



BRIDGES

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Stay on Mission

In today's world, the church faces numerous pressures to conform to the prevailing cultural norms. There is a constant pull to engage in political debates, to focus on influence, or to shift priorities in response to societal trends. These pressures often distract us from our primary mission. Yet, Jesus' example reminds us that we are called to remain steadfast in our commitment to His kingdom, regardless of the external pressures we face. In Matthew 9:35, we read that "Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction." I think that is a good description of Jesus' earthly ministry and mission. Jesus kept to this mission even when He was criticized, tempted, and felt various expectations upon him to do differently.

At New Baptist Church, we are committed to this same mission—teaching God's Word, proclaiming the gospel, and caring for people. The world tempts us to shift our focus, but we must resist that pull. Political and social issues matter, but they must never overshadow our primary calling as Christ's ambassadors. Our response to the brokenness around us should be to bring the gospel to bear in both word and deed, engaging with society as people of the Kingdom. Jesus also reminds His disciples that opposition will come. They will be like sheep among wolves, needing to be wise and innocent (Matthew 10:16). Faithfulness to Christ will often mean standing against the current of

culture, yet we do so with love, grace, and truth. Jesus' instructions to His disciples in Matthew 10 give us practical ways to stay on mission:

1. Begin with prayer – Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers" (Matt. 9:37-38). Before we act, we must seek God's direction in prayer.

2. Start where you are – Jesus initially sent His disciples to their own people, the lost sheep of Israel.

Likewise, our first mission field is our own families, workplaces, and communities.

3. Proclaim the gospel in word and deed – Jesus instructed His disciples to proclaim, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7) and to care for the sick and needy. Our mission is both to speak the good news and to live it out in love.

As we engage the world around us, we must ask ourselves: Are we staying on mission? Are we proclaiming the gospel, making disciples, and living out the love of Christ? Let's recommit to the mission Jesus has given us, trusting that He is with us every step of the way.

As we navigate a world filled with distractions, let us resolve to stay on mission. May we be faithful to the calling God has given us—to know His Word, proclaim His truth, and demonstrate His love. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus and follow His example, unwavering and faithful to the end.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Trent Eastman

