



Small Group Study Guide

South Park Church
1330 S. Courtland Avenue
Park Ridge, IL 60068
www.southparkchurch.org

Mission Statement Circles:

Transformation takes place when you come to know God through faith in Jesus Christ. When you trust that God loves you with an everlasting love, it empowers you to love him back with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then it keeps going and empowers you to love your neighbor as yourself. This transformation from the inside out is reflected in the concentric circles of our mission statement and the graphic for Send Me.

South Park Church exists to help people of all ages...



We dream of a church filled with personal stories about what is happening in each of these circles.

Send Me

South Park Church has always been a sending church.

We have had a role in training and sending many pastors and missionaries. While we remain faithful to that long-term calling, this series is primarily about our mission field. By the end of this series, we want to celebrate that God is calling us and sending us to join Him in His work where He has already placed us. God's heart is for our neighbors and community. He has good news to share with them.

The Mission of God

"The Bible as a whole presents the grand narrative that runs from creation to new creation. God's plan and purpose (or God's mission) is to bring the whole of creation, spoiled and broken by human and satanic evil, into unity in Christ, through whom he has accomplished its reconciliation by the blood of the cross (Ephesians 1:9-10; Colossians 1:20). And that new creation will be populated by people from every tribe and nation and language and people, who will have been redeemed through the Lord Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that through him and his descendants all nations on earth would enter into God's blessing (Revelation 7:9-10; Genesis 12:1-3; 18:18; 22:15-18). We can read the whole Bible from this missional perspective, seeing all the Scriptures as the witness to, and deposit of, the great saving mission of God, spanning the whole of creation, directing the whole of history, and centered on the whole gospel of Jesus Christ" (Christopher J. H. Wright in *The Message of Jeremiah 35*, developed more fully in *The Mission of God*).

How to Use this Study Guide

1. "Your Walk": Each week asks you to reflect on the past week and share a highlight with the group. You may want to ask everyone to share their answer in 30 seconds or less. This is a good way for everyone to participate. It also connects what is happening in the study with what is going on in the lives of your group members.
2. "Digging In": This is the Bible study portion. There are riches to be mined from each week's passage if we are willing to dig in.
3. "Living It Out": These five questions are the same every week. They are designed to increase our awareness throughout the week of God's mission and our role in it. We pray that this will build excitement and anticipation throughout the series as we hear ongoing stories of God at work all around us.
4. "Commission": We commission each other to join God in His mission each week. Please close your meeting by praying this in unison.

Week of February 17

Who is sending?

Your Walk

1. God is pursuing a growing relationship with you. How have you been walking in step with God or out of step with God this past week? Consider journaling your response and sharing one highlight with the group. Then pray opening your life up to the God who knows you best and loves you most.

Digging In

2. The word “sent” is used repeatedly in John’s Gospel, especially in Jesus’ prayer in John 17. What can we learn about God the Father, God the Son, and being sent from the following verses? (John 17:3, 8, 18, 21, 23, 25).

3. Read John 20:19-23. Make observations about this passage. What seems significant or surprising to you?

4. Reflect on others sent throughout the Bible (Abraham, Moses, the prophets). In what ways is the sending in John 20 continuous with what God has done in the past, and in what ways is it something new?

5. What emotions did the disciples experience in John 20:19-23? What influenced their emotions? As you think about being sent, what emotions are you experiencing?

6. How is the sending of the original disciples the same and/or different from followers of Jesus today being sent?

Living it out

7. Reflect on where and how you have seen God at work around you this past week. How can you join him in what He is doing?

8. Think about where God has sent you (neighborhood, workplace, school, hobbies) and what needs are there. What would it look like for you to love people in Jesus' name in those places?

9. God has purposely and providentially placed people in your life. With whom has God drawn you into relationship? What is God doing in their lives? How can you participate in that?

10. What interactions have you had with your neighbors this past week?

11. God has given us each other. How can we encourage one another as we are sent?

Commission

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you.
May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.
May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you.
May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Week of February 24

Why and I sent?

Your Walk

1. God is pursuing a growing relationship with you. How have you been walking in step with God or out of step with God this past week? Consider journaling your response and sharing one highlight with the group. Then pray opening your life up to the God who knows you best and loves you most.

Digging In

2. List things we learn about God in Isaiah 6:1-4. What do you find reassuring, and what do you find troubling?

3. In response to this revelation from God, what does Isaiah feel and do? How does your view of God influence how you see yourself? And how does God respond? Isaiah 6:5-8.

4. God is looking for someone to send. How does Isaiah respond to God's call? What had prepared him to respond this way?

5. God provides purification and freedom from guilt before calling to action. How have you previously seen or personally felt unhealthy pressure or guilt used as an attempt to motivate people to be involved in mission?

6. If you have ever tried to do something for God without first recognizing your own deficiency and dependence on God, what did you learn from that experience?

Living it out

7. Reflect on where and how you have seen God at work around you this past week. How can you join him in what He is doing?

8. Think about where God has sent you (neighborhood, workplace, school, hobbies) and what needs are there. What would it look like for you to love people in Jesus' name in those places?

9. God has purposely and providentially placed people in your life. With whom has God drawn you into relationship? What is God doing in their lives? How can you participate in that?

10. What interactions have you had with your neighbors this past week?

11. God has given us each other. How can we encourage one another as we are sent?

Commission

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you.
May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.
May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you.
May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Week of March 3

What are we Sending?

Your Walk

1. God is pursuing a growing relationship with you. How have you been walking in step with God or out of step with God this past week? Consider journaling your response and sharing one highlight with the group. Then pray opening your life up to the God who knows you best and loves you most.

Digging In

2. What does it mean to be Jesus-centered?

3. Read Matthew 28:16-20. How did the disciples respond to the resurrected Jesus? Why is their doubt mingled with worship? What do they doubt?

4. What is involved in making disciples? Make as many observations as you can from Matthew 28:16-20.

5. What holds you back from actively participating in Jesus' "Great Commission?"

6. In what ways can you participate in the Great Commission in the context of your family? Work? Neighborhood?

To learn more about baptism: www.southparkchurch.org/baptism

Living it out

7. Reflect on where and how you have seen God at work around you this past week. How can you join him in what He is doing?

8. Think about where God has sent you (neighborhood, workplace, school, hobbies) and what needs are there. What would it look like for you to love people in Jesus' name in those places?

9. God has purposely and providentially placed people in your life. With whom has God drawn you into relationship? What is God doing in their lives? How can you participate in that?

10. What interactions have you had with your neighbors this past week?

11. God has given us each other. How can we encourage one another as we are sent?

Commission

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you.

May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.

May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you.

May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Week of March 10

Where am I sent?

Your Walk

1. God is pursuing a growing relationship with you. How have you been walking in step with God or out of step with God this past week? Consider journaling your response and sharing one highlight with the group. Then pray opening your life up to the God who knows you best and loves you most.

Digging In

2. Read Acts 1:1-10. Have you ever had an experience you would describe as the power of the Holy Spirit equipping you to do something for God?

3. Reread Acts 1:8. What does it mean to be a witness for Jesus?

4. This verse describes four circles moving outward from the center both geographically and culturally. What would these four spheres look like for your life and our church?

- Jerusalem: the place where the disciples currently were and was filled with people like themselves.
- Judea: the area surrounding Jerusalem.
- Samaria: the people they lived near but didn't get along with easily.
- The ends of the earth: all the people far from them both physically and culturally.

5. In what ways are you already being a witness for Jesus in one of these circles?

6. As the story of Acts unfolds, the sending center moves from Jerusalem to Antioch. What are some of the practices of a sending church from Acts 13:1-3?

Living it out

7. Reflect on where and how you have seen God at work around you this past week. How can you join him in what He is doing?

8. Think about where God has sent you (neighborhood, workplace, school, hobbies) and what needs are there. What would it look like for you to love people in Jesus' name in those places?

9. God has purposely and providentially placed people in your life. With whom has God drawn you into relationship? What is God doing in their lives? How can you participate in that?

10. What interactions have you had with your neighbors this past week?

11. God has given us each other. How can we encourage one another as we are sent?

Commission

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you. May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm. May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you. May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Week of March 17

What am I sent to do?

Your Walk

1. God is pursuing a growing relationship with you. How have you been walking in step with God or out of step with God this past week? Consider journaling your response and sharing one highlight with the group. Then pray opening your life up to the God who knows you best and loves you most.

Digging In

2. Read Romans 10:8-13. Take two minutes to think about the content of this message. Write the core of the good news the way you would tell it to someone unfamiliar with it. Share your thoughts with the group. Is there anything you would change from your first draft after hearing from others?

3. How do you respond when people are not receptive to the message you share?

4. The central affirmation of the early church was "Jesus is Lord"; everyone else was saying "Caesar is Lord." Who (or what) are some gods that compete with your allegiance to Christ?

5. Read Romans 10:13-15. What does this passage indicate about the importance of sharing the good news?

6. Compare what this passage says about what God sends people to do with our church's mission statement. How does tonight's discussion relate to loving people in Jesus' name?

Living it out

7. Reflect on where and how you have seen God at work around you this past week. How can you join him in what He is doing?

8. Think about where God has sent you (neighborhood, workplace, school, hobbies) and what needs are there. What would it look like for you to love people in Jesus' name in those places?

9. God has purposely and providentially placed people in your life. With whom has God drawn you into relationship? What is God doing in their lives? How can you participate in that?

10. What interactions have you had with your neighbors this past week?

11. God has given us each other. How can we encourage one another as we are sent?

Commission

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you, wherever He may send you.
May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.
May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you.
May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.



Recommended Reading

Christ + City: Why the Greatest Need of the city is the Greatest News of All
by Jon M. Dennis

Gain by Losing: Why the Future Belongs to Churches that Send by J. D. Greear

Leading Kingdom Movements: the 'Everyman' Notebook on How to Change the World by Mike Breen

Let the Nations Be Glad by John Piper

A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story by Michael W. Goheen

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman

Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours by Roland Allen

Sentness: Six Postures of Missional Christians by Kim Hammond and Darren Cronshaw