

For the Name of Jesus Acts 5:17-42

God's mission is to advance His kingdom further out into the world and simultaneously further into the hearts of his disciples.

"Not only does Christian sanctification lead to Christian mission, but also Christian mission leads to sanctification."

David Matthis

"Not only does going deep with Jesus lead to me reaching out to others, but also that reaching out helps us go deep with Jesus."

David Matthis

2025 Focus #1 - Pray that the Spirit of God Makes Us More Spiritually Alert.

"But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him, (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy, they arrested the apostles and put them in prison. But during the night *an angel of the Lord* opened up the prison doors and brought them out, and said, 'Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.' And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach."

Acts 5:17-21

This is God's mission and Christ has resources in both heaven and on earth.

- **It is crucial in the mission of the church and the maturing of disciples that we realize that our battle is not against flesh and blood.**

"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

1 Peter 5:8

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

Ephesians 6:10-12

"It is unfashionable nowadays in the church (even while satanism flourishes outside it), to believe either in a personal devil or personal demonic intelligences under his command. But there is no obvious reason why church fashion should be the director of theology, whereas the

plain teaching of Jesus and his apostles (not to mention the church of the subsequent centuries) endorsed their malevolent existence.” John Stott

“Most of the devil’s advantage depends on the ability to move among human affairs undetected.” Richard Lovelace

- **Second, it is crucial that we recognize that those that are for us are more and greater than those who are against us.**

"For the Sadducees say that there is neither a resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all." Acts 23:8

“And to which of the angels has he ever said, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?’ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?”

Hebrews 1:13-14

2025 Focus #2 - Pray that the Spirit of God Makes Us More Spiritually Available.

Move towards mission rather than towards comfort. Move towards opportunities rather than ease or safety.

“But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ‘Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.’ And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.”

Acts 5:19-21

“But Peter and the apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Acts 5:29-31

“that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death that by any means possible I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

Philippians 3:10-11

2025 Focus #3 - Pray that the Spirit of God Makes Us More Spiritually Assured.

Pray that we believe far more in the sovereign authority and power of King Jesus than the stubborn opposition and hostility of people or peoples.

“But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand *as Leader and Savior*, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.’” Acts 5:29-31

“But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’” Matthew 19:26

“Our prayers for the unbelievers we love, and our evangelism, should be driven by this one and only hope for their salvation: ‘God may perhaps grant them repentance.’ Since he alone has the power to overcome spiritual deadness and Satanic blindness, we lay hold in prayer and witness on the truth: ‘God may grant repentance.’ That is our only hope.”

John Piper

2025 Focus #4 - Pray that the Spirit of God Makes Us More Spiritually Amazed.

The goal of mission is worship ... not just for the person who comes to Christ but for the person who has the joy of sharing and suffering for Christ.

Our sanctification should be as amazing to us as our conversion. Our persecution should be seen as our privilege. Our perseverance is nothing less than a miracle.

“In a strongly shame-honor-oriented society, to be dishonored normally would be considered shameful. The phrase (saying that they rejoiced) that they were ‘counted worthy to suffer dishonor’ is an oxymoron, a dishonor that is a cause for joy. The leaders beat them to produce shame. They hope that the shame might function as a deterrent and stop their preaching or at least persuade others not to heed them. In the apostles’ view, however, being worthy to be a witness to the name of Jesus is a great honor and a cause of rejoicing.” Patrick Schreiner

“While in the Roman world, the cross was an instrument of shame and humiliation, Jesus declared it to be his glorious exaltation ... The cross is neither the failure of Jesus’ messianic ministry nor simply the prelude to his royal glory, but the apex of his kingdom mission — the throne from which he rules and establishes his kingdom.” Jeremy Treat

“Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

1 John 4:4