

PP 1 God's Mission – The Missio Dei

What is God's purpose or mission with the world these days? Surely He is frustrated with the rise of other religions, declining church attendance, apathy towards the giving of respect due to Him, yeh, He would be totally justified in finishing it all right now. How about what's happening with this whole virus thing hey, what's going on? Yep He could totally finish it.

But He doesn't. Why? Well that's His choice but it also shows us the great continuity in His character. His purposes will be seen through. His plans will have due time to see fulfilment. But just what is this mission of God or as the theological term in Latin puts it, the missio dei.

Well the term refers more specifically to the purposes and activities of God in and for the universe. It is bigger than the church!!!! Certainly it is bigger than our congregation here, yet it includes us. It is about God's total reign over all of creation. Kingdom of God stuff.

The danger is that we take advantage of that concept and place all mission fully in the hands of God and wipe our hands of involvement. We need to look at the concept and at the implications to us.

Implications of the mission of God.

1.Pp2 The Mission of God Assumes that God is personal.

Mission is a subject that presupposes personal contact. If we believe that God is personal, knowable and interested in having a relationship with us as individuals

Then

it is not a big jump to think God is actively involved with the whole of creation.

But if we don't see God as individually involved we probably won't see Him as interested in small things like individuals. All through the bible we see God as expressed by the authors as involved personally with people and creation.

Look at this;

Pp3 HOS 11:3 It was I who taught Ephraim
to walk,

taking them by the arms;

but they did not realize

it was I who healed them.

HOS 11:4 I led them with cords of human
kindness,

with ties of love;

I lifted the yoke from their neck

and bent down to feed them.

The imagery is of personal attention. If this assumption is shaky or questionable then it is illogical to affirm that God is concerned about every aspect of life or that He is compassionate, a lover of justice, full of mercy and forgiving.

2.PP4 The mission of God is about God's purposes.

PP5 Theologian Emilio Castro says “The purpose of God is to gather the whole of creation under the Lordship of Christ in whom, by the power of the Holy Spirit all are brought into communion with God.”

PP6 look at this quote from Wilbert Shenk: “The redemptive power of God is now being guided by a particular strategy in order to bring the divine purpose to completion by delivering the creation from the powers of decay and death.”

It appears that God's purposes for the world are to get everything back to the way He designed it in the first place.

What is it that drives God's purpose? Have you ever thought why God is even into looking after the earth? I think the driving force behind His purpose is His love. God has this absolute boundless and matchless love for

His creation. Now we know that that includes us, but it extends to all that He has made. From an understanding that we can get a handle on, God's love is a highly personal reality. We understand the love concept in a fashion, so to say God's purposes are due to His love, we get an understanding that He really is interested in us. Our concept of love tells us that to be in Love means we are interested in the person or object that the love is addressed to. We understand too that God is love look at

PP 7 1 John 4: ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Love is one of those characteristics that we define our understanding of God by. The point I am getting at here is that the mission of God flows directly from the nature of who God is. It is an expression of love. Alongside that is the implications for us. It is impossible to be more basic in our understanding.

God's intention for the world is to show who He is – and those characteristics are Love, community, equality, diversity, mercy, compassion and justice. God wants His world to demonstrate His character. Yet it is His love that links with us.

Look again at

PP8 1 john 4.

¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

But love can not be understood theoretically. You just try to explain it in words. Usually, love is explained in metaphor, imagery, feeling and emotion, but not very well described clinically. But we know a loving act when we see it.

That is why we understand God's love through His act of Love by providing us the Jesus event. (Life, death resurrection of jesus)

PP9 Rom 5:10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

That verse doesn't mention the word love, but it describes the loving act.

Love is a central part of mission. If you don't love you can't mission. God's purpose is linked with His love, our purpose must be linked in love.

3.PP10 The mission of God is about the kingdom of God

It is impossible to grasp the mission of God without an understanding of what the Kingdom of God is about. God's kingdom is what He is reigning over.

Our belief is that He reigns over the whole world, the whole of creation. The kingdom of God is more than His church, although we are part of it, it is more than where He is involved in evangelism it is His total reign. His mission is to His whole kingdom.

In another sense the Kingdom of God is where His spirit is in control, where justice and peace and joy are experienced completely and permanently.

PP 11 Romans 14:7 For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

It is the experience of God being all in all, the ultimate and being respected and treated as such. There is a sense of now and not yet here. God is reigning over all but His reign is also being thwarted. So He is winning it back, that is His mission.

Look at these great verse and remember they are about God's mission.

PP12 Romans 8:19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We go back to our definition from Castro of God's purpose in mission. PP13 "The purpose of God is to gather the whole of creation under the Lordship of Christ in whom, by the power of the Holy Spirit. All are brought into communion with God."

What does that mean to us?

PP14 We are to participate in bringing the whole of creation under the Lordship of Christ.

If we are an active part of God's Kingdom, we are expected to participate in that kingdom's purpose and existence. If you live under the control of a kingdom your purpose is to further the purposes of that kingdom.

Our church is totally connected to the mission of God. We don't have much choice otherwise. If we claim to be a church of God, then we must be actively furthering God's mission. And loving it!