

Mission Brief: Fall 2026

In the past year I've watched a documentary and a movie about the hunt for Osama Bin Laden. The whole thing fascinates me. The movie depicts the lead up to the mission to go in and kill Bin Laden and the actors portray the events of the raid on his compound in Pakistan in 2011 in detail. It's intense and I've seen the movie a couple of times, and something always sticks out to me.

You've got a group of the most highly trained and skilled soldiers on the planet, and they all work together in harmony to make the mission a success. It all comes together because of good organization, training, and leadership but there are two necessities for the mission, and each soldier has to buy into both.

First, they all know the overall goal of the mission. What are we here to do? What is the mission for? And second, each soldier plays his role in making it happen. No one is looking to be the man. One guy stands guard while another guy flies the helicopter while another guy is the 1st through the door.

They all work together seamlessly because they are individually committed to these two necessities. They have them drilled into them leading up to the day of the mission, but there's a final mission brief where they are summarized one last time. Think of our time together this morning as a mission brief for our mission as a church.

It can be easy to attend church weekly and sort of float along. It's easy to forget that we exist as a church for a reason. We have a purpose and a mission that has been given to us by our Lord. I want to brief you on that mission and your role in it this morning so that we can more effectively engage it in the weeks and months ahead. I want to challenge us to advance the ball as a church and keep our mission moving forward. This requires all of us working together to see this happen. So, I want to give us **Two Necessities for Us to Stay on Mission for Christ.**

1. Remember the Goal of the Mission

When those soldiers first heard about their mission, they knew what the ultimate goal of it was. There were being sent to kill a known terrorist. There were secondary goals to it, but the main goal was clear, and everyone knew it.

What are we here to do as a church? To answer that question, we have to know what God's ultimate goal for all of creation is. What was God hoping to accomplish when He started this whole thing? Here's how I would put it: God desired to make a people who would dwell under His reign with Him in fellowship in the place He created for them. In the early chapters of Genesis, He placed the first two humans in a garden to be in fellowship with Him and represent Him and they were supposed to take dominion over all the earth by filling it with more image bearers who would live in communion and fellowship with God.

Very few missions go off without a hitch and God's mission ran into the biggest hitch of all, human sin and rebellion against Him. The goal is still the same but now humans are turned against God and His purposes and not in sync with Him. So what did God do to overcome this obstacle? He sent Jesus Christ to become a human to bring humans back into fellowship with God by defeating their sin and offering them communion with God through forgiveness of their sins. This is the good news of the gospel. God's rule and reign over His people has returned through Jesus and God offers forgiveness, victory and communion through Him.

This is the message that God has given His people to proclaim to the entire world so that more image bearers will turn from their sin and to Him. This is the mission He gave His followers in Matthew 28:18-20. And the beauty of this mission is that we know God won't fail in accomplishing it. Listen to the end of the story in Rev. 21:1-4.

Our role in God's mission is to proclaim the gospel and see followers of Christ made and then grow to be more like Christ as they are prepared for their ultimate home dwelling with God forever. As a church we could be involved in a lot of different activities and good things, but this is the main thing we are committed to. And here's how we try to express this: *WBC exists to make followers of Christ who worship God, connect with one another, and serve the church and the world.* We all need to know this ultimate goal and be aimed at it. But each person here needs to know what specific role you play in the mission. We don't all do the same things in the same way, but all are necessary. And this is the second necessity.

2. Recognize Your Role in the Mission

It's good and healthy for each of us to be pushed and challenged sometimes. That's what I want to do this morning. You have a vital part to play in God's mission. You are an important member of the team. But maybe you don't realize what that role is or how to play it. Or maybe you know what you need to do but other things have crowded out your participation in the mission. Either way, take this as a coach who sees the talent in you and wants you to realize your role and get the joy of participating in what God is doing. Here are 4 parts of your role:

- You Are a Follower...So Follow Christ

You are following something or someone. You are listening to and learning all the time. Something is leading you because you have no other option. The thing leading you could be your own heart and desires, but even those are shaped by some master outside of you. You are a follower. So what are you following this morning? What has captured your heart? What pulls you along and guides you through life? Every person in here is following something or someone.

If you claim to be a Christian, following Christ is a necessity. In fact, claiming the title of Christian is claiming that you are following Jesus. As you read the gospels there's a major emphasis on the disciples of Jesus. In the book of Matthew we are introduced to Jesus in Matthew 1-4 and at the end of chapter 4 the ministry of Jesus begins. What's one of the first things he does and one of the key parts of his ministry and mission? Listen to Matthew 4:18-22.

He calls disciples and then they commit themselves to Him and His teachings, ways, and lifestyle. Then when Jesus goes off the scene after the resurrection and ascends to heaven, he tells His disciples to make more disciples in Matthew 28:19.

Disciple says we are people who spend our lives apprenticed to our master, Jesus Christ. We are in a growing-learning relationship, always. A disciple is a learner, but not in the academic setting of a school-room, rather at the work site of a craftsman. We do not acquire information about God but skills in faith. - Eugene Peterson

What about your life indicates that you are actively apprenticed to Jesus Christ? The first and major part of your role in God's mission is to be a disciple to Jesus yourself.

- You Are a Worshiper...So Worship God

You and I are designed to worship God. Our hearts were made for this purpose, and this is where we find our joy, rest, and satisfaction. But our hearts have been twisted and bent by sin and now we give our worship to other things. We replace the one true God with created things. Listen to Romans 1:21-25. Your heart will worship something. What will it be?

Let me give you one encouragement this morning, Christian worship is unique among forms of worship in the world. When others "worship" they bring something to the altar or service to engage their God, appease Him, or honor Him by their devotion. How is Christian worship different?

Christian worship is, therefore, our participation through the Spirit in the Son's communion with the Father, in his vicarious life of worship and intercession. It is our response to our Father for all that he has done for us in Christ. - James Torrance

There's always been communion between Father and Son through the Spirit and Christian worship is when we get invited to participate in that communion because of what Jesus has done for us. John 17:20-26. Your role in the mission of God is to show up on Sundays with the body of Christ and together worship God. Join in what is already happening, the joy and honor between Father and Son through the Spirit. Join that because you have been invited in through Christ. You are joined to Christ because of the cross and you get to participate in the heavenly communion. Worship is the ultimate goal of God's mission in the world. You and I get the chance to share in that together.

- You Are Made for Relationships...So Connect with Others

One of the most prevalent lies of our culture is that you and I exist as isolated individuals and that we can find true and lasting joy by attending to our individual

wants, needs, and desires. God Himself has always existed in a community of persons, the triune Godhead, and that relational dynamic is reflected in how we are designed. We flourish when we experience communion with others and we are made for this. Notice the attention to “we” in Paul’s words in Ephesians 4:11-15. The saints are equipped for the work of ministry. We grow up together. Notice in verse 15 that the whole body is joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped. We need each other.

Now, let’s be honest with ourselves. Relationships are hard work and because of this it’s quite easy to ignore those we find difficult. We cut them off. “If a relationship drains you, it’s not for you!” Now, if you fill your life and time with nothing but difficult people and challenging relationships, that isn’t a healthy approach either. So, there’s a balance to be found here, but I have my suspicions that far too many people in our culture tend to eliminate any relationships that are difficult or challenging. The problem with this is that it’s completely lacking Christlikeness.

I’ve heard relationships compared to the little nodules on a lego block. That little bump that allows the Legos to connect to one another. Each person only has so many and can only cultivate a certain number of relationships to a deeper level. As you consider the relationships you have, pursue a mix of reaching out and being a little uncomfortable at times and those that are easy and bring joy and delight to you.

Here at WBC, we try to provide opportunities to build relationships that are Christ-centered. These happen through small groups and if a small group doesn’t work we have a women’s study and a men’s study. But you bring something to the table in relationships, so let me encourage you to not just be a Sunday morning person. Use your lego space for Christ’s mission.

- You Are Gifted...So Serve Others

One of the great delights of human beings is the variety, uniqueness, and gifting that God has given. People are endlessly entertaining, funny, talented and weird.

Next time you are at a dinner party and the conversation lulls, ask everyone to identify something they think they can do better than 90% of the population. Mine would be parallel parking.

Even if you can't think of anything, you have some God-given gifting. There's something that you bring to the table as an imager bearer. You may not be world-class at it, but there's something you enjoy and that blesses others. Notice Ephesians 4:16. When each part is working properly.

Here at WBC this can mean serving on one of our serving teams, but it also may mean just building a relationship with another believer and getting together for coffee. Serving happens to advance the mission and what is the mission? Making followers of Christ. The mission is about people, not about getting the tasks at church done.

So, as we head into the fall when things get busy, I know, consider God's mission and your role in it. Think of one of these areas where you can be more actively engaged because of God's grace in your life. I'll finish by reading a few verses earlier in Ephesians 4:4-7. It's all a gift. Turn that gift back around and join God's mission with it. Let's pray.

Sermon Reflection Questions: 9/6/26

- Describe a time when you had to lead a group of people toward accomplishing a goal or mission. What was effective in leading them and what wasn't?
- If you had to explain God's ultimate goal for creation to a 10 year old, how would you do it?
- How do we see God's goal for creation in the early chapters of Genesis and the last couple of chapters of Revelation?
- What is the biggest challenge for you currently to actively following Jesus?
- How does it change the expectations of following Jesus to think of it as an apprenticeship and not as a student?
- How is Christian worship unique from every other faith or religion in the world?
- What are the biggest challenges for you to regular church attendance right now? How can you practically address those?
- In what ways do you feel the cultural emphasis on the individual at work in your life and perspective?

- What are some ways to find a balance between sacrificially pursuing challenging relationships and spending time in life-giving enjoyable ones?
- In what ways do you personally enjoy serving in the church? What are the biggest challenges to service for you?