

## Module 3

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# How to Share the Biblical Basis of Missions

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Scott grew up in a good Christian home with godly, committed parents. He was in church every Sunday morning and night and was raised with an understanding of the principles of God. He went to a Christian high school where he was awarded student of the year and headed off to college to pursue baseball on full scholarship. At college Scott plugged into a good church, led worship and was trying to be a witness on his baseball team. Scott had a good life planned out: try to make it into professional baseball, continue his walk with God and if baseball fails become a worship leader at a mega-church. Then one Tuesday afternoon Scott's life took a dramatic turn. A friend of his sat him down and started probing him about his heart for the world. Scott gave him the good Christian answer and said that he loved the world, but that God had called him here to play baseball. As his friend started pressing a little more and asking for missions verses and his knowledge of the world, Scott had to plead ignorance and admitted that he could not name but one missions verse. His friend went to work. Starting with Genesis, Scott spent the next 30 minutes being walked through God's heart for the world. Through the life of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob it began to click for Scott that he really was unaware of God's priority to redeem all peoples. Finally, the story culminated when he read Rev. 5:9 and saw the story's conclusion: what God had promised Abraham about blessing all nations is fulfilled in Revelation. Scott was floored. How could he had been a Christian practically his whole life and never have heard the missions theme of scripture. After more learning and praying Scott has decided to quit baseball, finish college and use his music talent to reach the unreached tribal people in Papua New Guinea.

What if you spent some time learning how to help people like Scott on your campus gain a heart for the world. What if you cultivated the ability to walk people through God's mission vision from His word? That is where this module comes in. Here is a basic outline that you can use for showing people God's mission vision in a small group or one-on-one setting.

As you sit down with your group or individual begin by challenging them to look at the Bible as one book and show them that you can divide the Bible into three parts:

**An Introduction: Genesis 1-11,**  
**a Plot: Genesis 12 - Jude,**  
**and a Conclusion: Revelation.**

Begin by looking at the Introduction.

Read *Genesis 1:28* "*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth..."*

Help them to see that God, from the beginning, desired man to populate the earth both physically and spiritually. God knew that as Adam and Eve “filled the earth” with their physical descendants, they would be filling the earth with worshippers of God as they passed on their spiritual heritage. Help them picture the world full of worshippers as God intended.

Explain that because of the fall of man in Genesis 3:1-8 every thought of man was evil by Genesis 6:5. Consequently, God flooded the earth and started over with one family.

Read *Genesis 9:1* “Then God blessed Noah and his sons saying to them, “**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.**”

Observe that God repeats His command to fill the earth. The crucial question to have in mind while reading chapters 10-11 is, “Does God get it? Will He get the world populated?” God has commanded it twice; it must be important to Him.

Read *Genesis 11: 1-8* “Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there...Then they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.’”

“Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’ So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.”

Ask them, “Why didn’t the people scatter? What was their desire? How did God respond?” This is an extremely important chapter in Scripture and it will be vital that you pass on its significance to your group or individual. It is so important because for the first time we see the diversity of man. Up until now they have been one communal whole. Since man did not fulfill the command to populate the earth and spread out, God took it upon Himself to make sure they obeyed by creating the various language groups and scattering them all over the earth. Sum up the introduction by explaining what the world looked like at this point in history with man spread out all over the earth speaking many different languages.

Transition to the plot. Help them to see that God’s plan of receiving worship from all peoples on earth had not changed. In fact, the rest of scripture is an unfolding of this plan and how He will accomplish it. In this next passage we see the method that God chose to launch His plan and the method He chooses today...people.

Read *Genesis 12:1-4* “The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you...I will bless you...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”

“So Abram left, as the Lord had told him.”

It’s important that you point out that God chose Abram from all the nations on the earth (those scattered at Babel) so that through him God might reach the world. Abram’s obedience meant that he would have to leave his own country and go to the new land that God would show him. Here are some questions you might ask: What would you have done if you were Abram? Would you have left? Why or why not?

Explain that God's desire to reach all peoples does not stop with Abraham, but the rest of the plot (Genesis 12-Jude) is the story of God using people for the purpose of reaching the world. Talk through these different passages starting with Abraham's descendants:

Isaac: *Genesis 26:4* **"I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed."**

Jacob: *Genesis 28:14* **"Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring"**

Walk them through the rest of the Old Testament observing how God would do things in accordance with His desire for the nations to come to know Him. Here are some examples you could use:

The 10 Commandments:

Ever wonder why God gave us the Ten Commandments? The obvious answer is so that His children could obey Him, but there is more. As we read what Moses says about the commandments we see God's vision for all peoples to know Him. Ultimately, His plan was to have a people so set apart that as the nations looked on they couldn't help but give glory to God.

*Deuteronomy 4:5-6* **"See, I have taught these decrees and laws as the Lord my God has commanded me. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'"**

Parting the Red Sea:

God delivered His people from the bondage of mighty Egyptian empire. News of such a catastrophic event was sure to travel fast! The Israelites not only escaped from Egypt, but also parted the Red Sea! Look at the glory God gets from just one of the surrounding nations who heard about this miracle.

*Joshua 2:9-10* **"I (Rahab) know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us...we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt..."**

Solomon and his wisdom:

God gave King Solomon a great gift; He made the king wiser than any other man on earth. Why did God give Solomon this wisdom? Was it because He loved him? Was it because he needed it to be king? Was it because He wanted to bless him? These are all good answers, but look at it from a different perspective. Look at what happened when the nations heard this about the wisdom God had given Solomon.

*1 Kings 4:34* **"The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart."**

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego:

King Nebuchadnezzar was a wicked king who was greedy for glory. He was so greedy for it that when he constructed a huge golden idol and commanded everyone to bow to it, he decided that anyone who defied him would be burned to death in a furnace. Three men would not bow to the king's statue because of their devotion to God. Consequently, they were thrown into the furnace, but God miraculously saved them. Look at King Nebuchadnezzar's response when he witnessed this act. The story becomes yet another example of God's desire to be worshipped in all the earth.

*Daniel 3:29 "Therefore, I (Nebuchadnezzar) decree that the people of any nation or language who say anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego be cut into pieces... for no other God can save in this way."*

Daniel in the lions' den:

Daniel was exiled in a land not his own under the authority of a pagan king. Yet he was fully devoted to serving God. And it would cost him. King Darius' men had him thrown into a den of lions to be eaten alive and done away with. Yet God in His grace extended His arm of protection to Daniel and he was unharmed. As the King witnesses this act we see once again God's name being made known throughout all the earth.

*Daniel 6:25-26 "Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and men of every language who were living in all the land... I (Darius) issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel..."*

*For further verses see Psalm 33:13-14, 67:1-7, 86:9-10, 96:3; Isaiah 11:9-10, 49:6, 52:10, 61:11; Jonah 4:11, Habakkuk 1:5, Zephaniah 2:11, Haggai 2:7, Zechariah 8:20-23, Malachi 1:11*

As you transition to the New Testament show them that the plot continues. As Christ, God in flesh, enters the scene, help them identify His ministry pattern of reaching out to all nations. Here are a few examples:

Clearing the temple:

*Mark 11:15-17 On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area designated for the Gentiles to worship and he found people buying and selling there. As He drove them out saying "Is it not written; 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'?"*

The sign of His return:

*Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*

Jesus' ministry:

*Luke 4:42-43 "...they tried to keep him from leaving them, but He said, 'I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.'"*

The mandate to His followers:

*Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

Explain that the book of Acts and the Epistles are a testimony of the account of the gospel spreading outward. It begins with Jesus echoing what He taught the disciples

for the past 3 years and ends with letters to the churches that had just been planted by missionaries.

*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.”*

As soon as the church experiences persecution, they scatter (*Acts 8:1*), and the Lord adds great numbers to their missionary force.

*Acts 9:15 “...Go! This man (Paul) is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles...”*

Here are other verses from the New Testament that communicate the church’s missions vision.

*Matthew 9:35-38, 28:18-20; John 20:21, Romans 10:11-15, 15:20;  
Galatians 3:13-14, I Timothy 2:4-6, II Peter 3:9, I John 2:2*

Here’s the recap: the introduction: Genesis 1-11, the plot: Genesis 12-Jude, and now the conclusion:

*Revelation 7:9 “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb...”*

It is important that you connect for them that what is happening in Revelation was the very thing God started in Genesis 12 in the life of Abraham. God will do it! There will be a representative from every nation, tribe, people, and language bowing and worshipping at His feet. Heaven is multicultural. God is a missionary God and from cover to cover He is showing us His mission. Here are some good questions to conclude with:

- Do you see God’s heart for the world?
- Would you like to continue to grow in this area?
- Were there any familiar stories that you had never seen from a missions perspective?
- Would you like to get more resources on this subject? If yes, be prepared to gather these resources for them.

Help them make a list of some practical things they can do within the week to start to implement God’s heart for the world into their own life. Make yourself available for questions they may have.

*In Closing...*

No one would ever tell you that missions was a bad idea. In fact, just about every church would affirm its great value and importance! Yet, how many Christians know what the Bible has to say about it? How many think it is important because God thinks it is important? Disturbingly few. Without the authority of God’s Word, missions will remain just a good idea. It will forever be just a suggestion holding little to no priority for the average Christian. The Biblical basis for missions is a foundational tool in the belt of every mobilizer. The above information is the reason we mobilize with confidence.