

**2023 Theme - Focus On What Matters**

**Sermon Series - Focus On What Drives Us**

**Sermon Title - Focus On Mission**

**Sermon Texts - Matthew 22:34-40, 28:18-20 and John 4:1-42**

**Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry**

“Who else would die for our redemption, Whose resurrection means I'll rise  
There isn't time enough to sing of all You've done, But I have eternity to try”  
This old world can surely hit us with some hard and devastating things, but Jesus told us to be  
of good cheer because He had overcome the world! His resurrection means that we too will  
overcome! That is just one of the many reasons we worship, and that's an awesome message  
which we can't keep to ourselves! We have been given a mission to take that message to those  
closest to us and also to the world! Let's pray and we'll focus on our mission to transform  
worship, people and the world! Pray!

This is a two part sermon, but I'm going to give you both parts today. The first part of the sermon  
I'm going to give you the rationale and the Scriptures behind our

Church Mission To Transform Worship, People and the World!

Then I'm going to share a story from the life of Jesus that bears out all aspects of our mission.

Anyone heard any good conspiracy theories lately? I may get an amen on what I'm about to say,  
but then you may not like what I say after the amen! Not all conspiracy theories are theories,  
some have some truth behind them! Right? There are some strange things going on in our  
world, and that's not a new thing! There are things that go on behind closed doors and in places  
of power that we may never know about. And here's something we need to think about... God's  
Word says this...

Ephesians 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against  
the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the  
heavenly realms.

This means we must depend on God's power, His wisdom, His light, His guidance, and His  
protection! And this means we must not lose our focus on what matters when it comes to living  
our lives here on earth as followers of Christ! If we start focusing on the problems, the issues,  
the struggles, the enemy, then we will be like Peter when he was walking on the water to Jesus  
and took his eyes off Jesus. He began to look at the wind and the waves around him and began  
to sink! I have to admit, it's tempting to focus on the political and moral storms we are facing,  
rather than keeping our focus on Jesus. However, when we do, we can quickly begin to sink, get  
depressed, get worried, get discouraged, and despair of life itself. For your own emotional,  
mental and spiritual health, I would encourage you to limit your intake of all the political talk  
shows. If we're not careful we can spend all of our time worrying about things we do not have  
control over and cannot do anything about! Now don't get me wrong, I'm certainly not saying we

should bury our heads in the sand and not be aware of what is going on around us. And I absolutely believe we need to vote our convictions when we go to vote, whether for a candidate or on an issue! I believe it is imperative that we vote and that we understand how important it is to vote if we are to maintain our freedoms. People have given their lives to defend your right to vote! So I believe it is critically important that you exercise that right! I am so deeply grateful for the men and women of our armed services who work and train and when called upon, literally fight to defend our freedoms! A number of them are a part of our church! So to those serving and to those who have served, thank you for your service!! And I happen to know that we have some very deeply committed followers of Jesus who serve in our armed forces and I'm grateful for their witness to those with whom they serve! I also know some very deeply committed Christians who are elected officials and I'm grateful for their leadership. We need more committed Christians to serve in the political arena and show the world what a fully devoted follower of Jesus looks like and how that affects the way they serve! I'm extremely patriotic and love our flag and our constitution. But here's the distinction, I salute the flag and honor the flag and pledge allegiance to the flag, but I don't worship the flag! And I am grateful for our constitution and believe it to be the best form of governance in the world today, but it is not the infallible Word of God as is the Bible! That's why the constitution has been amended on numerous occasions. God's Word, on the other hand, stands for eternity, and is never to be amended or changed, despite the desires and attempts of some to do so! God's Word is eternal and unchangeable! And here's something I believe we must understand as Christians. Our hope is not in a political party, or a political leader! Our hope for now and for the future is in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! We should pray when we vote and we should pray for those who are elected after the vote, regardless of who wins. We may not be happy about the outcome, but we should be happy to pray for our leaders because God has commanded us to do so!

1 Timothy 2:1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—

1 Timothy 2:2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

1 Timothy 2:3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior,

1 Timothy 2:4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

You see, our purpose, and our mission as followers of Jesus Christ does not depend on who, or what party is in power. Our mission comes from our Lord Jesus who gave us our mission in two different places in Scripture! We must never lose our focus on our God-given mission!

### **Northshore Church's Mission is Transforming Worship, People and the World**

Our mission is what we do, and It is based on the two passages of Scripture known as the...

The Great Commandments and The Great Commission!

#### **The Great Commandments**

Matthew 22:34 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.  
Matthew 22:35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:  
Matthew 22:36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”  
Matthew 22:37 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’  
Matthew 22:38 This is the first and greatest commandment.  
Matthew 22:39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’  
Matthew 22:40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Folks loving God with all our heart, soul and mind is the transforming worship part of our mission! Amen? Amen! And loving our neighbor as ourselves is the transforming people part of our mission! Amen? Amen! Now let's look at the Great Commission Jesus gave us. We talked about this in some detail weeks ago.

### **The Great Commission**

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.  
Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
Matthew 28:20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Folks, that's the transforming people and the world part of our mission! Jesus said “make disciples of all nations!” At Northshore Church we want to focus on what drives us and I pray that our mission from Jesus will always be one of the primary things that drives us! Why? Because if we are driven by our mission and keep that focus, then God will bless our work and we will accomplish our mission. Let me explain why I shared the things I shared when we first started this message. During the days of Jesus and the days of the New Testament Church, there were people who were known as zealots. One of the disciples had evidently been a zealot, Simon the zealot. We don't know much else about this disciple from Scripture, but evidently he remained one of the 12 even after Jesus ascended into heaven because there is no mention of him being replaced. However, we can assume that he had left behind his zealot activities because zealots were Jews who were bent on removing the Romans by force and it didn't work out too well for them! Jesus had been clear that His intentions and mission were not to establish a worldly kingdom. He told Pilate this...

John 18:36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

The disciples didn't fully understand this and even after Jesus' death and resurrection they still had trouble focusing on the mission. Listen to Luke's account found in the Book of Acts...

Acts 1:1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach

Acts 1:2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.

Acts 1:3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.

Acts 1:4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

Acts 1:5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 1:6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

The disciples were still having a hard time focusing on the mission as Jesus had laid it out! They were still looking for a political solution.

Acts 1:7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

And we know that The Holy Spirit did come upon them and Peter preached a powerful message to a crowd of people which included some who had only recently participated in the crucifixion of Jesus. With amazing boldness and laser focus on the mission Jesus had given to him, Peter said...

Acts 2:36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

Acts 2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Talk about transforming people! Peter, the one who had three times denied even knowing Jesus, focuses on the mission and message Jesus had given to him and about three thousand people came to know Jesus that very day!

And what did the people focus on after that? Luke tells us in the next verse...

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

Acts 2:44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

Acts 2:45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Acts 2:46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

Acts 2:47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

They were obviously worshiping The Lord and people were being transformed daily, and this was going to have a transforming impact on the world as the gospel would spread! Had the disciples not focused on the mission God had given them in the great commission, and the instructions He had given them in the great commandments, the advancement of the gospel would not have happened. However, they did follow Jesus' instruction and as we now know, the gospel spread around the world! Okay, end of part one, the rationale and Scriptural support behind our Church's mission. Now the story from Jesus' ministry that bears out all three aspects of our mission. John 4:1-42. I guess you could say this is my illustration of transforming worship, people and the world! And anytime Jesus can be your illustration, it's a good one!! And as we read the story, I'll make my points first about...

### **Transforming Worship**

John 4:1 Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John—

John 4:2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples.

John 4:3 So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee.

John 4:4 Now he had to go through Samaria.

John 4:5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

John 4:6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

John 4:7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"

John 4:8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

John 4:9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

Samaritans were considered unclean people by the Jews because they had intermarried with foreigners during the Assyrian occupation of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. But Jesus makes it clear that God loves every human being regardless of their background and wants a relationship with them. Listen to what Jesus says to her...

John 4:10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

John 4:11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"

John 4:12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

John 4:13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,

John 4:14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Can you think of a better reason to worship God? The Creator of the Universe offers us living water! A spiritual drink that will satisfy the soul of its eternal thirst for an eternity! You see we have a God shaped hole in our hearts and only God can fill that void! Fame won't fill it, pleasure won't fill it, money and things won't fill it, human relationships won't fill it, substances will mask the void, but won't fill it! You might say, "How do you know those things won't fill the void? Because fame, pleasure, and artificial highs don't last! People who have millions never have enough! And human relationships, well they can be fantastic, but if you try to use them as a replacement for God you will be disappointed and you will find yourself chasing a mirage. Human relationships find their highest fulfillment when they follow a relationship with God first! Jesus addresses this issue with the woman...

John 4:15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

John 4:16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

John 4:17 "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband.

John 4:18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

Jesus was not trying to be condemning or mean spirited to the woman, but allowing her to continue living a lie was not going to help her discover the truth or transform her. So in a gentle but firm way, Jesus confronts her immorality. Interestingly she replies by bringing up the topic of worship!

John 4:19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet.

John 4:20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

John 4:21 "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

John 4:22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.”

The woman is focused on religion, ritual, place of worship, and the difference of opinion between the Samaritans and the Jews. Jesus points her to the Who of worship and that true worship is not about the place, but about the Holy Spirit bringing the presence of God to wherever you are worshiping, and that your worship is true, genuine and from the heart! When you focus on what matters in worship, God, then other things don't matter and you can worship 24/7/365! The transforming worship part of our mission at Northshore church is...

To engage in worship that touches the heart of God and changes the heart of man!

We want to transform worship from being a chore to being a joy! And part of that joy comes from the practical, and life changing, principles we learn when we come to worship. We don't just worship when we sing to God, we also worship when we listen to God speak to our hearts through the lyrics of the songs, through the reading of His Word, and through His Holy Spirit! We'll talk more about worship in a couple of weeks in our focus on the process message. But we must not forget the second part of our mission is...

### **Transforming People**

John 4:25 The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

John 4:26 Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you—I am he.”

Can you imagine what this woman must have felt at that moment? Jesus, whom she had never met, reveals to her that He knows all about her. She was a very insightful lady, as she had already made a connection about worship, and now she states that she “Knows that “Messiah (called Christ) “is coming and when He comes He will explain everything to us!” Why would she even say that to a perfect stranger? I believe she sensed in her heart that Jesus was someone really special. We'll see in a moment the impact on her life. But this story was not just about the transformation of the woman at the well. This story is about the continuing transformation of the disciples. They had a lot of growing and changing to do if they were going to take up the mission of Christ after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension back to The Father! Listen...

John 4:27 Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

The disciples knew that it was not kosher to speak to a woman in public, let alone a Samaritan woman. But they kept their questions to themselves. Jesus will use this as a teaching opportunity in just a moment, but first look at what the woman does...

John 4:28 Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people,

John 4:29 “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?”

John 4:30 They came out of the town and made their way toward him.

Let me just say that when you meet Jesus, it's life changing! She forgets all about her water jar. She's gotten a little taste of "living water!" By the way, this woman had probably come to the well at a time of day when others would not typically be there so she wouldn't have to endure the looks of condemnation and the whispers. She was an outcast. She was a loner. But after she met Jesus she was transformed! She goes back to the town and pretty much talks to everybody! I'm quite sure they were scratching their heads and wondering why all of a sudden she's not in hiding anymore. She was so different that they decided to go see what in the world she was talking about! But back at the well this is happening...

John 4:31 Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

John 4:32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."

John 4:33 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"

The Gospel, the Good News, is meant to transform people! That was Jesus' mission! It's so interesting that Jesus is trying to get the woman to see her need for the living water and He is trying to get the disciples to see their need for the bread of life! Aren't we also guilty of being so bound by this physical world that we many times can't see the spiritual realities that we so desperately need to see and experience? And those spiritual realities are found in Jesus because He is both the living water and the bread of life! Jesus went on to say this...

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

Jesus' mission was the spiritual food that fueled His appetite. In other words, He hungered to do God's will so you and I could have a chance at salvation! According to Hebrews 12:2 it was the joy that was set before Him! But here's an amazing truth: Jesus would fulfill His part of the mission of God for the salvation of humankind on the Cross, but He was passing the baton, the mission to transform people with the message of the Gospel, on to His disciples! Jesus asks them a question...

John 4:35 Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

John 4:36 Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

John 4:37 Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true.

John 4:38 I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor."

What was Jesus talking about? He was talking about the work that had been done by the Old Testament prophets to prophesy about the coming Messiah, and His contemporary John the Baptist who prepared the way for the Messiah, and then the work that He was going to do on the Cross as the Messiah, the Sacrificial Lamb of God! The disciples would continue the mission by preaching the message of Jesus and making disciples! In other words, they would be given the privilege of reaping the harvest!

Later in his ministry Jesus would say this...

John 6:27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

It is the mission of Northshore Church to transform people with that very message, and make no mistake about it, when we share the good news of Jesus with others and then make sure we spend the time to disciple them, then we are...

### **Transforming the World**

John 4:39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did."

John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days.

John 4:41 And because of his words many more became believers.

John 4:42 They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world."

When the people of Samaria saw the change in the Woman at the well they were curious and wanted to know more about this Jesus! They went out to meet Him and then asked Him to stay with them a while. He did and He taught them and many more accepted Jesus! At Northshore Church we want people to see the difference in our lives, just like the people saw the difference in the Woman at the Well's life! We want people to see the transformation in our lives so clearly that they want what we have found! We want to bring people to Christ and then disciple them in Christ! And as we transform people, we will be transforming the world one heart at a time. We'll talk more about that next week as we focus on our vision! Let's bow our heads for prayer! I know there may be some of you here today and you're curious about why we are so excited and passionate about this man called Jesus. I invite you to at least give Jesus a chance and see for yourself. As the worship band comes back up to lead us in our final song, understand this: If you are willing to admit that you're a sinner in need of a Savior, believe Jesus died on the cross to be that Savior, and call upon His Name for salvation you can begin your journey of transformation in Christ! It's exciting and amazing. The sinner's prayer goes something like this...Dear God, I realize I've sinned, and that breaks your heart, but I believe You loved me so much that You allowed Your One and Only Son Jesus to come and live a perfect life so He could be the perfect sacrifice for my sin. I ask You to forgive me and I invite Jesus to come into my life and begin transforming me into the person You created me to be! With Your help I will live a new life as a disciple of Jesus Christ! Thank You for hearing my prayer! I'm excited to see what we

will accomplish together now that I've allowed You to become a part of my life! I pray this believing in the sweet Name of Jesus! Amen!