

Momentum/Friction

Module: Mission Impossible?

Lesson 2: Mission Central

Objectives:

- Students will reflect on their ideas about the church
- Students will identify Jesus' teaching in Matthew 28:16-20 as a mission statement for the Christian church
- Students will evaluate their church or student ministry based on the mission statements found in Matthew 22 and Matthew 28
- Students will develop a detailed plan to enhance their church's/student ministry's effectiveness in at least one key area of its' biblical mission

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Small or medium sheets of blank paper for each group.
- ☐ Magazines
- ☐ Coloured Markers/Scissors/Glue
- ☐ A copy of the mission statement of your church or student ministry (if you have one)
- ☐ White board/chart paper and markers
- ☐ Handout "Making a Ministry Plan" (optional: make 3-5 copies on different coloured paper to help form groups when handout is used)
- ☐ Bible per group (3-4 students)
- ☐ Enough blank paper (preferably lined) for every group.

Minds On

Have students form groups of 3 or 4. Ask them to make a small collage together that represents their ideas of the church. Students can write words, draw pictures or use cut-outs from magazines. Once students have had adequate time to complete their collages, ask them to present them to the large group and explain their choices.

Say something like: *Last week we talked together about mission statements and how a company's mission statement defines its purpose and drives its decisions. We also looked at a personal mission statement that Jesus gave to his followers found in Matthew 22:34-40 and discussed what our lives would look like if we lived by that mission statement. (This could be a good opportunity to ask students if they completed their surveys from last week if they were made available to them.)*

Say something like: *This week we are going to look at another mission statement. Not so much a personal one (although it does have personal implications) but a mission statement for the church. Before we dive in to that, can any of you tell me what the mission statement of this church/student ministry is?* If yes, take a few minutes to clarify the mission statement. Are there any difficult words or terms? Does everyone understand what it means? If no, share your mission statement with the students and take a few minutes to clarify as necessary. If you don't have a formalized mission statement, say: *Our church/student ministry doesn't have a mission statement written down. If you had to come up with something on the spot, how would you describe our main mission as a church/student ministry?* Use a white board or chart paper to keep track of ideas.

Action

Have students form groups of three or four and ask them to look up Matthew 28:16-20. Ask students to discuss the following questions in their groups:

1. Who was Jesus talking to in this passage?

2. What things did he tell them to do?
3. What promises did he make?

After groups have had adequate time to discuss, invite them to share their answers with the large group. If not already mentioned, be sure to point out the following things:

- Jesus was talking to his disciples/followers and that they were the beginning of the Christian church (we read about it in the book of Acts).
- Jesus instructed them to go places, to invite and encourage people to follow Jesus with their lives, to baptize them, and to teach them how to live out Jesus' teachings.
- Jesus promises them that he already has authority over all people and places which should give them confidence and a sense of responsibility.
- Jesus also promised that he would ALWAYS be with them no matter what happened.

Once you have had time to discuss, say something like: *Last week we looked at a personal mission statement about loving God and loving others. Today, we're looking at the mission statement of the church. Look again at the things that Jesus told his followers to do in verse 19. Obviously, these things are important to Jesus. Talk for a few minutes in your groups about whether you think that the important things that Jesus asked his followers to do are important to your church/student ministry? If so, how do you know? Give examples. If not, why not? What do you think IS important?*

If your church/student ministry has a mission statement you might say something like: *Do these things that are important to Jesus show up anywhere in the mission statement of this church/student ministry? Explain your answer.*

Once students have had time to discuss, invite them to share their responses with the large group. Make sure to think through some positive responses/follow-up questions ahead of time. Be prepared to handle both positive and negative feedback from students. If there are any negative comments, do your best to use follow-up questions that seek solutions instead of complaints.

Say something like: *If we combine what we talked about last week with what we're talking about tonight we get, in just two simple passages of the Bible, a valuable summary of the mission of the Christian life and the Christian church. Fifteen years ago a well-known pastor of a growing in church in Southern California published a book about the mission of Christians and the Christian church. He said that every Christian church has five main reasons for existing: to worship, to minister (meet needs in love), to evangelize, to fellowship (encourage one another), and to disciple (teach people to become more like Jesus). Any ideas what passages of Scripture he used to make his point? That's right! Matthew 22 and Matthew 28. These passages are sometimes known as the Great Commandment and the Great Commission and they provide an awesome summary of the main mission or purpose of Christians and the Christian church.*

If possible, display the following slide in PowerPoint (or similar):

<p>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbour as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. <i>Matthew 22:37–40 (NIV)</i></p>	<p>Worship <i>Love the Lord your God with all your heart</i></p> <p>Ministry (meeting needs with love) <i>Love your neighbour as yourself</i></p>
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<p>Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. <i>Matthew 28:19–20 (NIV)</i></p>	<p>Mission/Evangelism <i>Go and make disciples</i></p>
	<p>Fellowship (belonging) <i>baptizing them</i></p>
	<p>Discipleship <i>teaching them to obey</i></p>

(Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*, Zondervan, 1995.)

Distribute the handout “Making a Ministry Plan”. Consider copying the handout in a variety of different colours so that there are about 3-5 copies of each colour. Once the copies have been handed out, ask students to form groups based on the colour of their paper. (i.e. all the reds together, all the blues together, etc.)

Say something like: *As highly valued members of this church/student ministry, you have been asked to submit a special report to the Board of Directors (or... Deacons/Congregation/Elders/Youth Pastor/Youth Leadership Team) on one of these key areas of ministry. In your groups discuss the questions on the handout provided and write down your responses.*

Once groups have had adequate time to complete their plans, invite groups to share their answers. Keep a running tally on a white board or chart paper of the answers to part one to determine some type of consensus about the importance of these five key ministry areas. Keep a list of the project ideas suggested in part two.

Consolidate/Debrief

Once all the groups have shared, ask students for thoughts or observations about what has been discussed.

Say something like: *These are some really great ideas! Let's take a few minutes before we're done to think about these projects. All of them are good, but if we wanted start with one, which one would you choose? Why do you think that project would be a good one to start with?* If you are having trouble getting responses you could take a vote to identify the top one or two ideas. Then, ask students why those projects seemed to be the favourites. (Note: this will require follow-up).

Say something like: *In these first two weeks of our series we have identified in Jesus' teaching two mission statements which serve as a vital foundation for Christians and for the Christian church. Next week we are going to learn a little more about how we can make these mission statements a reality in our lives and in the life of our church/student ministry.*

Close in prayer. Be sure to pray about the projects you discussed. Ask God to help you identify next steps in making one or two of these projects a reality.