



WEEK 3 COVENANT PARTNER CLASS VIDEO SCRIPT

Vow #3 (Mission) By God's Grace, I will prayerfully partner with God in His mission to rescue the world and make followers of Jesus

- I have been saved for a purpose! God has a role for me in carrying out Christ's Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
- I will build relationships with Christians and non-Christians alike, seeking to bring God's light and love to all I encounter (Matthew 22:36-40)
- I will partner with others financially and/or personally to reach the world with God's saving love (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

Outline

- The Great Commission
- Sharing the Good News in your Daily Life
- Volunteering with Impact
- Reaching Across the World

It is my pleasure to join you for this video, discussing vow #3, I will prayerfully partner with God in His mission to rescue the world and make followers of Jesus. I am Chris Ward, Lead Pastor, and ... *[add any other brief introduction you like]*.

The last two videos discussed how we are being continually transformed by the Holy Spirit, both as individuals and within a community of believers. In this process, the magnitude of God's grace and the gift of being able to know and serve Him should impact every area of our lives. In particular, as we live out that commitment, we desire to reflect the light of Christ to our world and share the joy of knowing Jesus with others. That can be very natural for some, and quite daunting for others. This week we'll discuss how we are making or can make that an integral part of our lives with a focus on intentionality in our existing daily interactions with others rather than adding more to our busy lives.

The Great Commission

In Matthew 28:16-20, Jesus commissions His disciples:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And they saw Him and worshipped Him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and 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."

This had to be a daunting challenge, however God empowered them and encouraged them as challenges arose. It is amazing that out of this small group, taking this challenge to heart and following the Spirit's prompting, the early church began in Acts and has now spread worldwide. This happened because Christians throughout the ages have taken up the Great Commission and sought to spread the good news of Jesus' redeeming love.

Many of us are not called to full-time service, however, we can still follow the example of Christ and the early church as we go about our daily lives. It requires being more intentional about our interactions with the people who cross our path on a daily basis: our neighbors, coworkers, clerks, servers, and others. It requires us to slow down enough to let them know we really see them, that there is more to them than just the glimpse we get as they go about whatever they are doing. It can be as simple as learning their name, perhaps asking about their day or family, and listening to them. For some that may be all we can do. For others, it may be the beginning of building a relationship or friendship that will open up opportunities to learn more about them and ultimately share more about Jesus with them.

Our modern lives push us to be so efficient and hyper-productive, making it difficult to slow down to genuinely greet someone, listen to them, and share a kind word. However, it can take only a few minutes and make so much difference to someone who feels they are never seen and perhaps often ignored, something that frequently happens to people in service industries.

Take a moment to pause this video and think about the people you interact with on a daily or weekly basis. Are there one or two that you could be more intentional with this week, letting them know you truly see them as individuals?

Jesus set an amazing example, much to the consternation of the Pharisees, by taking the time to really see people, to listen to them, to accept them, and to offer them love and grace at the place where they were at that moment in their lives. He didn't ignore their sins, but genuinely forgave them, giving them a real opportunity for a new start. No longer branded by their past, they had an opportunity to see possibilities for their future they'd never considered before. For many it was unbelievable, irresistible, and such good news in their lives that they couldn't help but share what they saw, heard, and experienced.

A wonderful example of this is Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman. You can read about that encounter in John 4:1-42. Jesus saw her as a person, not a stereotype. He knew her failings, but also saw her potential. He didn't preach at her, but talked with her as he slacked his thirst, allowing her to tell her story, and slowly opening her eyes to what He offered. His actions and words were far different from her encounters in town, which drove her to come to the well in the heat of the day, when she could avoid the disapproving townfolk. Jesus showed He cared about her as she was, while still offering her an opportunity for more. Her amazement at that encounter prompted her to share with others, ultimately resulting in many of them believing in Him.

The early church also was known for being a community that cared for each other and for those they encountered. In Acts 2: 42-47, we see a community learning and growing together. Verse 43, says, "everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles." I suspect they couldn't help but talk about that with their friends and neighbors. In verse 47, it says, "and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." That sense of community, awe, and joy would have been so attractive, particularly in light of the daily challenges they faced. Acts 4:32-35 also shows the sense of unity and care they showed each other.

Take a moment to pause this video and think about the last time your faith came up in conversation. Was it because of something the person saw in you and was curious about? Was it in listening to a challenge they were facing and perhaps sharing how you overcame a similar challenge?

We may think the Great Commission was intended for great evangelists, like Billy Graham, or committed missionaries, like Mother Teresa, who were called by God to full-time service. Hopefully, this video has expanded your view and made it something within reach of all of us. Something can all participate in wherever God has planted us: in our neighborhood, workplace, grocery store, gym, or anywhere else we regularly go!

It need not be "in-your-face" evangelism, such as street preachers or door-to-door cold calling. In fact, while that may work for a few, there are better approaches to make a lasting change in a person's life in this day and age. If you want to read more about how people come to Jesus in today's culture, consider reading, *I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptics Taught Us about Their Path to Jesus*, by Don Everts and Doug Schuapp.

Sharing the Good News in your Daily Life

Take a moment to pause this video and think about when you last discovered a great restaurant, product, or recipe. Who did you tell about it? Was it hard to tell them about what you discovered?

Social media is full of people sharing great finds. People can't help but text or call a friend about a great discovery.

The word "gospel" come from the old English "god," meaning good, and "spel," meaning "news, a story." The Bible challenges us share this good news. Could that be as easy as sharing our excitement about that great discovery we just made?

To do that, we need to let go of our preconceived notions around what is involved in sharing the good news. We don't need to be experts (the Samaritan woman certainly wasn't). We don't need to follow some all-inclusive formula (just share what excites you). And we definitely don't need to be confrontational (we certainly wouldn't about our latest discovery). We just need to be open to sharing what God is doing in our lives!

Take a moment to pause this video and think about how God has blessed you in the past week, month, or year. What stands out when you think about how God touched your life? Is this something that excites you enough to want to share about it?

God calls us to be a light in our world, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Take a moment to pause this video and think about how others might see God's light in your life. Are there things you naturally do or ways you naturally interact with others that would allow them to see a difference in you that makes them wonder why you are like that or what is it about you that allows you to be that way?

By sharing God's love with those we encounter every day it can open up opportunities for deeper conversations over time. You may find it leads to some surprising discussions. The Holy Spirit will prompt and guide us, we just need to be open to His leading, and not so caught up in what we are doing that we miss hearing Him and lose that opportunity to talk with someone God has brought our way. Sharing the ways the Holy Spirit is working in our lives (whether big or small) can be a blessing to those we are talking with.

This isn't about creating additional time, but being intentional as you move through your day and being sensitive to the Spirit's leading. Encounters may be just that moment, but they may also lead to building relationships that give a person a different perspective on Jesus and Christians, and provide opportunities to share your faith.

It can be comfortable to focus our friends relationships with fellow Christians — we need those. But we also need to include others in our circle of acquaintances and friends. If you would like to expand that circle of acquaintances and friends to seek out others who may not already know Jesus, below are some options to consider.

Be open to getting to know others. This is easier for some than others. But even those of us who are introverts, need people in our lives, perhaps fewer, but we still need community.

Realize that it may take some time, possibly years, to build a trusting relationship where another person may be open to hearing about your faith and how it has impacted your life. Give yourself time to get to know people. Be patient, listen for the Spirit's leading, and be open to those opportunities for spiritual conversations.

Take a moment to pause this video and think about where you encounter non-Christians most in your daily life. Do you need to find a way to expand your opportunities to meet non-Christians?

If you don't have many opportunities to build friendships with non-Christians, pray and ask God where He would have you meet non-Christians. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Think about your neighborhood —
 - ▶ Is there a neighbor that would like a walking partner?
 - ▶ Organizing a block party can be a great way to meet you neighbors.
 - ▶ Is there a neighbor that needs help with a particular task?
 - ▶ Is there someone you might invite over for coffee?
 - ▶ How else might you connect with your neighbors, maybe when walking your dog, doing yard work, or something else?
- Think about your workplace —
 - ▶ Who do you regularly chat with? Is it all superficial or can you use that time to get to know them better?

- ▶ Could you take a short walk with a co-worker during a break once or twice a week?
- ▶ Is there someone you could have lunch with every week or two?
- ▶ How else might you connect with your co-workers, perhaps over a shared task, at a social event, or something else?
- Think about your daily activities —
 - ▶ Are there individuals you regularly interact with at the grocery store, gas station, laundromat, or a favorite restaurant? Can you be more intentional about seeing the same checker, service person, or other individual at that place of business repeatedly across several weeks?
 - ▶ Do you go to a gym, dog park, or other place regularly? Who do you interact with? How can you build repeated encounters with an individual to get to know them better?
- Think about a group you belong to or might join —
 - ▶ Interest groups such as a reading group, knitting group, hiking group, sports team, or other common interest group where you would naturally build friendships around that common interest
 - ▶ Community groups such as those sponsored through quarterly city or county recreation postings
 - ▶ Consider volunteering at a hospital or school or on a local government committee

Volunteering with Impact

Looking for more structured ways to participate in God's mission in our Valley? There are numerous opportunities to volunteer with local mission organizations where you can meet and impact those you work with or serve. Here are some great options: Medford Gospel Mission, Hearts with a Mission, the Pregnancy Center, Wilderness Trails, Family Nurturing Center and Crisis Relief Nursery, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Youth 71:Five Ministries, and more. You can learn more about these at our local Missions fair or by reaching out to the Mission Commission chair (call the church office at 541-773-8274 for contact information).

You will find highlights in WestLife about local opportunities where you could volunteer in our community or even within the church, such as our own early childhood, children and youth ministries, Washington School, Wood ministry, and more. See the rack of cards in the Narthex, just outside the Gathering Space, or outside the entrance to the Worship Hall. Also feel free to talk with any of our pastors or elders about options and get connected with others who are volunteering in the community.

Reaching Across the World

An easy way to have a broader impact is to support mission organizations through your tithe and gifts to WPC. Our Mission Commission works diligently to vet and support worthy organizations both regionally and across the world. You may also have missionaries or mission organizations that you have connected with that you want to support directly.

God also calls some to be a short- or long-term missionary. WPC sponsors some short-term mission opportunities you may want to consider, such as serving as an adult leader with one of our youth missions or participating in a short-term mission such as working for a couple of weeks in the Mathari Valley sponsored through Sanctuary of Hope in Nairobi, Kenya. You'll see information about these opportunities in WestLife.

If you are feeling called to be a missionary (whether short- or long-term), please speak with one of the pastors. They can connect you with short term mission participants and retired full-time missionaries in our congregation that can provide guidance as you prayerfully consider God's leading in this area.

Closing

Thanks for watching this video! Your next step is to participate in the Week 3 discussion. You should get an email and/or text reminder. In preparation for that discussion, please spend some time reflecting on the four questions that came out of this video in the Week 3 Handout.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion Slide & Handout

1. *Are there one or two individuals that you could be more intentional with this week, letting them know you truly see them as individuals? Would you be willing to share a name so we can pray for the Spirit's guidance as you interact with them this week?*
2. *When did your faith last come up in conversation with another? Was it because of something the person saw in you and was curious about? Was it in listening to a challenge they were facing and perhaps sharing how you overcame a similar challenge? Is there an instance you would be willing to share with the group?*
3. *How has God blessed you in the past week, month, or year? What stands out when you think about how God touched your life? Would you be willing to share one such instance?*
4. *How might others see God's light in your life? What might allow them to see a difference in you that makes them wonder why you are like that or what is it about you that allows you to be that way?*
5. *Where do you regularly encounter non-Christians in your daily life? How can you use those encounters to build friendships that may lead to sharing your faith?*
6. *What is your biggest challenge to sharing your faith with a friend? How can we help you overcome that challenge?*