

Topic	The Missional Church
Reference	John 20:19-23
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They have given up their businesses, they have given up their families and they are following for three and half years and then suddenly the guy say, “hey, I am going away”. It is like having everything pulled out from under you and you can understand sudden fear, anxiety and loss of faith sets in. So but Jesus says, I come to give you peace.

Now this peace is more than the lack of conflict. If you look at Numbers which is the context of which is the Israelites, they leave mount Sinai and just before they entered the Promised land there is this blessing which we are all familiar with

Numbers 6:23-26 (ESV)

Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, 24 The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Now here we actually have this concept of peace. If peace is the lack of conflict, the Israelites would have been fighting when they reached the Promised Land. So peace cannot just be a lack of conflict. In a Jewish concept of shalom, a wholeness, an inner completeness, a fullness. It is every aspect of your life, physical, psychological, social, spiritual and it all flows into being in the right relationship with God. It is that perfect situation. This is what Paul talks about in 1 Colossians 19-20

For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things whether on earth or in heaven, making shalom by the blood on the cross.

It is more than just the forgiveness of sins. It is reconciliation. All the pain and suffering in the entire universe is actually brought to that place where there is perfect prosperity, perfect peace, that is what he is talking about. It is like watching the last part of Maleficent. Where the evil queen is defeated and the couple are going to get married and they were all standing there. Everybody is dressed in their best and the blood has been wiped off the floor and the people are reconciled. There is perfect prosperity and peace and the future is great. That is the perfect picture of shalom. When Jesus walked through those doors, he said shalom. That perfect place where God wants you to be.

The singers sing about this in the songs, a place far-far away. That's the place called shalom. Then the first thing he does is that he shows you his scars. I mean what's the deal. We all hide our scars as we are ashamed of them. If you look at the Book of John, they have got seven miraculous signs where Jesus progressively displays his glory. His glory means who he really is. His identity is masked by the nature which he has taken upon himself, fully himself but one by one he lets down this mask as it were and he reveals the inner nature that shines right through.

- His glory is shown when he turns water into wine.

- His glory is shown when he heals officials.
- His glory is shown when he feeds 5000 people.
- His glory is shown when he is walking on the water, healing the man born blind
- Ultimately his glory is shown when he actually raises a man from the dead.

But here you actually have a situation where there is a locked door and Jesus walks through a locked door, that's not enough. The most important thing he does is that he shows them his scars. That's what it is all about. He shows them his scars.

John 3:14-15 (ESV)

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

Here you have Jesus trying to tell his disciples there are two aspects of glory. There is the humility or humiliation which we will see. When you lift a man totally naked on the cross bleeding and crying in agony that is humiliation but the some word lifted can also be used to mean glorified. So on one hand you look as terrible, horrible, on the other hand it is wonderful. Here you have Jesus coming through locked door and displaying the very scars that he has overcome because he has risen from the dead. It is a emblem of honor instead of humiliation.

During the cultural revolution there was a guy called Shui Yang in the Hainan Province. He was like most people at that time who were Christians were made to walk through the streets wearing a big hat, and they will write your sins. Shui Yang believes in Jesus Christ. For the first day they had given out so many big hats that he didn't even get one and he was really upset. The next day when they were parading down the road, he insisted them the heat and they gave him the hat. This man believes in Jesus Christ was written over it. He walked down there proudly with tears of joy on his face. He was so proud that when the day was over, after being pelted and insulted and humiliated by the people of the province he said to the police, can I keep this hat. And he did, they let him keep the hat. Every day his relatives will see him, his family will see him feeding the cows, raising the sheep wearing the big hat, he couldn't get rid of it because he was proud. What was to others a humiliation to him was a badge of honor and when Jesus Christ entered that room, the first thing he did was say, peace be with you these are my scars. This is what glory looks like.

You see, our idea of glory is something shiny, like a shiny object. If you look at Jesus when he first told the disciples who he was, Peter said you are the Christ. The moment he says you are the Christ, he says to them look at son of God, son of man will be crucified and after three days will arise but they only heard the word crucified. So therefore their face fell. After three years, he had to take them to a mountain of transfiguration and at there his true nature shown through the human veil and there was next to him Moses who represented the law and Elijah represent the prophets and they both spoke to him, which means they testified of who Jesus was and you know the sound came from heaven. The father said, this is my beloved son, listen to him.

The whole focus is this issue is listen to him, why, because their faith had been flagging because he had just told them he was going to be crucified and they lost faith. In fact, when they came down from the mountain some of the disciples who were not up at the mountain had so little faith that they couldn't actually heal

people anymore because of that seminal moment when he told them he was going to die. It is very hard to swallow. Our idea of glory is that marvelous light, but when Jesus came to do the upper room again when he was risen from the dead he showed the glory. The eight sign of glory, which is in his hands. That is what it was all about. The crucifixion of cross, the scars bear testimony to that great event. So therefore it brings us to the last point which is the mission.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you"

So therefore we see the nature of God. God is a sending God. Right from the beginning, he is a God who sends. He sends his son to us. He sends the Holy Spirit to us. The son sends us out for a mission. The sons sends the Holy Spirit. Here we see father, son the Holy Spirit, the trinity involve in the act of missions. In the nature of our being is actually, our new nature is actually our missions. We are a people defined by our missions of what God is doing. We are going to be like Jesus Christ empowered by the spirit, bearing the cross. In fact Jesus said,

Mark 8:34-35 (ESV)

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it."

So when he comes through the locked doors of the upper room the first thing he shows you is his scars. The second thing he said was go and you have got to bear the same scars as he did and this is the ministry that he invites us to participate with and continue. Now we don't do it alone, we do it with his power

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."

He is talking about the gospel. When we go forward, forgiveness or judgment turns on the gospel of Jesus Christ emblematic by the scars and we take these scars and we go to the world, we offer the world peace.

Implications of us,

We are all sent. Because the nature of our God is a sending God. So therefore the moment you say we are Christians we are the sent ones. We are all on a mission. Missions is not an extra department of the church. It is not one department who has a little bit of budget. Missions is not primarily a check writing ministry. Missions is all of us, believing that when we are actually saved by Christ, we bear the peace of Christ and we need to take that peace of Christ and go back to the rest of the world wherever we are. We are all missionaries. We are all on a mission. We need to see our lives as a mission. So therefore our gospel foundation is shalom. As we are filled with the spirit of God, as we are filled with his peace and his prosperity and his wellness, we cannot help but go forth because our cup of wine is overflowing. It flows out.

The great commission does not necessarily describe all of what it is, because some people take it like a command. Most people talk about evangelism in harsh tones and in a very guilty kind of complexion on their face. But the point is that if our lives have a gospel foundation and we have been changed by the shalom, we have got no choice because to share it, because it so fills our life. Sometimes we don't share it because maybe it doesn't fill our life. we need to have gospel intentionality in our lives. We actually

purposely do things in our lives and reshape our lives so that it reflects that the gospel is our center. We need to have a clearly defined mission. It doesn't have to be in Afghanistan, it can start in your back room, it can start with your family. We adjust our lifestyles to the people whom we are reaching out to and the main aim is to display and to declare the gospel.

How is being missional going to look like. I am going to bring forth on this podium here four people who have expressed this in different ways in their lives.

Samuel Khew:

As Dr Peter mentioned these are four missionaries that we as a church as FBC support and they were very conscientious when I met with them yesterday. They said, what is the dress code. I said, it's okay. It will be treat for us to get in conversation with them.

Andrew:

Hi, my name is Andrew. I serve in Organisation called El Shadai Center. It is a faith based humanitarian NGO who focus mainly towards the people in Malaysia.

Martin:

I have been in China since 2005 that come close to 15 years. We are husband and wife. We are doing community development work in China.

Diana:

I am serving in China. We work with migrant children from poorer villages in China.

Pari:

I work for Operation Mobilization.

Samuel Khew: So maybe we can start with Martin and Diana. When you say that you do community work, may be I can direct this one to Diana. What kind of work does that include?

Diana: Actually we have a center called Happy Hour in Kunming. The children come from Monday to Friday after school to do their homework, to close the education gap and on Saturday we actually do character teaching like our Sunday school. That's what we try to teach them values, good moral values, character building. We partner with three top uni there and the police department.

Sam: How many students and volunteers do you work with?

Diana: Normally we have 100 over kids coming and then now this year may be less about 80 plus because a lot of family goes back to village to build their own house. We have this uni student that come in and help us. So one of the uni student is a top scholar and the government are also supporting him. One day this guy came and told me he is a believer now. I asked him why? He said, I feel so empty even I am a top student in the best uni and I feel so empty but every time I come to Happy Hour I see all of you teachers, I see the joy, the love and the peace that you have and I wanted that and praise God he came to know the lord and he finished reading his bible in four months.

Sam: So from what I understand these after school activities and then the reason you guys are there is to be in close contact with these students and these volunteers and through your lives be able to share the gospel.

Diana: We preach at all times, if necessary use words.

Sam: Cool. Let's move onto Andrew. So I know that you work with refugees. So people from all over the world who are here because perhaps in their home country they are persecuted and I understand that you run both a school and you also do community development work. So I understand the school portion, talk to me a little bit about the community development that you do.

Andrew: Because we believe that other than providing them educations, we also provide empowerment especially for the teenage and also the adults. Some how God use very unique ways having this people to faith, engaging with their own people. We talk about generations. These are the new believers who are going out to their generations to reach out to their own people. God works in a very amazing way.

Sam: Pari, tell me a little bit more about the work that you do with OM here in Malaysia.

Pari: It is a little different, I work in an office behind a desktop. The work that my team does is to support what happens on the mission field, to provide instruction, to support that. So for instance we do accounts and we make sure that the funding goes to wherever they are and they get their monthly income. We also do fund raising for projects, so in large amounts we send money out. We communicate the stories of what God is doing around the world. So we need people like accountants, graphic designers, writers, journalist, so that is some of the work that I do, but I also come alongside people who sense that God is calling them into missions and are trying to discover what that mean, from what that would look like. We like to work a lot with young people.

Sam: So there seems to be a common threat, like none of you are involved with any thing that is purely evangelistic and nobody is planting churches or doing campus crusades or anything like that but it is just as you do the community, you come into contact with nonbelievers and that's how you share the gospel.

Being a missionary comes with a cost.

Sam:	As you struggle with that and you mentioned that your wife, she was worried as well. Was there any verse that you held onto during that time.
Andrew:	I am always reminded from John chapter 10:10, I want to give you life, life abundantly. He do not only want to give you a life merely to survive here, God actually want to give us abundant life, a fullness only God can provide. The same way when we have that abundant life, we also want to share the life with others. Because we do not want to merely live on earth which is temporal because we have an internal life that we need to look into. Whatever that we invest now has an after effect after that. So we want to invest in what is eternal. While we live here is only temporal. A day will come everyone of us will have to leave this earth and where we will be after that. So we want to invest life that will give abundant to the others and also to our own self.

Sam:	It is good. Maybe to wrap it up. I want to ask all of you the same question and that question is this. As we as FBC sit here in our seats, I get the feeling that a lot of us will feel like, I am no missionary I am just an average Jo, what can I do to participate in the mission of God. What can I do to become more missional today itself or tomorrow and what would you say to encourage the average Jo that is seated here and may be we will just go down the line and we will start with Andrew and then move on.
Andrew:	Always remember that who is this God that we worship firstly. If this God is a God that created heavens and the earth, it is a supreme God. You can ask what is God doing at this present time. God is always at work, whether the church are ready or not, God is always at work. Number three, we have got to ask how can I become in partnership with God. God is not going to ask you for your program. God is asking you to partner with him. To us when we go and do what God is presently doing, we are taking a great joy because you have to also remember one time this author of this purpose driven church Rick Warren. He said that, God is actually create the wave. He only wants us to ride on the wave. You cannot go and create the wave your own self. God in every season and every time has created a certain wave and the church has to need to know what is their first 21 st century wave that God is creating. If you have brought this refugees, migrants, stateless people into our land, God has created that wave for the church to ride on it.
Sam:	Amen, thanks. And Martin how would you encourage or what should we do as an average person to participate in the mission of God.
Martin:	I think we have got to ask ourselves hard questions. How can I be a blessing? Since we have received so much blessing. The tag line I gave to you also is PGG, pray, Give and Go. So if you are not ready to Go, Give, if you are not ready to Give, pray. I mean everybody has a responsibility, everybody can still do something. So I believe church, I mean God have bring the people here for a purpose, so we shouldn't sit at back, at least come and visit us and Kunming, get your heart tender, don't bring your children to overseas, go to somewhere undeveloped. They will see how easy to take care of them. they will be more thankful and the verses I will leave with you is in Zechariah 4:6, not by might and not by power but by your spirit. All of the times we forgot, it is our God's work. We forget that we need to be everything, power. So when you ride on this wave, partnership with him and you will find there is a joy. I think everybody of us are quite healthy and we should go for missions.
Sam:	Diana?
Diana:	I go back to basic, read and pray every day. Read your Bible and pray every day. The need for you to come is greater than the need there. There is so much need in China but the need for you to come is greater than the need there. Do you want to know God's direct line, a call to him. It is my favourite verse, Jeremiah 33:3, call onto me and I will answer you. I will show you great and mighty things that you do not know. The harvest is plentiful but the works are few. Go, thank you.
Sam:	Thanks. Pari, same question for you.
Pari:	I am going to say live simply in that to recognise that God is Jehovah Jireh, God is our provider. All the things that we have whether physical or even talents and skills just to live very simply and not spent too much, so that we have time and we also have extra

	resources to then give to God's kingdom and not build our own kingdom but to build God's kingdom, live simply.
Sam:	That's great advice. Well, that's unfortunately our time. I know in 25 minutes there is not too much that we can cover, so really this is just the surface. We want each and every person to be missional.

Thank you Sam. Thank you our brothers and sisters in Christ for such lovely sharing. We should have more episodes like this. I just to summarize two things, the motivation that I got from this was God is too good and life is too short. We have God's shalom. Andrew gave up his business after a while because it really pales in comparison when you look at his life in Christ. Martin and Diana had very prominent position in society and they gave that up why because they found something greater. If you look at Matthew Chapter 13, the man who found a great treasure in the field he goes off and he sells all he has to get the treasure and he sells it with great joy. They don't do it reluctantly. They do it with great joy and that's a position where every person who is sent by God heals.

Why does God have to send missionaries anyway. Why cant the local people just do that, because God is a sending God. God sends people. There was a story told of a pastor who encountered a young lady in Germany. He was sent to Germany and lived day in and day out in a secular occupation with the German lady and the Germans are very secular and one day she said to him. You know, you cant be a Christian because you are just like me and I am a nonchristian, you read the same things, you are concerned about the city, you are concerned about all the things that I am concerned about and yet you are a Christian and I am like you, which means may be I can be a Christian too.

You see when we are missional we cross the culture, we enculturate. We go into that culture and become part of those people, so that they can identify with you. We go through the same struggles. We go through the same pain. We go through the same challenges but when we have those challenges we dig deep into our Christian resources and when they see us do that then they say, I can be like that too. We are able to not only display and declare the gospel of Jesus Christ. So that's why God calls missionaries and I am going to end here with a song. It really encapsulates this idea of God giving us so much in our darkness and pain, all of us come to church and we want to be ministered through in our darkness and pain and sometimes when God blesses us that's all we do, we don't go further than that but we actually have to respond.