Why Mission?

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Date: 08 November 2026

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[0:00] Great. Well, can I just add my welcome to you this morning. And you might be worried thinking, we normally do a reading about now. He's gone rogue. He's put the Bible to the side. He didn't even bring one up.

What's going wrong? Well, rest assured, I have a whole page of printed out verses from the Bible. It's one of those series that we're in at the moment where it's topical.
We're going through, why gather? Why do we do church? And when we come, why do we do what we say we do? Why do we preach? Why do we do communion?
Why do we baptize people? And this morning, we're looking at why mission? Why mission, which is helpfully behind me. I know we have a lot of different verses I'm going to refer to this morning.
So I've put them on the slide behind me. So hopefully that's helpful. And that's why we don't have a main reading. We're going to have lots of little readings. Because as we're going through these things, it's good to justify what we're saying by referring to the Bible.
[1:02] It is our truth as Christians. And so it's what we will refer to. So to get ourselves thinking, I was looking up recently the population of the world.

We're now at 8 billion. And by this morning, it should be about 327 million. Dot, dot, dot, dot, dot. That is a big number.
That's one of those numbers that you actually can't quite picture. You just don't really understand. Or certainly I don't understand how many people that actually is. And you know, by the end of this sermon and about half an hour's time, there'll be an extra 4,000 people on planet Earth.
Taking it a little bit more local. On average, per day. And it'll vary wildly. Don't get me wrong. Between your stage of life that you're at, who you are, what you do with your time.
But you will have about nine meaningful contacts with someone else in the course of your day. Nine meaningful contacts. It could be a chat with a person who's serving you coffee.
[2:10] It might be someone at work that you're having lunch with. But we, on average, have nine meaningful contacts with another human being per day. You know, schools.

The children, most of them have gone out. But there's 280 is the average in a primary school. Or 1,000 in a high school. That's a lot of interactions going on.
And you know, quite literally, bringing it closer to home, I was looking up. I was quite interested. The average street population. So the average people that share your street name is 65.
65 people that live on the same street as you. Now, why did I get into this rabbit hole of numbers? Well, my point is, is that we can't get away from people.
And as we'll see, and as we'll look at, we are born to be relational. We are born to know other people. To come into contact with other people. And as Christians, we should act in a certain way when we do.
[3:13] So as we get stuck into why mission, I was thinking, how are we going to approach this? And the why, of course, is important. But you know, so are all the other words.

So we're going to start with what. We're then going to do why. We're going to do who, when. And then we're going to do how. And we're going to look at how we can look at this topic of mission.
So let's get stuck in to the what. Well, what do we mean by mission? Well, I'm going to define it, and Craig helpfully shared this as well. But sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others.
That's how I'm going to define it. Mission is sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with other people. And the good news of Jesus Christ is the gospel.
Gospel means good news, and most commonly it is referred to as the good news of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, we have the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

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[4:15] That's where these guys who had eyewitness accounts of what Jesus did and what he said. But you know, in order to share the gospel, we need to know it.

We need to know the good news of Jesus so that we can tell it to others. And you know, if we're trying to tell someone the good news of Jesus, it will really affect on the situation and the circumstance.
Alan Sugar in The Apprentice, he likes to say to the people who are in front of him, likes to say, give me your elevator pitch. You've got 30 seconds. Sell it to me. And they always look a bit flustered, and they're not really sure what to say.
And they start with, like I did, big long numbers that mean nothing. And they don't get to the point. But you know, that might just be it. We might end up in a conversation with someone on a bus, and they're about to get off.
And we've got 30 seconds to tell them why we think Jesus matters. Or it might be that we meet up with someone in a coffee shop for the sole purpose of going through who Jesus was and why he came.
[5:24] And so our definition and what we say in answer to that question will be very different. And you know, I'm going to give it a maybe middle-of-the-road go just now.

So the gospel, we need to know it. Well, God, before time, before time even began in eternity past, was Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit.
God was relational in and of himself. That God out of love created the world. And the world was made perfect. And mankind was made.
That means that we are known and that we are loved by God. But that perfect picture was ruined when man's disobedience came to the fore. And sin came into the world.
It ruined God's perfection. And since then, there's been a separation between God and man. We can see how that relationship between a faithful God and an unfaithful people goes throughout the Old Testament as his people wander away from him.
[6:34] And yet God is faithful and tries to bring them back. But ultimately, that relationship with God was severed at that point. And I think we know that sin is rife in the world, isn't it?

And if we look at ourselves, we know that we are sinful, that we mess up. We get it wrong at times. And God, because he is holy, because he is perfect, because he is just, he can't just let us away with it.
No, there are consequences for our actions. But the good news of the Bible and the whole of the Old Testament points to this man, Jesus.
And over 2,000 years ago, he came into the world, and that was God's salvation plan. And you know, the wonder of it is, is that this plan wasn't an emergency hatched plan.
No. God created the world knowing that we would mess it up. Knowing that Jesus would have to come. And yet out of love, we were created anyway. So Jesus came.
[7:42] He was a child. We'll think about that soon, won't we? I'll not say how long it is. But very soon. We will think about Jesus coming into this world as a baby.

Born like any other. And yet so different. Fully man, but fully God. So didn't sin. Never messed up. Could only do that because he was God.
And in his years of ministry, aged between 30 and 33, when he went around telling others about himself and about his father and why he had come.
He said, I am the son of God. And he backed it up with the miracles. His actions proving that he was who he said that he was. And this Jesus, he went all the way to the cross.
That we think about Easter time. He allowed himself to be put on it. And he was punished physically, yes. But in those three hours of darkness, all of sin was put upon him.
[8:45] That punishment that we deserve, individually, for our sin, was put upon him. The one who didn't deserve it. Took it for those who do deserve it.

Which of all of us. And then he died. He was fully dead. That soldier put that spear in his side. He was buried. But then rose again, triumphantly, three days later.
Talked to many people. Many people saw him. Risen again. And then went back to the right hand of the Father on high. And so as Christians, we worship one who is not dead, but is alive.
And that is the glorious good news of Jesus. He also promised. He said, I will come back. And get you again. And so if we trust in him, if we accept the work that he did, if we apologize for the wrongs that we have done, and promise to live our lives the best that we can, for the Lord Jesus, then we

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can look forward to a future that has no more pain, no more suffering, no more tears.
A world that is perfect once again. That is the good news of Jesus Christ. 1 John 4, 9-10.
[10:04] It's always great to quote the Bible when we are telling others about Jesus. It says this, this is how God showed his love among us. He sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love. Not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. That sums it up beautifully, doesn't it?
That was what Jesus came and did. And that is the good news of Jesus Christ. So we need to know it ourselves to be able to tell it, don't we?
So that brings us to the why. Well, if we know that, if we are Christians, if we have accepted that truth and we are trying to live that out, then why would we want to tell others about it?
Well, Psalm 117, what a beautiful little psalm. This is the full thing. Praise the Lord, all you nations. Extol him, all you peoples, for great is his love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.
[11:13] Praise the Lord. Amen. Well, we see in that, that God cares for the nations. He cares for all people. This was in the time of the Old Testament where he had his people, the people of Israel.

And yet God cared for the nations. He wanted all nations to know him and love him. So first of all, we should want to tell people because God cares for them.
We're also commanded to tell others, both directly and indirectly. When we look at these two passages here, 1 Timothy 1.15, feel free to turn to them if you want.
I would encourage you to have your Bibles or you can take notes and check them up later on and read the passages around. They're very helpful. But 1 Timothy says this, here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.
Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst. That was Paul speaking. If you don't know his story, it's an interesting story to go and see why he says he is the worst of sinners.
[12:22] Luke 19.10, for the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. That is why Jesus came. He came to seek and save the lost.

He came to tell others. He proclaimed that about himself. And we are to be like him. Jesus is our ultimate example. Christian means to be Christ-like.
As Christians, we are to work hard to be more and more like Jesus every day. And so we are to follow his example and to tell others. But we are not proclaiming ourselves because why would we? We have nothing to offer. We proclaim Jesus just as he did. And you know, in a similar vein, when we grasp the gospel truly, we will want to bring others into what we know and to what we have. When we fully understand the magnitude of what God has done for us, the position, the horrible position that we were in, living in sin, living without God's favor, what we have been saved from, an eternity without him, and saved to a life that can be fulfilling, we can have joy to the full, and a future in heaven that is perfect, and where we can praise God forever.
[13:52] When we truly grasp the magnitude of that, we will want to share that with other people. Acts chapter 4, verse 20. So in Acts, Peter and John, they were gone and they were in Jerusalem.

They'd just seen the risen Jesus. They were so full of what they had just seen. And they say this, as for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.
You imagine it was almost pouring out of them, just saying, we've just seen this. We have witnessed this. We want you to know about it. And to put this into context, they were in front of the Jerusalem council.
They were basically being pulled up, saying, you've got to stop. You're causing lots of trouble. Stop what you're doing. So in grave danger, they just said, we're sorry, but we're not.
We can't help it. We're going to tell it anyway. We can't help ourselves. And when we grasp the gospel truly, that will be us. Mark 12.
[14:55] Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. And the second is this. And this is Jesus speaking. That's why it's in red.

Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these. Love God and love your neighbor. By your neighbor, it just means those you come into contact with.
Those nine meaningful contacts a day. Those people in your high school of a thousand. Whatever it might be. Your street of 65. If you love the Lord and you love your neighbor, then you will be

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burdened by the fact that they don't know the Lord Jesus as their Savior.
Romans 10.14. How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?
Let me paraphrase. Unless we tell people about Jesus, how are they going to believe in him? And if they don't believe in him, how are they going to put their trust in him? Unless they put their trust in him, how are they going to live their life for him?
[16:06] And have that everlasting joy that we are promised. So that is the why of mission. Which takes us to the who.

Well, quite simply, who is it for? Mission is for. We've heard of Hebron Fiona doing her great work in Argentina.
There's lots of other people that we have associated with with this church who are doing great work in our city, far-flung countries.
So is it for them? No. It's for all Christians. We have an evangelism team here at Brunsfield. Oh, great.
That's the evangelism guys. That's their job. No. They're there to facilitate the evangelism of every single one of us. Evangelism mission is for all Christians.
[17:05] It is all of our jobs. And who is it to? Who is mission to? Well, it's to everyone. Well, we've seen that already, haven't we?

God desires that all people will be saved. This is good and pleases God, our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.
God is not selective in who He wants to be saved. You know, it's not like back in the schoolyard when you had everyone up against the wall and you picked the best players first.
You can come on my team. No, God wants all to be saved. The opportunity for salvation is open to everyone. God desires all people to be saved.
And I think we quite helpfully maybe separate mission out. I think we think global. We thought about that with Hebra and Fiona. People in different countries, those who go to the mission fields, we might use phrases like that.
[18:09] I think that's helpful to think of it in that way. And thinking global is right. It's great that people feel the call. There are brave people who take up that call to go to places that they don't know, speak in languages that are not their own, and to go and to tell people who've never heard of Jesus all about Him.

And I have so much respect for people who take that up, either short-term, long-term, full-time, whatever it might be. So it is important to think global. Psalm 67 says this, one to two, but the whole thing's great if you want to read it later on.
May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine on us so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. The psalmist's desire here was that all nations would be saved.
It is important that we think global. The picture in Revelation, so John's image of heaven that he has, the vision of heaven, says this, after this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne and before the Lamb.
They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. We can find real motivation here and going and seeking out every nation. There's great organizations and websites we can look at and see where there are those who just, they haven't had anyone come and speak to them about Jesus.
[19:49] So it's important to think global, but we also do need to think local. The mission field isn't just out there, it is here. We've heard helpfully from Ben and Keita.

Their mission field for the next season is at home. You probably wondered when I was coming to this one. It was always coming, wasn't it?
The Great Commission. We had to read this, didn't we? Matthew chapter 28, 18 to 20. Jesus came to them and said, so he had risen again from the dead.
He was about to go back to heaven and he leaves his followers with this instruction. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

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Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.
[20:50] That was Jesus' instructions. But it's not just go to other nations, but all nations, including our own. There is a great work to be done in our streets and in our localities.

You know, for an encouragement this morning, you might think that you're in a dead-end job that's going nowhere. You might be thinking, well, my flat's terrible and I don't like my flatmates.
None of them wash up. You might be thinking, this unique horse, I'm not sure this is for me. And while these things might be true, but God has placed you exactly where he wants you for this season.
Where you are right now is where God wants you and he wants to use you where you are. You just need to be willing to be used by God.
Pray to God, say, use me where I am. Help me to be a witness to those around me. God has placed you where he wants you.
[22:00] That can be a great encouragement to us. But you know, we see here, don't we, that it's not just mission as and of itself.

We do not just tell people about Jesus and then go, right, I'm away to the next person. You know, we see the pattern here, don't we? Jesus gives authority to his disciples to go and make other disciples.
As we thought about last week, those who come to know the Lord Jesus are to be baptized. We thought about that last week and the importance of following that commandment as well.
But then also teaching young Christians, helping them along in their faith. You know, the mission field is encouraging people from being really against God and sometimes it's just shunting them along the path.
It's important to also teach those who have come to know Jesus all that the Bible says and instructs. So that is the who of mission.
[23:15] And then we have a really easy one. The when. Well, it's always. Hopefully that was the answer you knew was coming up. You know, it's not just on a Sunday.

I didn't look at the calendar and go, right, I'm preaching today so that's my mission and then, oh, I'm not until January so I've got three months off. I'll take a break.
Or I shouldn't think like that. That's for sure. You know, it's not just on a Sunday. We don't have a set period when we clock in to mission. No, it is to be a continual thing.
We are to be a continual witness to those around us. We are to be salt and light. As Christians, we are to reflect the light of Jesus to others and to this dark world.
That is what we are called to do. You know, my great-grandfather, he was a barber among other things and what used to happen was that he was the barber in the town so everyone went to him and you would go and everyone just knew this happened but you went and you got your haircut of course but you also got the gospel.
[24:28] I think you paid for the haircut but the gospel just came free. That was an added bonus. But you know, he was a type and some people are gifted in such ways that it just spilled out of him.

He couldn't help but talk about Jesus and the importance of Jesus in his life. So people would be getting their haircut and they would be hearing the good news of Jesus as it went along.
You know, it's that continual witness in our lives. It's so important and we see that in Acts and don't get me wrong, the caveat, the Acts, it was unusual times, it was the early church, the Holy Spirit came and all sorts of sort of unusual things were going on.
But you know, we see that Jesus was preached in the synagogues, yes, in the streets and also at stonings and other such strange events. In Acts chapter 7 you have Stephen who's standing there, his accusers in front of him with their stones at their feet about to pick them up and hurl them at him for preaching the gospel.
What does he do? Does he backtrack? Does he say, you know what, I'll ease off, I'll not do it again. No, he uses that opportunity, his last words to preach the good news of Jesus once more to those who are about to pick up stones and throw them at him.
[25:52] Acts chapter 8, we thought about this a bit last week. Philip, he's told to go. where? To some nice palace and to tell, you know, such people in a really nice environment or a comfortable sofa.

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No, he goes to a dusty road in the middle of nowhere, on a road to nowhere. And he's called to go and to explain the good news to the Ethiopian eunuch.
And as we saw last week, the Ethiopian eunuch was then baptized there and then at the roadside. the when of mission is always and it'll look different for each one of us.
So you might be thinking, well, that's good. That's all well and good. That's the theory. But how does that help me? You don't know me. You don't know my situation. And I don't. And this is the thing.
It looks different for each one of us. Depends our character. Depends what we're like. But you know, I'm going to go through five things that might be helpful. You know, I'd really encourage you and I'd challenge you that at the end of this sermon, grab a coffee, turn to the person next to you and just maybe share some hints and tips.
[27:06] What works for you? Or where do you struggle? We've got growth groups going on. Get into your growth group. We can really dive into some of these applications, some of these practical things.

How do you find sharing the gospel? How do you reach out to those who you know? So I'm going to go through five things. Well, first of all, practically, well, our words and deeds are to display our faith.
Jesus showed that above all else. He cared for people's physical needs. He fed them. He healed them. And likewise, we have things like food bank, the care van, where we go and we meet people's physical needs.
And that is important. Of course it is. But we also want to meet their spiritual needs. We want to tell people about Jesus. But often by meeting people's needs practically, we can reach out to them spiritually.
So that's practically. Relationally, you know, most people will become a Christian not by randomly walking into church one Sunday morning because they just feel like it and then hearing about Jesus and becoming a Christian.
[28:15] Well, the most way that people become Christians is because of who they know. And people that love them and care for them and want them to come into what they know, which is Jesus.

And to do so, we need to make bonds with people. We need to have that surface level chat. If we're not interested in those in our office, if we're not, say, how was your weekend? How's the kids doing?
Where did you walk your dog this weekend? If we're not having that kind of level of chat, then we'll never get down to the deep chat about what is life all about? What are you struggling with? I'm really sorry to hear about that your marriage isn't going so well.
And that can be difficult. We don't always get on with people. We don't always naturally click. We might find some people quite difficult to speak to. But we need to be relational with people in order to introduce them to Jesus.
And going along with that is intentionally. If we don't have a mindset of mission, then we just won't.
[29:26] We just won't do it. We need to approach situations and conversations and people with a mindset of mission. I know myself, if I don't approach going to speak to someone, if I don't approach it with a thought of, I'd really love to tell this person about what I spoke about at church on Sunday or what I heard or something like that, if I don't have that intentionality, then I'll just find myself five minutes later walking away going, you've done it again.

You've just talked about the football results and the weather and then you've walked away. We need to have that mindset of mission. How can we introduce the people we are speaking to to Jesus?
And a big thing is practice. We'll not always get it right. What's the phrase? Practice makes perfect? Well, that's a lie. Nothing's perfect. But practice, we get better.
We will mess it up. We will, you know, I didn't quite get that right. That's fine. We need to give these things a go. We need to be willing to step out and to introduce people to Jesus, to try and talk to them and to try and introduce them to the truth that we know.
We will get better at it. We will learn through our mistakes and that's okay. So we do need to start and then we need to practice. And just to finish, and this is the biggest encouragement of all, we do this with God's help.

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[31:02] We are not set on our own. This is not an individual endeavor. This is not like that guy that what, I don't know, for 28 years around the world, you hear about him, just on his own, toiling away.

That's not us. Well, one, we have our church family. We have Christians who we know and we can chat to. We can encourage each other. But more importantly, we have God's help.
We have the Holy Spirit. When Jesus went, he said, I will send my helper who will be with you. And the Holy Spirit goes before us, works in people's hearts. We can give great thanks to God for that. So the Holy Spirit works on our behalf. The other thing is that salvation, it's God's work. It is God who saves.
We don't save. I have no power to save people. Who do I think I am? No, but sometimes God uses us. He blesses us by using us to be able to introduce people to Jesus.
[32:13] But it is God's work. It is God who saves. So that should be an encouragement to us. Let's see the end of the Great Commission. Not only is all authority being passed through the Lord Jesus and he gives us authority to go out in his name, but read this.

Right at the end, I didn't read this before, the end of the Great Commission. Jesus says, and surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. As we live our lives, Jesus is with us.
He promises that. So until we die or go to be with him, he promises that he'll be with us every step of the way. And I really trust that that is a great encouragement to us as we step out and try and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.
Let me just pray as we finish. I do trust that's been an encouragement. Please grab me at the end. I'll be loitering around the back. Please grab me. Let's chat about these things.
You know, we can pray about these things and be thinking who in your life you can be praying for that you're speaking to and that you want to introduce Jesus to. So let me just pray.
[33:30] God and Father, we just thank you for your word. We thank you that it is your chosen way of speaking to us in this age that we live in.

we thank you that we can see the Old Testament and that all things point to the Lord Jesus. We thank you that we have those eyewitness accounts of what he did and what he said and the amazing work of salvation that happened on that cross.
We give you thanks that death was not the end but that the Lord Jesus rose again and that we do not worship one who is dead but who is alive.
And Lord Jesus, we just thank you that you promised to be with us as your people. We thank you that you are with us every step of the way and we just ask for boldness not in ourselves but in the message that we have to share because it is so important and the magnitude of it is so great.
And so give us boldness and strength and help as we seek to tell other people about the Lord Jesus. Help us to feel the burden for those who we come into contact with who live on our streets that we know and love.
[34:55] Help us to be burdened for those people and so as we meet people and as we discuss with them give us the words to say. Give us the motivation to speak to them and we just thank you that you promise that you will be with us the whole time.

So we thank you for this time that we have had. We thank you for who you are and we just ask these things in your most precious and worthy name. Amen.

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