

## What Lies Ahead

### Part 1: The Church's Problem

#### Acts 8:1-4, Matthew 28:18-20

**ME:** Different type of series. Pull the curtain back a bit. A look at what leadership has been wrestling with for over a year...

Episodes build on each other- Episode 1- Intro Problem. 2- How we got here 3- Our New Focus. 4- What actually going look like.

**WE:** The Great Closing shined a spotlight on a huge problem we should've seen earlier... **Our personal preferences have blinded us to our shared purpose.**

Even though teaching online, groups still meeting (virtually), BUT "I need church service..." Crisis of faith/far from God

Interesting historical fact... First church was shut down too... by a public murder...

Growing, meeting in homes, at temple a bit of resistance, then a leader named Stephen was murdered in the streets for preaching about Jesus...

**Acts 8:1-4a**... but the believers who were scattered...

- Complained
- Got Angry
- Fought for their rights
- Chose to publicly defy the governing authorities
- Fought amongst themselves
- Belittled leaders who thought differently.
- Ended friendships and church memberships b/c of these disagreements

What does it actually say? **v. 4** *But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.*

When being persecuted and facing death for following Jesus... these JF's scattered and started inviting people to the KoG wherever they went.

No program, not even organization... just seemed like the natural thing to do.

What is the difference?

Why in the face of actual public torture/execution did the 1st Jf's become more effective... while many of us in US basically fell apart b/c we couldn't meet in our preferred way?

They were committed to a clear common purpose...

**People who place a shared purpose above their personal preferences can change the world.**

They were committed to the mission Jesus had given them...

**GOD:**

Jesus' last instructions... "here's what I want you to do now"... **Great Commission**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

*Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

**ALL AUTHORITY**... That's a lot. He is King of Universe. Ready to build his kingdom

**THEREFORE**... "B/c of my authority over everything I have a purpose/mission for everyone... Here's how you are going to build this KoG on earth... **Because Jesus has authority over everything he has a purpose for everyone.**

**GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES**... Don't just keep this among yourselves, don't just focus on yourselves and building something for yourselves. Don't just sit around waiting to go to heaven... GO

- More than just going to different parts of world (though that is included)
- Means ACTIVELY Going with purpose everyday
- Going across the street, purposely befriending people far from God, going beyond our comfort for the eternal good of others
- Going outside of what we prefer and want for what others need.

Command is not to GO and create a religion, or Xian countries, make sure everyone follows 10 commandments, create little holy communities safe from world, or even to make sure kids know all bible stories...

Jesus' Disciples are commanded to GO and MAKE DISCIPLES...

**The purpose of Jesus Followers is to REPRODUCE followers of Jesus on purpose.**

Not make sure people follow rules, not make sure they follow a specific way of doing a weekly religious service, are nice and stop doing bad things...

Purpose is to join Jesus in producing in others what he has produced in them... true life, faith, love, joy, growth, compassion, and authority and power to join the mission also...

How? Jesus gives 2 Steps...

#1 **BAPTIZE**... Purposely invite others to discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers. Invite them to them revolution.

Baptism- Symbol of new allegiance.. From self-rule to KoG (Last series)... a commitment to joining the REVOLUTION

**Share the Good News**- God is FOR you so much that he died FOR you. To forgive the hurt you caused. To restore true relationship w/ him, others, self.

Free from guilt, shame, fear, selfishness... and the brokenness those bring.

Free to be who you were always created to be

#2 **TEACH TO OBEY ALL COMMANDS**.... Not just teach content, rules, stories. But **train** how to actually live this new life and pass it on to others.

Not just to listen to sermon after sermon but to actively and purposely put faith in action... what it looks like in daily lives to exhibit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and self-control.

That is why the "CHURCH" exists... Bring KoG to rest of world.

Invite and train people to discover, enjoy, and share the life Jesus offers everyone.

It's not easy but It's not something we have to force and feel guilty about and stress about... it's something we can enjoy and simply live b/c...

**"I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS"**... not just to comfort but to empower... he is with us in our GOING, BAPTIZING, and TEACHING. The hard work is on him. We just choose to be actively looking for the ways he wants us to GO.

### **WE Part 2:**

Problem is,,, We basically replaced the Great Commission with what Mancini and Hartman call the Functional Great Commission.

*Go into all the world and make more worship attenders, baptizing them in the name of small groups and teaching them to volunteer a few hours a month*

### **We've made Following Jesus about a preferred weekly event not a life of shared purpose**

It's no wonder people struggle when the event is taken away!

There's nothing wrong with a weekly church service... but if we aren't careful we can easily make that the focus and purpose...

And Instead of developing resilient, reproducing disciples, we've created people who know a few religious tricks.

- How to sing songs, join a small group, listen to sermons, and volunteer at a weekly event

Missing out on the true mission, fulfilling true purpose... experiencing truly needing Jesus to be with you always... as you GO

Jesus commissions us to an adventure, to joining his universe changing revolution... we have our own unique role to play... but we've become distracted by comfort of familiarity and preference.

### **YOU:**

So we have decided to rethink what we are doing as CCC.

Committed to refocus on our true mission.. Not simply train people to live in church culture.

We want to journey with others as we discover, enjoy and share the life Jesus offers together.

Assignment... if this piqued your interest, bothered or angered you, or made you uncomfortable...

Discover what you are invited to... **Read Acts 1-12 this week.**

### **Ask... have I been committed to the mission or to preference?**

- Nothing wrong with having preferences but... we are created to exist for more.

### **WE:**

Next week how we got here. Why this way of church is so ingrained that what I'm saying might feel wrong/uncomfortable.

You are invited to continue the story that was started 2000 years ago in the ancient middle east...

Though our methods might change as time progresses... Our mission has never changed.

Our journey is on the same path they walked... we are direct descendents.

**The new future desperately needs Jf's who choose to make their life about God's revolution.**

World needs you. Come with us. Won't be easy. But will be worth it.

### Questions

1. How have you seen God working this week?
2. What stood out to you most in this week's message? Were there any portions that were confusing or bothersome? Discuss reactions and highlights together.
3. Read Matthew 28:18-20. What is your first reaction to the "Great Commission?" What might it practically look like for this to be a guide for both your personal life and the overall life of the Church?
4. As you consider Jesus' command to his followers, how can your group pray for you this week?

### Summary

When we read the historical accounts of the first Jesus Followers there seems to be a vast difference between what we see in them and what we see in our current American Church. Why is that? What made a group of persecuted Jesus Followers who were on the run for their lives such an effective force for change in their world? What have we missed in our current view of the Church?

### Episode Breakdown:

- 1:00 Backyard Hello
- 3:00 The Church's Problem w/ Jon
- 23:00 Challenge, Giveaways, and Knight Rider

 Don't forget to subscribe :) <https://bit.ly/yourcrosscreek>

 Let us know you're here! Comment, or <https://bit.ly/wlcmccc>

### SHOW NOTES:

- ▶ Notes & Questions: [https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/media/2021-05-16\\_cg.pdf](https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/media/2021-05-16_cg.pdf)
- ▶ Transcript: <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/media/2021-05-16.pdf>
- ▶ Ask for Prayer or Questions: <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/welcome/>

▶ Outdoor Party!!! May 23, 4:30pm

Music. Play area for kids and laid-back fun. Bring your own chair or blanket, and drinks. We'll take care of the rest. RSVP online... <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/party/>

▶ #forSalem May Challenge: Meals FOR Teachers (Teacher Appreciation)

--Buy a meal for a teacher AND support a local restaurant.--

HOW: Pick a teacher... either of a family member or just from your neighborhood's school (google is your friend here).

Teacher emails are easy to find on school websites! What a surprise it would be to get a thank-you in what has been a pretty interesting and trying year!

 Here's a list of some #salemOregon restaurants who have egift card options. (You can also just go directly to your favorite spot's website to see if they have them available!) <https://www.giftly.com/restaurant-gift-cards/salem-or>

▶ #SalemOregon #local Giveaways (Happening on Social Media later this week)

- Enter to win this week on Social Media- Shaka Brah <https://www.facebook.com/TheShakaBrah/>

- Last week's giveaway: Ankeny Vineyard <https://ankenylvineyard.com/>

▶ Suggested Bible Readings:

Acts 1-12

▶ Additional Resources:

Future Church- Will Mancini and Corey Hartman

<https://www.amazon.com/Future-Church-Seven-Laws-Growth/dp/1540900614>

Irresistible- Andy Stanley

[https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/irresistible-faith-our-chance-to-change-the-world--again\\_andy-stanley/](https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/irresistible-faith-our-chance-to-change-the-world--again_andy-stanley/)

Evangelism in the Early Church- Michael Green

[https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/evangelism-in-the-early-church\\_michael-green/](https://www.thriftbooks.com/w/evangelism-in-the-early-church_michael-green/)

▶ Music we listened to making this episode:

Heart Songs- Weezer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SS6HBXHS00k>

Mack the Knife- Bobby Darin: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0oVilTRp9M>

Wait for It - Hamilton Soundtrack: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZH8TyHUzRQ>

▶ Subscribe to the Podcast & listen on the go:

<https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/messages/#podcast>

▶ Donate to Crosscreek & keep a good thing goin': <https://www.yourcrosscreek.com/donate>