

**5 BIBLE STUDIES**

**WHERE LOVE COMES TO LIFE – WEEK 5 and Conclusion**

Special thanks to Dean Eaton, Church Planting Mentor and Mission Facilitator, for developing the training material.



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## Bible Study 5: FORMING MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES - WHERE LOVE COMES TO LIFE

**Open in Prayer Readings**: Matthew 5.14-16 Message; Romans 10.12-14

*You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.* (Matthew 5.14-16 Message)

*Jew and Gentileare the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?* (Romans 10:12-14)

**Introduction**

Is Jesus calling you into the family business; t*he renewal of all things?* To ‘keep open house’, so that people may open up to God; to be ‘generous with your life’ so that all people everywhere may discover this generous Father in heaven’?

This message of reconciliation which we proclaim is for the healing of the whole of humanity and ultimately of the whole creation.

*Therefore the love of Christ compels us…. Our firm decision is to work from this focused center: One man died for everyone. That puts everyone in the same boat. He included everyone in his death so that everyone could also be included in his life, a resurrection life, a far better life than people ever lived on their own (2 Corinthians 5.13-15).’*

This “…focused centre…” on a “…far better life than one could ever live on our own” is the big idea in Paul’s letters to the various churches he wrote to as he explained to them who we are ‘in Christ’.

It begins with our Baptism and works out in our everyday walk with God in various ways. For example,

**In our worship:**

As believers we have been raised up with Christ into a place of communion with Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Romans 8.30; Eph. 2.6). This is the embedded (rooted, surrounded, implanted) place from which we worship, as we enter into Christ’s perfect worship God comes to us in His Word and in the bread and wine (Hebrews. 8.1-6).

**In our prayers:**

It is from this place in Christ that we pray in His name as we see that we are caught up in Christ’s perfect prayer life (John 17, Heb. 10.19).

**In our relationships:**

It is from this place that we see others as not only made in God’s image but also justified by his bodily sacrifice (2 Corinthians. 5.16-17).

**In our mission:**

It is from this place that we live in the fullness of Christ’s life in the Spirit (Romans 15.29) which compels us to love all people, to serve them and to share with them our greatest treasure – Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4.7). It is from this place that we listen to and echo the Master’s call upon every person ‘Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life’ (Matthew 11:28-30 Message).

Embedded in Christ we engage with others and the creation. We respond to Jesus’ invitation to ‘walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace’ (Matthew 11:28-30 Message).

This requires that we are not doing mission to pay for our sins, to earn God’s approval or for self-importance, but rather because we are working with Jesus in the family business, ‘…making all things new’(Revelation 21:5).

What does your participation in the love that renews all things look like?

We all have different roles within the task of local mission.

Some of us are called to serve the GROW aspect of our mission; offering people who are Christians to grow in Christ through offering opportunities for Worship (Word & Sacrament) and service.

Others amongst us are called to serve in the GO aspect of our mission; offering people who are not yet Christians to come to Christ through offering opportunities to be invited into Gods family.

***Grow*** and ***Go*** are ongoing tasks that intertwine. There is no linear sequence that says first we *grow* until we reach maturity, after which we begin to *go* into the world. If we wait until we feel ready, most of us will never *go*. Rather it is ***as we go that we grow***.

We don’t seek to learn a whole lot of things just in case we need them, but as we *go* we discover what we need to study and how we need to be equipped and so we *grow*.

As Paul says to Philemon, “I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.” [NIV v6]



So how does this work out in practice in the local congregation?

By continuing to develop the opportunities for Christians to worship and serve AND by forming a community of practice ‘where love comes to life’ in the GO area. We call this new team, this new kind of small group dedicated to local evangelism missional communities - Missional Communities.

This is important because the GO aspect is as important as in the GROW aspect.

**Pathway of Evangelism Engagement**

Conversion

**GO** - EVANGELISM (Sow & Reap) **GROW** - CHURCH LIFE (Worship & Serve)

A person’s faith journey -l--------l-----l------l------l---**†**-----l-----l-----l-----l-----l-----l—

What is a Missional Community? It is a new kind of small group within the Congregation or Parish dedicated to local evangelism. Soon we will launch our own Missional Community.

Would you like to join such a group who will do a series of 8 Bible studies after which you can decide to start serving in that team to GO do local mission? If after the study you decide that is not for you then you can work out how you can serve or continue serving in the GROW area of congregational life.

*Play video – MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES 3*

**Series Conclusion**

In this our first RENEW Mission Life season on the theme *Where Love Comes To Life,* we have learnt that it is in God that we find love. It is in God that we find our true identity and purpose for living. This is because love has always been alive in the Divine Community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

A missional life is a participation in the shared life of Father, Son and Spirit and a participation in Gods proclamation of this life to the whole of creation (Mark 16:15). This is *why* we *go* and *make disciples* of all the nations,baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28.19 NLT)

Will you say today, *here am I Lord, send me*?

**Group Discussion**

1. What impacted you or stood out for you from the biblical passages expounded in this study? Why?
2. What questions were raised for you?
3. Do you want to explore Missional Communities (Missional Communities) further by signing up for this eight week journey of discovery?

**Prayer**

You are the God who makes extravagant promises. We relish your great promises of fidelity and presence and solidarity, and we exude in them. Only to find out, always too late, that your promise always comes in the midst of a hard, deep call to obedience. You are the God who calls people like us, and the long list of mothers and fathers before us, who trusted the promise enough to keep the call. So we give you thanks that you are a calling God, who calls always to dangerous new places. We pray enough of your grace and mercy among us that we may be among those who believe your promises enough to respond to your call. We pray in the one who embodied your promise and enacted your call, even Jesus. Amen.[[1]](#footnote-1)



**What Next?**

It starts by doing the 8 week RENEW **Missional Communities** bible studies.

Now that the RENEW Mission Life sermon and bible study series is completed consider registering your interest, with your Pastor or designated person, to commence the next stage of your local mission development. The next stage is for you and at least 3-8 other people to pioneer a **Missional Community**. This is a new team (community of practice) working in the evangelism space of your congregation. This team will become pivotal to sowing and reaping the harvest God wants to send your Congregation.

**Missional Communities** are a new kind of small group in your congregation doing evangelism in social networks, the local community, Schools and other places.



1. Brueggemann, W. *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth: The Prayers of Walter* (Augsburg Fortress, MN. 2003). P.533 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)