

People live for a lot of different things ranging from fame, fortune, and family to health, hope and happiness. What do you live for? The Apostle Paul gives a clear reason for living as Christians. He wrote, **“Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”** (1 Corinthians 10:31) Jesus said, **“Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”** (Matthew 5:16)

Our purpose in life is to live to the glory of God. That is the theme for our services for the next six weeks as we look at the mission of Open Arms, focusing on the why and the how of each part of the mission. If you look at the screen you can see a new logo for Open Arms. The goal behind creating this was to make the church’s mission more visible. Many of you never see the mission posted high above the doors on the back wall. The mission of Open Arms is **“Serving People. Sharing Jesus. Sending Servants Who Make Disciples.”** We plan to post this Mission Logo in different places around the church so everyone can see it.

This morning we are beginning a series talking about the why and how of the mission we all share beginning with “Why Talk About Jesus?” Many of us are hesitant to talk about Jesus. It is risky talking about our faith today because so many people have politicized Christianity. Others just are not interested and don’t want to talk about Jesus. But Christianity is not a political movement. It is not a religion in the sense of rules and rituals. Christianity is a relationship with Jesus and His people.

Many people believe that this life is all there is, that our lives have no eternal or lasting significance. That rational enables people to think an unborn child is just an embryo, not a human. It also gives people permission to end human life early thinking it is better for someone to die with dignity than to lose their abilities or to suffer. But the Christian faith gives us a very different picture. People are created in God’s image. God knows us before we are born. This life is not all there is. The book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament tells us, **“Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart.”** (Eccl. 3:11)

Sin broke our relationship with God and with one another. The Prophet Isaiah tells us that our unity with God is lost when we disobey Him. It didn’t take long for Adam to blame Eve and God for his disobedience. But God did not zap Adam and Eve on the spot. Instead, God promised to deal with their problem Himself. Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise. The Apostle Paul wrote, **“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.”** (2 Cor. 5:19)

What is Jesus’ mission? He came to restore our relationship with God. Jesus said:

- **“For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.”** (Luke 19:10)
- **“My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”** (John 10:10)
- **“I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark.”** (John 12:46)
- **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.”** (John 14:6)

The word “Christian” means to be a little Christ. We are to be like Jesus in our world today. Jesus’ Mission is now our mission. Our mission is important because everyone needs Jesus. People are lost without Him, even if they don’t know it. If you have ever been lost and didn’t know which way to turn, you know how frightening that can be.

Jesus told the parables about the lost and found sheep, the lost and found coin, and the lost and found son recorded in Luke 15 in response to the “good” people who complained that Jesus was spending time with “bad” people. Jesus said that there is rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents and sends us out on a mission to find the lost.

Jesus makes it very clear that His mission is our mission. He tells us to make disciples of all people. Paul said that He was compelled to preach the Gospel. Jesus commands us to tell people about Him. It is not an option. It is our responsibility. We are Jesus’ representatives, His Ambassadors to the people we know and encounter. When was the last time you had a faith conversation with someone? Has it been a while?

There are a few things in the history of the world that changed everything.

- The printing press put books in the hands of the common people
- TVs changed family meals and evening activities.
- The internet changed how we get and share information.
- Cell phones have become so important that you may think you can’t live without it.

The Bible is full of events when God disrupted lives.

- Moses’ life was disrupted at the burning bush
- Mary’s life was disrupted by a visit from the angel Gabriel
- The Disciples lives were disrupted when Jesus invited them to follow Him
- Jesus’ resurrection disrupted the lives of all people

People need Jesus to disrupt their lives now. Life expectancy in the United States is on the decline because of the rising use of deadly drugs and the rising suicide rate. One American dies from suicide every 11 minutes. Obviously, something is not working.

Jesus disrupts lives by telling people they are valued for who they are, not for what they do. Everyone is valuable to God. It doesn’t matter whether you are young or old, rich, or poor, abled body or incapacitated. God does not look at your skin color or bank balance. He looks at your heart and sees someone He loves and gave life too. We are all valuable because God love us.

Jesus disrupts lives by saving us from sin and death through the gift of faith. We can’t save ourselves. We will never be good enough, talented enough, successful enough, beautiful enough, wealthy enough, or popular enough to save ourselves. Jesus disrupts our lives by entering into a personal relationship with us. Jesus fixes what is broken in our lives. We can’t fix ourselves.

It is one thing to know that we should talk with people about Jesus. It is another thing to do it. Next week we will look at “How to talk about Jesus.” A Jesus talk may be the most important conversation we will have someone.