

"I'm fine, just busy..."

Lesson 7

Your Mission vs. Society's Expectations & the Devil's Lies

Intro: What do Harvard, Yale, and Princeton all have in common? Likely the first answer that comes to mind is that they are all ludicrously expensive (\$80k a year on average). Maybe someone would consider them all to be incubators of woke ideology and political policies. A few might know their historical connection- they were all founded with the purpose of training pastors to do Gospel work through local churches.

A passion to accomplish the mission of Christ, given to His local churches, by coming alongside of them in the formal education process of pastors was a worthy endeavor that pleased God.

What happened? It was not the ONE THING that unmoored these institutions and crafted them into what they are today...it was the slow fade, over time or what is often referred to as- mission drift.

They had a mission to serve Christ but slowly deceit, through the work of the devil and society's expectations, veered them off course.

If we are Christians, what is our mission? How does it impact our dedication to our local church? How does it morph our calendar? How does it help us know what to say yes to or no to?

Consider these verses.

Mt. 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Mt. 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

2 Cor. 5:17-22 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

If you had NO other parts of your NT, what would you conclude about your daily existence for Christ and how it relates to His church?

One could easily conclude that a Christian is to submit their temporal, daily existence to knowing Christ and making Him known to others as the fulfillment of the design of His church.

A life absent of this or intermittent about this would be viewed as unbelieving or idolatrous.

Let's consider a life lived on mission vs. a life being molded by society's expectations and the devil's lies.

I. Am I busier than Jesus?¹

- Jesus as a young adult.
 - **Luke 2:49** And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
 - Remember this passage? It marks a seminal moment in Jesus' earthly existence where He indicates His deity and exerts authority as the Messiah by reminding His earthly parents that His life would be focused on eternal matters.
- This pattern continued as an adult.
 - **John 6:38-39** For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.
 - As we follow Jesus' public ministry, we find Him traveling north and south throughout Israel multiple times.
 - Varied stops, varied durations, varied miracles, varied teachings- one constant, doing the eternal work of the Father in His daily life.
 - Jesus was busy but only busy with what the Father wanted...busy without being frantic.
- **BREAKING NEWS:** We are **NOT** busier than Jesus.
 - Though He only had 3 to 3 ½ brief years of public ministry:
 - He took time to pray.
 - He invested in others.
 - He took time to honor the Sabbath.
 - He took time to go to Synagogue.
 - He turned down opportunities to stay on mission.
 - He was inconvenienced to accomplish the mission.
 - He valued this as ESSENTIAL, NOT optional.
 - He was guided by what He OUGHT to do, not by merely what He COULD do (since He had the freedom to do so).
- Redefining Urgent vs. Important?
 - Urgency speaks of this realm with its time constraints.
 - Importance speaks of eternity with its implications.
 - What are your guiding priorities or guiding mission?
 - Can you show that from the Bible and prove it with your calendar?

II. How do we passively absorb society's lies?

- History records an awful lesson taught to humanity by Joseph Goebbels (Nazi propaganda chief). ""If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it." The phrase alludes to the concept of the "big lie," a propaganda technique popularized by Nazi Germany

¹ DeYoung, Crazy Busy, Chapter 5.

- It suggests that a falsehood, repeated frequently and forcefully, can be accepted as truth by some, especially if the lie is large and audacious.
- This tactic relies on the human tendency to be swayed by repetition and authority, even when the information is demonstrably false.
- **John 8:44** Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.
 - Jesus reminded the Pharisees that the devil is the originator of deceit and works his craft among humanity relentlessly in the attempt to thwart God's causes.
 - From blatant lies (rejecting God's existence, rejecting Him as our Creator, rejecting the existence of a sin nature) to more passive ones (as long as I obey God in this way I can not prioritize obedience or eternity in this other choice).
 - He is consistently seeking to lull Christians into a mindset couched in deceit (whether blatant or innocuous).
- How do we fight the waves of culture and deceit? We go back to the verses we saw earlier (or any number of other verses in the NT regarding time, thinking, witnessing, etc. and construct our priorities according to God's Word (and desire expressed in it).
 - I must set priorities because I CANNOT do it all...**Phil. 3:10**
 - In our opulent culture with an enormous amount of personal liberty, the possibilities for work, entertainment, hobbies, and achievement are almost unlimited.
 - Too many Christians fall prey to subtle lies that they need to be involved in "it" to: be a good parent, have a full life, make the most of their time on earth, be a good friend, be a good coworker, etc.
 - You cannot do it all, therefore do what God has commanded and let other items take small slivers of what is left.
 - I must set priorities if I am to serve others effectively...**Phil. 2:1-5**
 - Seeking Christ and His desire for others in accomplishing the Church's mission requires eternal priorities. Without these, we will either not serve, serve in a convenient manner, or serve inconsistently.
- **What is one lie the Holy Spirit has or is convicting you about that your priorities (misplaced) reveal?**

III. Detangling false dichotomies

- Too often, we believe that living on mission is only practical or expected for certain Christians (pastors/missionaries/deacons, etc.) and that it is incompatible with "the real world".
 - We have let our upbringing form our expectations rather than Scripture.
 - We have let our culture give us priorities and values rather than eternity and holiness.
 - What on the surface seems impractical, unnecessary, or even impossible is simply a matter of false dichotomies (logical fallacy indicating only two choices exist when in reality, more options are possible).
- Consider- **Rom. 12:1-2, 1 Cor. 6:18-20, Phil. 1:1, 1 Tim. 1:1**
 - These (and many other) convey the reality that ANYONE who places their trust in Christ has become God's child but also His servant.
 - Our living "in the real world" is to be upon the basis of being Christ's surrendered and yielded servant.
 - When we hold ideas or expectations about how others should follow Christ but excuse it for ourselves, it is passive or intentional idolatry.
 - It creates a false dichotomy about what is involved with being on mission each day.

- It really is not that complicated:
 - If someone asked you to sum up the key elements of following Jesus as seen from Matthew-Revelation, it might be easy to say the following:
 - If you have access to God's Word, TAKE IT IN & GIVE IT OUT- hear it preached/taught, read it personally, study it, memorize it, and tell others about Jesus from it.
 - If you have access to a local church, MAKE IT THE NON-NEGOTIABLE CENTERPIECE OF YOUR WEEK- the word church by definition and usage in the NT means to assemble. The example of it shows us a place of intentional accountability, personal investment with spiritual gifts, and the benefit of spiritual aid...all approached with anticipation, not convenience or apathy.
 - If you receive any wages, BE A SACRIFICIAL GIVER ENABLED BY GRACE- the NT does not recognize the profession of a believer who, over time, does not give towards the Gospel through their local church.
 - If you have cognitive capacity, PRAY TO GOD AT SET TIMES AND CONSISTENTLY EACH DAY- the unprecedented access we have as a child of God allows us to spend intentional time in prayer to God as well as a consistent chain of communication throughout our day as a way of life, not as a last resort.
 - If able, BE WILLING TO GO WHEREEVER THE GOSPEL IS NEEDED- the "norm" for Christian throughout the NT was for them to be willing, even go, wherever there was a request or a need to further the Gospel. This took place in people's lives who were healthy and wealthy and with those who were afflicted and impoverished.
 - If you suffer persecution or due to the curse of sin, RECEIVE GOD'S AID TO TRANSFORM YOU AND FOR IT TO BECOME A PATHWAY FOR THE GOSPEL WITH OTHERS- Opulence and freedom often create a "soft" populace and Christianity/churches can be infected as well. God's people have had times of ease and times of affliction with the latter typically causing Christians to conform to God's purpose rather than the former.
 - **These are not "duties" one must DO, they are fruit of a submitted and vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ.**
- If we find a thought process, idea, opportunity, or life event contradicting the above, we must ask ourselves what we are believing and therefore being conformed into?
 - Transactionalism is perverting churches and discipling the next generation to be passive idolaters.
 - Sunday AM matters but since I do not really like small group time (or whatever), I will skip out on that.
 - I will listen to the livestream at the kid's sports activity that way we can talk about it in the car and still show it mattered to us.
 - I give my time to serve but because of inflation, I just cannot give to the Gospel much or at all.
 - I do Bible plans that address my life or needs but do not consistently read through it.
 - Mission continues to become untethered from the Scripture and fit conveniently with our desires.
 - It creates an unbiblical view of God, our relationship with Him, and distorts our servitude towards Him.
 - It creates a false idea that our partial sacrifice or obedience means He is ok with us doing as we desire in the other areas.

Conclusion: Mission drift can happen to any institution when they begin to ignore their original purpose or integrate other priorities that compete against it; this can also happen to any Christian who accepts societal expectations as "normal and necessary" and heeds the subtle, yet powerful lies of the Devil.

The end result can be genuine professors of Christ who's weekly life would demonstrate a submission to Christ when convenient or enjoyable but not in a way that prioritized His mission and expectations.