

“THE Mission” Matters Most

Isaiah 43:18-21

August 18, 2013

Introduction Illustration:

With our fighting forces deployed to many hazardous areas around the world we hear a lot about their mission. Today we are going to examine the importance of a mission and why it urgently matters.

As an example we will look at a mission portrayed in one of my favorite movies from my youth. Yes that means it is an old movie, but it works.

The Guns of Navarone (loosely based on true story)

The Germans have trapped 2,000 British soldiers on Keros, an island in the Aegean, with only one sea route for evacuation, a sea route commanded by two gigantic German antiship batteries deployed in a massive cliffside bunker on the island of Navarone. The British assemble a team of commandos and resistance fighters to scale a 400 foot cliff and dynamite the 2 guns so that allied ships can rescue the 2000 trapped soldiers.

That was the mission and there were many difficulties. From feuding fighters to sabotaged equipment. It seemed like an impossible one.

What if the fighters gave up, or thought the original plan was too hard and decided to wing it or wait for another possible opportunity to present itself?

2000 soldiers would have died or been captured.

The ships on the way to evacuate those soldiers would have been sunk resulting in many more deaths.

Loosing sight of a missions objectives too often results in great loss of people.

This holds true for Gods Mission as well! In spades!

T/S: Introduce yourself... and connect Intro & Big Idea

Big Idea: It's ONLY God's mission that matters!

God created the universe for a specific purpose. That purpose was to Glorify Himself. Everything in creation was made for that purpose, including, and specifically us.

The objective is His glory, The realization of that objective is His Mission. This tells us that THE mission, Gods mission, is all that matters.

PRAY

T/S: Announce the text (Isaiah 43:18-21)

The Guiding scripture for today is Isaiah 43:18-21 where God tells us about something new which is about to happen.

600 years before the birth of Jesus, 200 years before the intertestamental period where The Lord seemed to be silent for 400 years as there is no biblical record of His voice.

The chosen people has been through several cycles of following God, turning away, punishment, repentance and rescue God made an announcement.

Preview/Overview: (Tell them what you're going to tell them)

Major Point #1: Hear the Mission (Mission Briefing)

Major Point #2: See the Mission (Mission Planning)

Major Point #3: BE the Mission (Deployment)

T/S: Let's read the text and jump right in this morning:

Major Point #1: Hear the Mission! (Mission Briefing)

Lets look at three components of the mission briefing

Mission notice: HEY! something's going to happen.
Listen up!

Conditions: Why is a mission needed

Objective: What is to be accomplished?

Our key verse give us our mission notice, then we will look at Isaiah 59 to learn the conditions and objective of the MISSION

Mission notice: HEY! something's going to happen.

(Isaiah 43:18-21)

18 "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.

God starts by telling us to forget about the past ways.

No more "That is how we have always done it".

Drop the fruitless customs and habits.

Forget the empty old time religion. (SOP)

LISTEN UP! New Orders

19 Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, **do you not perceive it?**
BEHOLD= Something new and important is about to be revealed!
What is it? "I am doing a new thing!" **You must not miss this!**

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

A way in the wilderness- for the lost to follow.

Rivers in the desert- water for those dying of spiritual thirst.

Jesus is The Way.

20 The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people,

21 the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise.

This new thing will point to My glory. Even the wild animals will notice how I bring rescue to my people! I don't know what the beast know, I haven't talked to an ostrich lately, but the point we need to take to heart is this:

This is done for The People who Praise and worship The LORD

Now that we have heard the mission notice lets get the conditions and objective in Isaiah 59:14-17

Conditions: Why is the mission needed

Isaiah 59:14-17 ESV

(14) Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares, and uprightness cannot enter.

(15) Truth is lacking, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. The LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice.

This mission is needed because:

Mankind has strayed from truth an righteousness and is headed for destruction. Even those who seek truth are set upon by the world.

God is displeased and knows that this will result in His justice and wrath

In plain English "people are going to die and suffer" eternally.

(16) He saw that there was no man, and **wondered** that there was no one to intercede;

God knows fully the terrible vengeance in store for us.

In His compassion and merciful love for us He **wonders** that there is no one to rescue us

Hebrew shamem(shaw-mame); to wonder, appalled, stupefy, amazed, astonished

God is appalled that the world has no way of salvation on its own.

Now that we have received notice and understand the conditions requiring the mission what is the objective?

Objective: What is to be accomplished?

then his own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him.

(17) He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.

God chooses to give us what we need even though we could never deserve it. He shows us **grace** by purposing to be our intercessor.
HE does it because He is righteous
He does it with zeal
He does it to bring glory to His name.

That was then-this is now. How does it still apply? What is God telling us TODAY.

Today's orders(still the same)

Forget the old ways: We are too often caught up in stylized religion, our salvation and ministry checklists and a "that's how we always do it" mindset.

I am doing a new thing: Applies yesterday, today and tomorrow. We are living in Gods New Thing. His mission is **always** NOW!

Do you not perceive it! Open our eye and our hearts to what He is doing NOW! Or we will miss it, and that would be catastrophic.

I will Make a way: I am The Way, The truth and The Light. No one comes to The Father Except through me. Jesus is the Way

Today's Conditions: The world is still full of the lost, subject to Gods wrath and yearning to be freed by Gods mission. The mission field is worldwide and local. We too often think it is in Kenya or on Kent Island, but in truth the mission is in your kitchen, and Kent Island, and in Kentucky, and in Korea and in Kenya. The mission is where we are at every given moment, in every place we go.

Today's Objective: In His righteousness God has provided The Way to salvation,
He is still working with zeal.
HE is still working to show His glory.

So What?

How do I use this today? We examine our own hearts and dedication to God.

Am I in a spiritual rut, am I acting out of habit or am I aware of what God is still doing in the world, and in my back yard?

Am I working out my salvation with fear and trembling, am I one of His People?

Am I following The Way, is my zeal for Jesus?

Do I go to church, or **am I** The Church.

Do we see there is still a need. DO we SEE the lost?

T/S: Just in case "hearing" the mission is not enough for you... God has SHOWN us the Mission through the life, death, and ministry of our Messiah...

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Major Point #2: **See the Mission! (Mission Planning)**

Mission prep: Logistics, training, and personnel.

In truth Gods mission planning was completed before creation, He gives us a glimpse of His logistics in The first chapter of Genesis.

He created the universe and filled it with stars.

He arranged the stars into galaxies and gave some of them planets orbiting around them

He places one star setting apart from the others in its galaxy and put 9 (or is it now 8) planets around it.

He placed the 3rd planet just the right distance from its sun and tilted it so it would have seasons.

The tilt would cause it to wobble so He gave it a moon of just the right size and placed far enough away to stabilize its spin.

He gave it oceans and land to support life.

He populated it with mankind.

I think we get the point. That is what He did to prepare for The mission (and yet we have the nerve to call it OUR solar system)

However during the 400 years God seemed to be silent (intertestamental period) we can see His preparations in history. The Jewish people again fell away from God, they were ruled first by the Greeks and then by the Romans, who were perhaps the most tyrannical conquerors they had ever faced. All of which prepared the world for Gods "New Thing". When everything was in place He acted

So lets see the mission from 2 perspectives. First from His base camp (Heaven) in Phillipians 2: 5-11, and then from the mission field (here)

Base Camp

Imagine that moment in the throne room of God our Father and redeemer, and The LORD says to His Right Arm. "It is time."

Philippians 2:5-11 ESV Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Jesus was God, He had every attribute of God yet He did not desire to hold on to those very characteristics. He desired only to obey The Father.

(7) but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

In obedience He laid down everything that made Him equal to God,\. And became a servant, He didn't sigh, roll His eyes or try to make a deal. He said Yes Father, and obeyed.

(8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

God made man, became a servant and died on the cross. Why? To redeem His people from Gods wrath for one thing. But the next verses show the real reason.

(9) Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, (10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Christ died on the cross to Bring Glory and praise to God our Father, The Creator of all things. That was His main objective in Gods Mission.

Now if that was what took place in heaven, what did we see here on earth?

Galatians 4:4-5 ESV (4)But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

Being born of woman subject to the law, as we are, Jesus is deployed on earth to glorify God. His Mission was to die on the cross for our sins.

However while He lived He also had some logistical matters to attend to, which involved His ministries while on earth.

Jesus grew up as we did, and during His years of ministry He Called the Apostles and attracted those who would be disciples, taught them to follow Him and prepared them to go into the battle.

Application: (So what!)

It might seem strange to you but I see His ministry as similar to the Special Forces A teams. They often deploy to a hostile area to recruit local people and organize them into an effective fighting force equipped to continue the battle after they have left.

Jesus recruited and taught the locals (us) to become part of the mission. He teaches, and empowers us to BE the mission. How do we Prepare?

By studying the Gospels where we are shown what we need to learn and embrace to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. He perfectly teaches us by His words and actions, how to follow in His footsteps.

But in order to Be the mission we also learn from seeing an example of how His disciples learned to BE the mission

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Major Point #3: BE the Mission (Deployment)

Deploy to the mission area & accomplish the objective.

- Illustration: All the preparation and planning in the world is useless until it is put into effect. However one of the last steps before deploying is to see how others have performed the same action.

Luke 10:1-20 is a perfect example.

- Lets look at **some** of this and see what we can learn:

Luke 10:1-20 ESV

(1) After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.

(2) And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

(3) Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

His disciples were sent to where Jesus was about to go.

The disciples were to pray that many who heard would follow Jesus and make more disciples
They were sheep among wolves, in other words they were going into hostile territory.

(8) Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you.

(9) Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

Sometimes you will be well received. Minister to those peoples needs but inform them that the kingdom of God is near, your ministry is Gods, not yours.

(10) But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say,

(11) 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'

Other times you will face rejection, maybe even hostility (possibly a majority). If they refuse to hear, leave them and move on. But let them know that Gods kingdom is near, if they are not interested it is between them and God. No intercession is given.

(16) "The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

Always keep in mind that you are speaking for God, not yourself.

(17) The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

(18) And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

(19) Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

(20) Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

The disciples returned and were impressed with themselves for the wonders done in His name.

Jesus rebukes them by reminding them that HE gave them the authority to work miracles and revoke demons. It was not about them.

He then tells them that it was their obedience, not their works that has their names written in Heaven. That obedience should be the center of their Joy.

After His personal mission of death on the cross, that which only He could do was accomplished, He was raised from the dead and met with His disciples and His last words to them were:

(Matthew 28:18-20 ESV) And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Jesus deploys His disciples to continue THE Mission, to make disciples who make disciples and to continue bringing Glory To The Creator, in the sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

This is The Great Commission.

So What do we do with this?

We are His Body and our mission is to let Him work through us. So it is now our co-mission. Always remembering that Jesus is the Head of the body.

Are we fully zealous about carrying out The Mission? The only one that Matters?
To Glorify God through His Son the Christ Jesus?
Are we obeying so that our names are written in heaven?
Or are we stuck on going to church or finding a ministry?

Video: Alan Hirsch - *Communitas*

It can be easy to loose sight of THE Mission to glorify God through His Son Jesus the Christ. But I pray that you now have a better picture of what it is

1 DO we HEAR the mission

Are we forgetting the old ruts of checklists and stale meaningless religion.
Are we aware of the New Thing That God is doing until the end.
Or are we in danger of missing it.
Do we see that there is still a need

Look at the hurting until you hurt with them. No rushing past, no turning away. Look at the face until you see the person.

2. Do we SEE THE Mission

Are we preparing and training by prayerfully studying Gods word.
Are we examining ourselves to ensure we are truly in Christ?
Are we prepared to live sacrificial lives in Christ?

3. Are we Being the mission

With our families
In our neighborhood and community
At work and socially
Do we hear a calling to reach other peoples.
Are we proclaiming the Glory of God to the world

Close: We have learned that we need to BE the Church. In order to BE the Church we must be on THE Mission with Our Savior Jesus Christ. Locally, regionally and to the world. If we are then we may know the Joy of our salvation because only then are our names written in heaven! Because only THE Mission matters at all. **Millions of peoples eternities depend on it!**

Invitation

Let's Pray!