

Getting Stuck In... To God's Mission (Genesis 12:1-3, Matthew 28:16-20)

Let me tell you about some of the things I love:

- **SLIDES** Favourite TV programme – The Good Wife
- Coffee – favourite place Carluccios's £1 coffee
- Family
- Rembrandt
- Favourite book – The Peregrine (READ excerpt)

I could bore you some more – point to this. Title: 'Mission' – sharing faith – can be scary – BUT... if you love something, if it's made your life better, *of course* you want to talk about it. Easy to talk about the things you love, it's the most natural thing in the world. Why wouldn't you?

Interesting question is why we put matters of faith and belief in different category from rest of life. We can talk about people we love, hobbies and interests we love, things we love, and it's easy. Then get to Jesus, and we clam up. It's funny isn't it? Because when you think about it, it should be the most natural thing in the world.

Come back to that later. Title Getting Stuck In... to God's Mission. Series on what it means to follow Jesus, the key areas – looked at talents, money (and will look at bible and prayer). Right in middle is mission. Deliberate – mission should be at heart of all we do. **SLIDE** Temple 'Church is only organisation which exists for the benefit of its non-members'. But what is it? Quick recap first before some practical tips

SLIDE Mission is God's idea. Goes right back to start of bible, and calling of Abraham. Human beings have rebelled and world is not as it should be; judgement, sent flood, more trouble with Babel – where is all this heading? God calls (Abraham) Abram and in doing so sets out his vision, his plan for the world.

SLIDE 'GO' – mission means 'sent'. Not static, God calls his people into the world to achieve his purposes. But what is the purpose:

SLIDE God's people ...in God's place ...under God's blessing ...AND blessing others

EXPLAIN – God's people READ v2a – God forming a people who could call his own; Give them somewhere to dwell (READ v1). And these people would live under his blessing (READ v2b)

Fulfilled in next few books of bible – Israel went to Egypt and became a nation (God's people), they were given Canaan to live in (Israel – God's place) and God gave them the law. God's people in God's place under God's blessing.

One bit missing – blessing the world. Meant to be a light to nations – occasionally, but more often kept blessing to themselves.

But this is the plan – this is what God is working towards. What is mission? It's joining with God in his great task of forming God's people to dwell with God under his blessing, and going out and blessing others (as a result of which they might also come and join us).

Plan hasn't changed – fast forward to Matthew 28 and what does Jesus command his disciples:

SLIDE God's people – Make disciples (v19)

God's place – (v20) I am with you always – our dwelling place is not now in the land but in Christ

God's blessing – (v19-20) baptising... and teaching

Blessing others – (v19) GO... (to) all nations

Jesus sends us out to fulfil his mission, to announce the kingdom of God, to teach it in all its fullness, and to demonstrate its reality. It's essentially the same mission as God gave Abraham, God's plan hasn't changed. But now he is calling not just one person, he calls all his followers to play a part in this. We are all called to go. Mission is not for experts or particular people, it's for all of us (just like every theme in this series).

How can we play our part?

For church: (**SLIDE**) Church says 'come' but Jesus says 'go' – measure of mission is not how much goes on in here, but how much 'out there'. Values – final one Outward-looking. Aspirational – but who we want to be.

But for us as individuals:

SLIDE GOOD NEWS – how does Jesus announce kingdom – near and it's good news. Is message still good news to us? If it isn't, why would anyone want it? How to be inspired – what good news can you tell at the moment?

SLIDE BLESSING OTHERS – mission does involve us telling the message, but most of those opportunities will come in response to us blessing people. Very little in NT about forcing our faith – message is: live your life and people will ask you. Who are you blessing? More people you bless, the more you will get chances to talk about your faith.

SLIDE BE YOURSELF – back to where we started. Make it natural. Tell your story, how God has intervened in your life, what he is doing at the moment. Let people like me worry about the complicated questions, that's what I got sent to college for.

It's God's mission. It was his idea, he empowers it and he makes it happen. And whatever happens he is always with us. (**SLIDE**) READ v18, Therefore Go...READ v20b.