good works. Consider your own life, based on your generosity and good works, where is your hope placed?

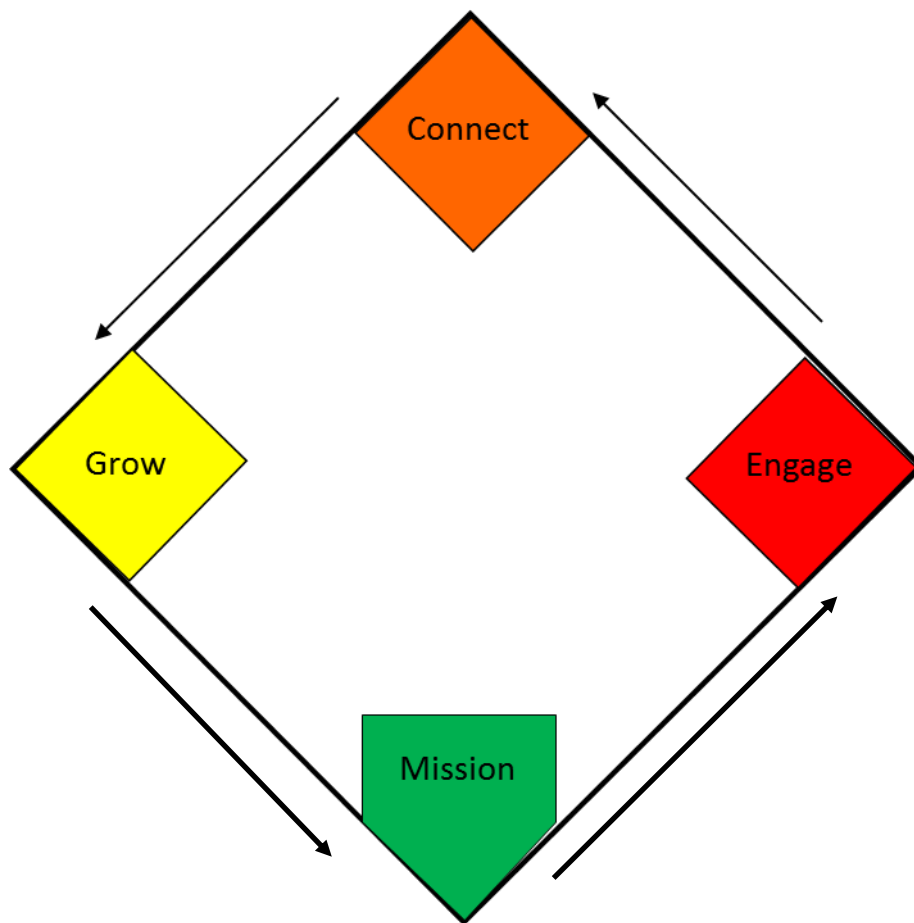
The Cross Chart



Growing in the gospel means seeing more of God's holiness and more of my sin. And because of what Jesus has done for us on the cross, we need not fear seeing God as he really is or admitting how broken we really are. Our hope is not in our own goodness, nor in the vain expectation that God will compromise his standards and "grade on a curve." Rather, we rest in Jesus as our perfect Redeemer—the One who is our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 1 Cor 1:30

Source: *The Gospel-Centered Life* (Thune and Walker-2009)

Our Mission. EP Church is a community of God's people
*seeking the renewal of Annapolis
as we are renewed by the gospel.*



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