

# FOLLOWING JESUS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Core Practice: "Everyday Mission"

## WHAT TO EXPECT

*The basic practice of "everyday mission" in a Table Community leans into the following pattern :*

- [1] **Identifying our mission field** – We'll talk about the places and people of our everyday lives, so that we can learn together how to join Jesus on mission.
- [2] **Discerning our opportunities** – We'll help each other recognize Jesus in our everyday encounters, growing in confidence to notice the Spirit's prompts and then respond with boldness.
- [3] **Reflecting on our witness** – We'll share our experiences of responding to the Spirit, encouraging one another to live more courageously on mission with Jesus.

## EVERYDAY MISSION

*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. – Luke 10:1-2*

It's common to think of "mission" as something we do *for* God—usually at a specific time and place, amongst a particular people group, for the sake of accomplishing specific tasks. While that isn't entirely wrong, it can lead us to compartmentalize our faith and miss the Spirit's movement in the ordinary moments of our everyday life.

Mission isn't primarily about doing things *for* Jesus, but living life *with* Jesus. It's learning to say yes to the Spirit's promptings wherever we are—whether we're at home, work, school, or in our neighborhoods. Mission is simply the overflow of loving God, which naturally moves us to love our neighbor.

John Wesley famously said, "in general, it seems, the kingdom of God will not 'come with observation;' but will silently increase, wherever it is set up, and spread from

heart to heart, from house to house, from town to town, from one kingdom to another.”<sup>1</sup> In short, the gospel spreads in the context of relationship! This was Jesus’ approach – investing in the twelve and even more so in Peter, James, and John. He invested in the few for the sake of the many.

The purpose of the core rhythm, **“Everyday Mission,”** is to help one another grow as **everyday missionaries**—people who listen for and respond to the Spirit’s leading in every part of life: where we live, work, learn, and play. We gather to be formed, encouraged, and equipped so that when we scatter into our everyday lives, we join God in what he is already doing. This is the heartbeat of a Table Community.

## **RHYTHM OF SCATTERING**

### INDIVIDUAL MISSION

When we leave our Table Community, we are sent back into everyday life to join the Spirit in what he is already doing. The question becomes: *How is the Spirit at work in your everyday life?*

Take time to reflect on the three spaces below and prayerfully consider how the Spirit may be leading you to join Jesus in each one.

#### **Home** (First Space)

We all live somewhere. Some of us live with family or roommates, while others live alone. Our Table Community invites us to begin seeing our homes differently—not simply as private spaces to retreat into, but as mission bases where we join the Spirit.

#### *Questions to Consider:*

- How might the Spirit be inviting you to follow Jesus at home?
- Are there neighbors God may be inviting you to befriend?
- What would it look like for your home to become a place of hospitality, prayer, and spiritual conversation?
- In what ways could your home become a mission base?

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<sup>1</sup> John Wesley sermon on the “General Spread of the Gospel”

- If you have children, how might the Spirit be leading you to disciple them?

### **Work or School** (Second Space)

The second major space we scatter into is work or school. This often requires another shift in how we think. Many of us view our jobs or studies primarily as something we do for ourselves—a way to earn a paycheck or obtain a degree. While that may be true, it is not the whole picture. Work and school are also places where we can join the Spirit. These spaces connect us to a wide network of relationships, creating opportunities for meaningful conversations.

How might the Spirit be leading you at work or school?

*Questions to Consider:*

- Where do I see the Spirit already at work in my workplace or school?
- Who might the Spirit be inviting me to pray for regularly?
- Is there an opportunity to create space for prayer or Scripture with others?
- Who might the Spirit be prompting me to encourage, serve, or support?

### **Everywhere Else** (Third Space)

The final space includes all the other places we regularly spend time outside of home and work or school. This might be cafés, gyms, parks, grocery stores, clubs, children's sports, or other spaces in our community.

Engaging these spaces missionally requires a shift in perspective. Instead of moving through them on autopilot, we learn to enter them with awareness and openness to what the Spirit might be doing.

Ask the Spirit to open your eyes to the people around you and to give you opportunities to share the love of Jesus. This might look like offering an encouraging word, praying with someone, paying for a meal, or building relationships over the long haul. The goal is not to manufacture opportunities, but to follow the promptings of the Spirit as we enter these spaces.

*Questions to Consider:*

- How might the Spirit be leading you in this space?
- What opportunities already exist around you?
- Are there barriers you need help overcoming?
- Is there someone you feel led to intentionally invest in?
- What might it look like to become a consistent presence in this place?

## COMMUNITY MISSION

In addition to our individual mission, it is important for Table Communities to discern how the Spirit might be leading the whole community to join God's mission together. Often, these opportunities will naturally grow out of the relationships and needs we encounter through our individual lives on mission.

There are countless ways a Table Community might join the Spirit's work. Here are a few examples:

### **Gathering in Public Spaces**

At times, a Table Community may choose to gather in more public settings—such as parks, front or back yards, cafés, or other neighborhood spaces. Meeting in visible places can create natural opportunities for others in the community to notice, engage, and even join the gathering.

This may require us to think intentionally about *how we gather*, making space for newcomers and creating an environment that feels welcoming and accessible.

### **Going Where We Are Sent**

As we live on mission in our first, second, and third spaces, we will often become aware of needs around us. Sometimes these needs can be met individually, but other times they require the support and presence of a community.

In these moments, a Table Community can respond together—joining the Spirit by stepping into those needs with love, generosity, and practical care.

### **Serving in the Community**

Opportunities may also arise for the Table Community to serve the broader community together. These could include things like visiting people in hospice care, regularly serving among the poor, mentoring youth through programs like Big Brothers or Big Sisters, or helping elderly neighbors with household or yard work.

As we pay attention to the Spirit's leading, simple acts of service can become powerful expressions of God's love.

### **Inviting Others into Table Community**

As we live on mission, our goal is to befriend and bless others, but also to share the life we have received in Christ. One natural step is inviting people into our lives and Table Community.

Many of these opportunities will arise through the relationships we form in our everyday spaces. As friendships grow, invitations into community can become a natural extension of the mission we are already living.

## **RHYTHM FOR GATHERING**

When we gather together the goal is to help one another grow as everyday missionaries.<sup>2</sup> We do that by having spiritual conversation together around the following...

- **Identifying our mission field** – We will have conversation around the first, second, and third places of our daily lives, and the kinds of people we meet along the way. The goal is to help each other develop a sense of being sent by Jesus, and discerning how the Spirit might be inviting us to join his mission of love.
- **Discerning our opportunities** – We will also talk about how we can recognize the leading of Jesus in our everyday encounters (in each space). The goal is to help each other grow in confidence about sensing the heart, voice, prompts, nudges, intentions, and impulses of his Spirit, and become more bold in our witness.
- **Reflecting on our witness** – Lastly, we will share our experience of sensing the movements of the Spirit and how we respond to them. The goal is to help each other become more faithful in following Jesus onto the mission field of everyday life, more courageous in seizing the opportunities for witness as they arise, and more resistant to the things that hold us back.

There is always a temptation to settle for less, this is especially true when it comes to joining God's mission. This is why our conversation together must move from the abstract (theology, strategies, and principles) to the concrete (real examples of people and situations).

## **WHO TO INVEST IN?**

Our primary principle for joining God's mission is simple: **invest in a few**, just as Jesus did with his disciples. Rather than trying to reach everyone, we focus on

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from "A Quick Guide to House Fellowship" by Philip Meadows, page 56

building meaningful relationships where we can share our lives and point others to Jesus.

As we invest in a few, it's important to prayerfully discern whether the Spirit may also be inviting us to welcome some of these people into our Table Community.

The following are a few ways we can discern who the Spirit might be leading us to invest in, as well as who we might invite into our Table Community.

- *Ask the Spirit to highlight someone in your life.* Simply pray and ask the Spirit to show you who to invest in and for opportunities to have spiritual conversation.
- *Are they hungry for more of God?* This is often the starting point to whether or not someone is open to Jesus. This requires discernment as we talk with others. For instance, as you listen to people talk do you sense a longing for more in life, a spiritual curiosity about faith, the Bible, prayer, God, a desire for community, etc.? If people do not have this desire it certainly does not mean we stop hanging out with them! But it is a way to discern whether or not someone is open to Jesus and his community.
- *Do they have the time or space for relationship or TC?* Sometimes people say they want community (whether to develop a friendship or join a TC), but they actually don't have the time or space for it in their life. Or they may not be willing to make time or space. This makes it difficult to invest in the relationship if the person doesn't make space for it (as difficult as this may be).

## **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION**

*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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20)*

*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. (Luke 10:1-2)*

*Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. (Mark 3:13-15)*

*Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits. These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. (Mark 6:6-13)*

*"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)*

*"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. (John 14:5-8)*

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)*

*Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth,"for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." (Revelation 21:1-4)*



THE TABLE