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## GRACE COMMITMENTS 3

## 3

## The Local Church, Part 3: A Mission to Non-Kingdom People

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Check JG member's progress on 21 days of personal worship. Ask if anyone has gone past 21 days yet.
- **EQUIPPING** – Continue memorizing the books of the New Testament. Review the illustration and the "roof" (Pastoral Letters).
- **MISSION** – Encourage your JG to begin the Mission section early in the week. Their assignment this week is to have a conversation with a second person on their prayer list in order to gain insight into their needs and look for opportunities to make the gospel known through deed.

## EXERCISES

- Review memory verse of the week and discuss how it relates to the **TRUTH** section.
- You should have a few people recruited to recite the books of the New Testament for this meeting. Continue recruiting so that everyone in your JG has recited the books of the New Testament by the end of this section of *The Journey*.

## DISCUSSIONS

- **TRUTH** – The material this week emphasizes that God intends the local church to function as a mission to non-kingdom people. When discussing the local church's missional function, Randy wants you to emphasize these points:
  - Every believer is also an ambassador called to participate in the church's mission to non-kingdom people. Challenge your JG to discuss any intellectual or emotional objections to this. But, you don't want your JG to lapse into a performance mentality regarding this. Encourage any objectors in your JG to surrender their hearts to God and ask Him to make them willing ambassadors.

- An effective mission to non-kingdom people must be committed to providing answers to the painful questions and real-life needs of the least and lost. A truly missional church will never separate the spiritual and social aspects of the gospel. See Matthew 25:31-46.
- An effective mission to non-kingdom people must be committed to proactively seeking the least and lost. It will strategize on how to reach the non-kingdom people within its sphere of influence and will equip its members to act on that strategy. See Acts 1:8.
- **TRUTH** – You can discuss any of the **IN BIBLE** questions with your group in order to make these points. Here are some tips that may help you:
  - **MATTHEW 25:31-46** – The story of the sheep and goats is challenging because taken alone it sounds very performance oriented. However, don't let your JG forget the larger context of grace throughout Scripture. The sheep's good performance did not earn them acceptance by Jesus. Rather, their works demonstrated that they truly belonged to Him. The goat's unconcern for the practical needs of people around them demonstrated that they had failed to receive and pass on the compassion of the Savior. They failed to meet the obvious needs of those around them. This shows that the mission of the church to the least and lost must always include practical deed ministry.
  - **JOHN 8:1-11** – Somehow, Jesus pricked the consciences of the woman's accusers so that they inwardly knew they were unfit to stand in judgment due to their own sins. Jesus alone is sinless, which qualifies Him to be the perfect Judge, and yet, though He commanded her to leave her sins, He did so while offering forgiveness and mercy. His example shows that as the church pursues its mission, it must not do so from the standpoint of judgment, but of mercy. As Randy says, like one beggar showing another where to find food.
  - **JAMES 1:22-27** – In verses 22-25 James uses the mirror analogy to retell the meaning of the parable of the wise and foolish builders. (See Matthew 7:24-26). In verse 26 he gives an example of "forgetting what one looks like/building a house on sand", followed by positive examples of "remembering what one looks like/building a house on rock in verse 27. This shows that pursuing the practical deed ministry of the church's mission is essential to following Christ's core teachings. It's hard to say one is a follower of Christ if one willingly leaves the vulnerable in need and want.

- **EQUIPPING** – You can use the **IN BIBLE** questions on Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, and 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 to challenge your JG about their participation in mission. You can also use the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Equipping questions to spark some interesting discussion. The key is to help your JG seriously evaluate their personal connection(s) to Christ’s mission. Ask each group member to commit themselves to developing real, on-going connections to mission. This could be in the form of intercessory prayer for the least and lost, being equipped to share their faith, financially supporting those in need or regularly serving those in need. This may also be a good time to lead by example and discuss ways to serve the least and lost in a tangible way.
- **MISSION** – Allow time for people to share their experience talking with people on their prayer lists.