



john 15:4  
**Abide in Me**



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

Volume 1 - Number 4  
The week of October 25, 2015

*60<sup>th</sup> Annual Missions Conference*  
**The Sending Church**  
**“Live Sent or Die Trying”**  
Acts 13:1-3

**THIS WEEK'S CORE STATEMENT**

**MISSION - The Sending Movement**

“The vision of LifePoint is to send the church to be the church. Imagine if thousands of churches across the US embraced the Sending Church vision and ran hard after the heart of God. Every tongue, tribe, and nation would hear, see, and experience the gospel in our lifetime. I want to invite you to be a part of something big— no, let me rephrase that . . . something God-sized. I am not suggesting the activity of God can be reduced to a formula. Formulas are for recipes and chemistry sets. But, I would love for you to embrace six heart-shifts that are critical to becoming the Sending Church God created you to be.

1. **Imagine a Jesus Movement.** An incredible tsunami of lostness hovers over our planet. People are drowning in their sin, hopeless without the gospel. That’s why Christians must go; that’s why churches must send. That’s why we must start a Jesus movement that flows through local churches worldwide to take the gospel across the street and across the world. No longer do we have the luxury of half-hearted efforts to add a few new believers here and there. We can no longer think addition; we must think multiplication. Time is short. People are dying all around us. And, if one soul is of incredible value to God, then how valuable are hundreds of thousands of souls? We long to see the rapid multiplication of new believers that results in great movements of God sweeping the globe like an incredible rescue operation through unreached, unengaged, and neglected people groups around the world. When our hearts become ablaze with the glory of God, our mission efforts will explode into culturally diverse movements (see Acts 2 for an example). And these movements will consist of many disciples being made, many leaders being trained, and many churches being planted. After seeing what God can do with a few Sending Churches, the thought of a great movement of Sending Churches blows my mind. But, the last thing I want to do, is create organizations or networks to zap our energy (while producing little results). But, if we can combine our knowledge, expertise, and experiences, I’m just crazy enough to believe that we can see a Jesus movement sweep the planet that can literally take the gospel to every tribe and nation in our lifetime.

A Jesus movement was first seen in the New Testament: Individuals found Jesus, he revolutionized their lives, and as a result, Jesus was spread from their lives to the lives of their family and friends. Then, so many wound up following Jesus that churches were necessary to assimilate all the people. It was a Jesus movement.

2. **Start Thinking Upstream.** A heart-shift always precedes a change in behavior. Larry McCrary and Caleb Crider were both serving as missionaries in Western Europe when God began to transform their thoughts and gave them a new way of thinking about missions. They embraced the current reality that all was not well in the world of sending missionaries. It became obvious that a couple of things were broken.

*First, they believed that many churches had outsourced the Great Commission.* Missions had become a program versus the core function of local churches. For all the positive effects of central mission-sending agencies, there was one huge negative: the church was forgetting the mission. The spiritual implications of outsourcing the Great Commission are huge. Outsourcing the mission of God is a fancy way of describing biblical “disobedience.” I am by

no means suggesting they (mission agencies) should be eliminated. But God has moved us beyond a mind-set of outsourcing missions.

*Second, Larry and Caleb believed that churches were not involved with those whom they had sent. Once the church sent missionaries to the mission field via a mission-sending agency, they seemed to be forgotten by their church. The church was forgetting the missionaries. “Out of sight, out of mind,” seems like a trite description of the current reality in the sending world. But with the exception of Christmas or Easter, churches can unplug from the missionaries who need their support. The challenge of staying connected to the mission and the deployed missionaries is real. Watching video clips and reading brochures makes the mission of God to the nations seem distant. And giving percentages of weekly offerings feels like outsourcing, particularly if that is the extent of our involvement. The lack of authentic ownership of God’s deployed missionaries is staggering. The negative results extend far beyond declining support, prayer, and caring for those sent directly to the nations. It appears that people are no longer being challenged to hear God’s direction and embrace His assignment to the nations. The other implication is that missions is reserved for seminary-trained professionals. No wonder people are backing away. Beyond an occasional missionary speaker to their local church, there is no real face on deployed missionaries or their mission. This leads to apathy and disengagement. Churches have a responsibility to be a part of sending people and staying involved in their lives. Spiritual accountability, nourishment, and strategic involvement are vital from local churches to deployed missionaries. The health of God’s mission depends on it.*

3. **Think and Act Like a Missionary.** The church is the sending agency and the mission organization backs up the local church that embraces the mission of God and fully embraces the missionary. I desire to see churches think and act like missionaries. The new missionary does not necessarily need to raise support. Real jobs give them a reason to be in their country and a means to stay in their country. And those real jobs give them access to people with the gospel that professional missionaries do not often have.
4. **Join What God Is Already Doing.** I really believe that we are in the early phases of an authentic movement in the US where the people of God own God’s mission in new ways. Churches are sending people in a variety of ways. Through the marketplace, church-based teams, students, short-term missionaries, traditional mission-sending organizations, etc., the mission of God has multiple delivery points. This is normal for followers of Jesus. We are to follow Him wherever He sends us.” Revelation 7:9-10 tells us that there will be people from every tribe, tongue, and nation worshipping at the throne of God. “When God leads everyday people out of a church to other parts of the world, everyone’s perspective of the world and God’s mission changes” (Doss Estep). “This is a biblical mandate and the Spirit of God will direct and transform churches through it. This is the fuel of the church!”
5. **Discover Your Church DNA.** The DNA of every church— rich or poor, suburban or urban, large or small— is sending. Imagine what would happen if every church embraced their DNA and became the Sending Church that God created them to be! I hope you get in on the action. You can’t walk away from this responsibility if you want to walk in obedience to the commands of God. As you become all God wants you to be, you will face incredibly difficult decisions. And you will likely need to make radical changes in your approach to church.

Acts 13 is a significant transitional passage in the history of the Jesus movement. Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them (Acts 13:1-5).

Although the gospel was already branching out beyond Judaism as Christians scattered all over the world to avoid persecution, international “sending” started in the Antioch church. This passage gives us a picture of the first true Sending Church who prayerfully, intentionally and strategically sent people to another culture to multiply gospel influence to the nations.

### This Week’s Complementary Passage

#### HABAKKUK 2:12-14

“Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by injustice!  
<sup>13</sup> Has not the LORD Almighty determined that the people’s labor is only fuel for the fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing? <sup>14</sup> For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

appointed

eternal life

Gentiles

gospel

grace

Holy Spirit

Jesus

Jews

prayer

salvation

witnesses

word of God

### This Week's Text for Study – Acts 13:1-3

#### STEP ONE ...

**READING** what the passage says (*Read it at least three times*).

<sup>1</sup>Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. <sup>2</sup>While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."  
<sup>3</sup>Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

#### STEP TWO ...

**OBSERVING** how the passage moves

Return to the passage and **mark key words, phrases and movements**:

- Put a parenthesis around the phrase, "the church at Antioch."
- Underline the five names mentioned in verse 1.
- Double underline "prophets and teachers."
- Bracket the word "while" in verse 2.
- Circle the words "worshiping," "fasting," (v. 2) and "praying" (v. 3).
- Write the words, "God's call" in the margin of verse 2.

**STEP THREE ...**

**ASK the five “W” questions and the one “H” question:**

1. **Who** is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? And, to **whom** is it speaking?
2. **What** is the subject of the passage? What does the passage say about the subject?
3. **When** do or will the events occur? When did something happen to a particular person, people, or nation?
4. **Where** did or will this happen?
5. **Why** is something said or mentioned? Why would or will this happen? Why at this time? Why this person?
6. **How** will it happen? How is it to be done? How is it illustrated?

**STEP FOUR...**

**GROWTH GROUP CONVERSATION: EXPLORING** the message through group discussion

1. Read Acts 11:19-30. What can you discover about the church in Antioch from reading this passage (i.e., location, demographics, reputation in the culture)?
2. Create profiles from the names mentioned in verse 1.
3. Why would the church in Antioch send two of their best leaders off on a long-term mission?
4. What are some essential marks of a Sending Church?
5. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in being a Sending Church?
6. How do you see your career as a part of God’s calling on your life?
7. How has God spoken to you during our mission conference?



## THE MISSION OF LOUDONVILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

We are committed to reaching and teaching people to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ, connecting them to one another and sending them to serve their families, communities and world.

### 10 CORE BELIEFS OF A DISCIPLE

#### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

#### **The Godhead** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

#### **The Deity and Sinlessness of Christ** *Colossians 2:9*

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life.

#### **The Sufficient Atonement of Christ** *2 Corinthians 5:19-21*

We believe in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood.

#### **The Resurrection and Return of Christ** *Acts 1:3, 9-11*

We believe in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory.

#### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful man, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential and that a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

#### **The Ministry of the Holy Spirit** *John 14:16*

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

#### **Unity in Christ** *Ephesians 2:14-17*

We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Eternity** *Revelation 21:22-27*

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

#### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

We believe that everything we have or own belongs to God.

### 10 CORE PRACTICES OF A DISCIPLE

#### **Undiluted Worship** *Matthew 22:37-40*

Loving the Lord God with all of our physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual vigor and, my neighbor as myself.

#### **Constant Abiding** *John 15:1-11*

Abiding in Christ in order to be faithful and bear fruit.

#### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

Reading the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for daily life.

#### **Desperate Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

Praying to God to know Him, laying requests before Him and, finding direction for daily life.

#### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

Fellowshipping with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, other people's lives and, in the world.

#### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

Using my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

#### **Total Forgiveness** *Ephesians 4:30*

Practicing forgiving others as God has forgiven me in Christ.

#### **Tangible Compassion** *Matthew 25:31-46*

Showing compassion to those in need and so minister to Jesus Himself.

#### **Generous Giving** *2 Corinthians 8:7*

Giving away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

#### **God Space** *Ephesians 6:19-20*

Increasing the quantity and quality of our gospel conversations

## 10 CORE VIRTUES OF A DISCIPLE

**Love - a sincere affection for others** *1 John 4:10-12*

Love is acting in someone else's interest no matter who they may be, no matter how you feel, and no matter what it costs.

**Joy - a delight unaffected by circumstances** *John 15:11*

An inner delight in God that is sustained in spite of the changing seasons of life.

**Peace - an abiding sense of harmony** *Philippians 4:6-7*

Relationships are free from friction. Positively, it describes harmonious relations with others in the church.

**Patience - a willingness to stick with things** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

Being willing to live with a difficult situation for a long time—even if things are slow to change or never change.

**Kindness - a sense of compassion in the heart** *Job 6:14*

An inner disposition that puts others at ease and out of which kind actions flow.

**Goodness - a goodness that flows outwardly** *1 Thess. 5:15*

Choosing to do the right things in my relationships with others.

**Faithfulness - an unwavering loyalty** *Psalms 26:3*

Being the kind of people who keep our word to one another.

**Gentleness/Humility - an attitude of humility without any**

**entitlement; a lack of self-awareness** *Philippians 4:5; 2:3-4*  
Gentleness is power and strength under God's control. Humility is considering others above myself, if I consider myself at all.

**Self-Control - an ability to direct your energy wisely**

*Titus 2:11-13*

The strength to restrain our desires, emotions, and actions has to come from within rather than from some outside source.

**Hope - a certainty of what is to come** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

Coping with the hardships of life and with death because of hope in Christ.

Each week this Bible Study will feature either a core belief, practice or virtue vital for growing disciples.

**Sermon Notes:**

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