

## ***Joining Jesus on His Mission* by Greg Finke**

### **Devotional & Small Group Study – WEEK TWO**

#### **DAY 8 OF 42**

##### READING GUIDE:

- Read today's devotion below.
- During days 8-14 (at your own pace) read chapters 3 thru 6 from *Joining Jesus on His Mission*.
- After days 8-14, meet with your small group and discuss the 5 questions found on the back of this week's devotions.

“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...” (Matthew 28:19 ESV)

Finke in chapter 3 shares that in the span of recent decades “the U.S. has become a major mission field, the major mission fields of the world have become much more Christian. Today, there are nearly as many Lutheran in Ethiopia as there are in the U.S...We used to think of missionaries as being sent to the mission fields of far-off places like Africa and China. But now we can send missionaries to the mission fields of our own subdivisions, neighborhoods and apartment complexes. We used to think of people as being ‘overseas missionaries.’ But now we can think of people as being ‘neighborhood missionaries.’ We used to think that if someone became a missionary, we would send them to India or South America. Now we can simply send them home after worship because our local neighborhoods have become mission fields.”

**So with this insight, how is God messing with you? How does your mindset change considering that it only takes one step out of your house to enter the mission field...the mission field to which God has placed you?**

#### **DAY 9 OF 42**

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“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (Galatians 5:22-24 ESV)

Those who belong to Christ Jesus are marked by these attributes. And the world is watching.

I recently heard an overseas missionary speak of an experience with his not-yet-Christian neighbor. It had been about 8 years since the missionary and his family moved into the community. The neighbor, after the 8 years, shared a confession with the missionary. He said, “When you first moved next door, I had no interest in talking about God with you. I was skeptical. Since then, over the years, I’ve watched how you live your life. I’ve seen how you’ve raised your kids. I see how you love and treat your wife. Now I’m ready to talk about your God...”

Near the end of chapter 3, Finke shares that those in our culture “are looking for what Jesus has already called his followers to be. For instance:

- People take note when someone is willing to sacrifice themselves for the good of others.
- People appreciate the opportunity to sort through their spiritual questions honestly without manipulation
- People are intrigued by someone who exhibits both grace and wisdom
- People are looking for those who exhibit authentic love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and self-control.”

Of course it is only through the Word of God and His Spirit that will transform one's life for Christ. But to gain a hearing of the Word, how we live as followers of Jesus does matter.

**Considering the bulleted lines above, in what area(s) would you say you have the most room to grow in looking like what Jesus has called you to be? How could growing in that area impact those in your life--both fellow believers and those who do not yet know Jesus? With the Spirit's help, guided by the Word, what one next step will you take to grow in this area?**

## DAY 10 OF 42

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"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13 ESV)

When you refer to someone as being green, typically that means inexperience. Such people are just beginning in their field of work or practice. Some will use this term in the negative sense, accusing one of being placed in a position of responsibility prematurely.

In the positive sense, we can look at green, like plants, as having the potential to grow--a good thing! We can look at the green person as a fresh start, a blessing, as hope for something that will bear much fruit--all truly accomplished through the One who planted it and makes it grow. "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit." (John 15:5a NLT)

You may feel "green" over the idea of living missionally. You may not feel equipped enough, that you've not read enough books or memorized enough Bible verses. Don't fret; you're in good company! And most importantly, Jesus is with you! As Finke writes in chapter 4, "...joining Jesus on his mission will not require us to absorb a lot of additional teaching. It is simpler than we think, not more complicated. After all, the mission of Jesus originally exploded with 'unschooled, ordinary men' (Acts 4:13)."

**How does this impact your missional mindset? How does this change your perspective? How does this keep you from stalling, never thinking you are equipped enough? How do you see that God still uses you, stretches you, gives you room to fail, gives you room to learn, gives you room to grow in living out His mission?**

## DAY 11 OF 42

### READING GUIDE:

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"And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. =And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. =And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." =And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere." (Luke 9:1-6 ESV)

When Jesus sent out the twelve, do you think they had it all together? Do you think they knew everything they needed to know about doing ministry? Look up Luke 9 in your Bible, and then page through the following chapters. Jesus continued teaching MUCH! Jesus definitely wasn't done equipping His disciples. But He didn't wait for them to "know it all" before He sent them out. He gave them some training and got them out there.

Finke points out in chapter 4 that so many of us read multiple books on a subject matter and never doing anything about it. When it comes to living out Jesus' mission, "by giving the mindset and practices a try, as best we can, even though imperfectly, we learn so much more than if we settle for reading about it."

So you are in day 11 of this 42-day journey. Don't wait until day 42 before you go out joining Jesus on His mission. **What can you try today?** And no worries about results. Jesus has all of that covered.

## DAY 12 OF 42

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“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 ESV)

“This is how we know what real love is: Jesus gave his life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters.” (1 John 3:16 NCV)

When it comes down to it, how do we live as neighborhood missionaries?

- Loving others.
- Getting over our me-centeredness.
- In response to Jesus giving His life for us, we give our lives for our brothers and sisters.

A favorite acronym of my mom's is K.I.S.S. - Keep it simple, silly.

In chapter five, Finke unpacks the simplicity in how we give of our lives:

“Jesus knows he must keep our participation simple. And so he does. He keeps it as simple as this:

In order to join Jesus on his redemptive mission all we really have to do is: enjoy people; and seek recognize and respond to what Jesus is already doing in the lives of the people we are enjoying.

Could it really be this simple? The answer is ‘Yes.’”

At the very end of chapter five, Greg writes, “We make it hard when we try to do the work of Jesus rather than what he gave us to do.”

**How does all of this make things simpler for you as you join Jesus on His mission?**

## DAY 13 OF 42

### READING GUIDE:

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“And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.” (Matthew 9:10 ESV)

Reclining? Wasn't Jesus on a mission, His mission, to save the world? With only 3 years of recorded ministry as an adult, how could He have time to recline? Why would He make time to recline? How could that have been the most effective use of His time?

Yet as Finke points out in chapter 6, “Jesus enjoyed being with people and knew how to hang out with them. He watched, listened, shared stories and shared life. He wasn't in a hurry. And when the moment eventually came to share with them some good news about God, it was well received precisely because he had earned their trust as he hung out with them.”

A few years ago I saw Bob Goff, bestselling author and speaker, speak about quitting something every Thursday. Basically he quit certain things to make more room in his life for the things that are really important. One of those important things, as Jesus modeled, was reclined time spent with those who do not yet know Him.

**How does joining Jesus on His mission in this way mess with your busy schedule and what you've considered as effective use of your time? How may God be calling you to make room, quit something, recline with others? What is your next step with this?**

## DAY 14 OF 42

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"If you love only the people who love you, what praise should you get? Even sinners love the people who love them...But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without hoping to get anything back. Then you will have a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High God, because he is kind even to people who are ungrateful and full of sin." (Luke 6:32, 35 ESV)

Ever been on the receiving end of someone else's agenda? When you didn't comply as he or she hoped you would, did you experience the person exiting the "friendship" you two were forming and move on to another prospect. How did that feel? And the tougher question—ever been the one with the agenda?

Even as followers of Christ, with the most noble of intentions, we can cast agendas to our neighbors, co-workers, and teammates. If these folks don't comply to a profession of faith in Jesus according to our certain timetable, we may just raise up our hands and say, "I'm done! I'm moving on to the next candidate." That is the easy way--not Jesus' way, not the way of His grace (grace defined as "undeserved love"). The easy way is to love people who comply with love and the responses we hope for. Jesus' way is to love people no matter reciprocity.

Finke shares in chapter six, "If we love with an agenda, our love is untrustworthy because it is really bait...If, after a time, they don't comply with our agenda, we will withdraw our love. 'It didn't work,' we think to ourselves. But that's not the way Jesus loves. He loves because every person needs love whether they receive it or not. 1 John 4:19 says it plainly, "We love because he first loved us," not because people have earned our love by conforming to our agenda."

**How is God convicting you to imitate Jesus with agenda-less friendships as you join Him on His mission?**

## Week 2 Small Group Study

In his book, Finke recommends the following 5 questions (in bold) to be asked at small group gatherings. An additional question or two are added to help you unpack the bolded questions:

1. **How did you SEE God at work in your life this week?** What's God trying to have you pay attention to?
2. **What has God been teaching you in HIS WORD?** (Like through the daily devotions in this booklet) What's God inviting you to believe?
3. **What kind of CONVERSATIONS are you having with pre-Christians?** Finke wrote, "The practice of talking with people happens in many ways. However, all of them boil down to this: Jesus can do more with two people who are talking with each other than He can with two people who are successfully ignoring each other. So what kind of conversations are you having with the people around you?"
4. **What good can we DO around here?** What is God asking of you and how do you think you are to respond? What good can we do *as a group* in our communities to show Jesus' love?
5. **How can we help you in PRAYER?** What do you want us to ask you about next week?