

Elementary

“Elementary, my dear Watson.” This is one of the most famous lines in English literature. With it, images of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s fictional sleuth Sherlock Holmes come to mind. We can imagine him solving some deep mystery that seems impossible for us to understand, but to him is so simple that he wonders why no one else can see the solution. As he says, it all seems so elementary, so basic.

One of the things about serving God is that we need to remember the basics. In this week’s study we will go back to the basics of mission: what has God called his people to do in this world? Let’s explore together the fundamentals of mission, and we will see that it all really is elementary.

Monday – Our Fundamental Purpose

Descendant: something deriving in appearance, function, or general character from an earlier form.

Dictionary.com

1. Please read Genesis 12:1-3. What did God call Abram (later renamed Abraham) to do? What is the conclusion of verse 3?
2. According to Romans 4:16, who are Abraham’s spiritual descendants? Who do you think the “many nations” are that God speaks of in Genesis 17:5?
3. If Christians are Abraham’s descendants, inheriting the blessing God gave him, then what does God promise to do through his people just as he promised to do through Abraham?

Making it Personal: Pray for God to show you how you can be a blessing to those around you.

Tuesday – God’s Intentions

“We may be certain that whatever God has made prominent in His Word, He intended to be conspicuous in our lives.” Charles Spurgeon, 19th c. American preacher

1. Please read Deuteronomy 7:7-16. According to verses 7-8, did the nation of Israel do anything to gain God’s favor? How do you sometimes fall into the trap of thinking that you need to earn God’s love?
2. In comparing the promise of Deuteronomy 7:12-16 with Jesus’ words in Luke 19:41-44, what do you think happened to Israel to bring the nation to such a state of affairs?
3. Jesus speaks of peace in Luke 19:42. According to Isaiah 42:1-9, what would that peace look like?

Making it Personal: Give thanks to God that you do not have to do anything to earn his love.

Wednesday – The Church

“The apostles were made evangelists to us by the Lord Christ; Jesus Christ was sent by God. Thus, Christ is from God, and the apostles from Christ...The Church is built on them as a foundation.” Clement, 1st c. Bishop of Rome

1. Please read Matthew 16:13-20. What central truth is contained in verses 15-16? Where did this knowledge come from, according to verse 17?

Text Insight: Recognizing someone as another’s son meant to give the son the same attributes as the father.

2. Why do you think Jesus instructed his disciples to keep this to themselves in verse 20? After his resurrection, how does Jesus release them from this restriction in Matthew 28:18-20?
3. The truth that Peter spoke became the foundation for building Jesus’ church, according to Matthew 16:18. What does this tell you about the central mission of the church?

Prayer Focus: Pray for God to use believers everywhere to spread the word about Jesus.

Thursday – The Body of Christ

“Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.” Ephesians 5:23

1. Please read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. What does this tell you about belonging to Jesus?
2. According to the conclusion of John 15:1-8, what is the purpose of belonging to Jesus?
3. Relying on these passages, what would you say to someone who claims a superior spot in the church because of where they have come from?

Making it personal: Pray for God to use you to bear much fruit for him.

Friday – Fringe Benefits of Carrying out the Church’s Mission

“This life was not intended to be the place of our perfection, but the preparation for it.” Richard Baxter, 17th c. English Puritan church leader

1. How would you characterize the relationships Paul built through his work in the church, as shown in Romans 16:1-8?
2. Please read Luke 17:1-24. What did the 72 disciples experience, according to verse 17? What did Jesus say is even more important?
3. What does Jesus offer us in John 10:7-10? In comparing this with Luke 10:20-24, what do you think it means to have a full life in Jesus Christ?

Making it Personal: If you belong to Jesus, thank God for calling you into the full life he has for you. If you do not yet belong to him, accept Jesus as your Lord right now and begin your journey in the full life he offers.

For the Weekend: Read Genesis 12:1-3 and Matthew 28:18-20, and pray for God to guide you in understanding what part he has for you in carrying out his purpose for his people, the church.