
Surprise the World! Chapter 7: Sent

I will journal throughout the week all the ways I alerted others to the universal reign of God through Christ.

Scripture

²¹ At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²² So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ²³ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." —Luke 7:21-23, NIV

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. —2 Corinthians 5:16-19a, NIV

Chapter Summary

This habit is about identifying yourself as a missionary. In journaling, we see ourselves as missionaries whose lives are like trailers or previews of an upcoming film.

"Trailers are tasters, short film versions of the soon-to-be-released feature, and they usually include the best special effects or the funniest scenes or the most romantic moments, depending on the film, of the upcoming feature. Now, watch those around you in the theatre at the end of each trailer. If it has done its job, usually one person will turn to the other and say, 'I want to see that movie.' This is a great metaphor for the missional church. If it does its job well, people will see what it does and say, 'I want to see the world they come from.'" —Page 86

So what does the reign of God look like? Frost calls these "missional priorities."

1. **Reconciliation.** On the cross, Jesus reconciled Jew and Gentile, slave and free, God and humanity. We announce reconciliation (champion it, describe it, explain it, advocate for it) and demonstrate it (are reconciled to others and help others be reconciled to one another).
2. **Justice.** In justice, we stand up for the rights of the poor and powerless, for in God's kingdom, no one lives on the margins. We can look at the Christians who have gone before us for examples—John Wesley, Charles Finney, Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, John Stott, and Dorothy Day are just a few. We can be involved in anti-trafficking, promoting fair trade products, give clean water, equal access to education,
3. **Beauty.** Beauty is part of what alerts us to God's existence and therefore can point us to his reign. He cites Rudolph Otto, a German theologian, who says that when we have an encounter with God, we respond by acknowledging His majesty and simultaneously are afraid and attracted to God. We are overwhelmed and come face to face with our smallness. We can both invite others to encounter beauty in our world and create beauty in things like music, art, crafts, food, and more.
4. **Wholeness.** When John the Baptist wondered if Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus answered by speaking of the healing and wholeness brought to people as evidence of the kingdom of God. The work of doctors, nurses, therapists, and counselors is part of bringing wholeness. As is repairing damage done by natural disasters. More than this, though we also pray for supernatural healing.

“[A]s Anne Broyles says, in keeping a journal, ‘what our mind is thinking and our heart is feeling becomes tangible: ink on paper.’” —Page 93

Frost wants this journaling to be more than simple statements about what you did. It will also be:

1. Processing events.
2. Making sense of God’s work.
3. Keeping a record of insights.
4. Asking important questions.
5. Identifying ourselves differently.

Questions

Use whichever questions you like. Some are taken from the book; other questions can be found starting on page 109.

1. In Luke 7, bringing wholeness is evidence of the kingdom and its Messiah come. Have you ever wished God would give you more tangible evidence of His kingdom being present in the world today? If so, what kind of evidence would you want?
2. Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 5:16 about not regarding anyone from a worldly point of view are often taken to mean how we view others. But what if we apply them to ourselves? Are you ever tempted to view yourself as anything other than what God says you are?
3. Which of the four missional priorities do you gravitate toward? Shy away from?
4. Think about a relationship you know of which needs mending. How could viewing ourselves as missionaries propel us to be ministers of reconciliation?
5. Have you ever needed someone to stand up for you? To bring about justice on your behalf? How did this feel? What did you hope God would do in that situation?
6. Have you ever thought of beauty as a part of the kingdom?
7. In a world where beauty is often sexualized, how can Christians be part of creating beauty grounded in the good creation of God?
8. Have you ever journaled before? What are the benefits of journaling you’ve experienced?
9. Skim read what Frost says on pages 94-96 about the things to include when journaling.

Prayer

Hand out pieces of paper. Give your group or class 5-7 minutes to write out their prayers. Have them each complete this sentence as a starting place. “Father, I _____ a missionary, and /but _____.” The first blank can be filled with things like “long to be,” “am not sure I am,” “am,” wonder about being.” Once people have written their prayers, give them time to speak them aloud (without pressure to do so).

Challenge

Journal throughout the week all the ways you alerted others to the universal reign of God through Christ.

