**We Live Missions Week Small Group Guide**

**A View of Missions from History’s Greatest Missionary**

**Prework:** Preview the video [“Reaching the Unreached”](http://www.vimeo.com/228755241) and consider sharing it during section 1. Visit [joshuaproject.net](https://joshuaproject.net/) and choose an unreached people group to pray for together at the end.

“For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews *[in his life on earth]*, on behalf God’s truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed *[that is, Abraham, to whom God promised that his family would bless the whole world, see Genesis 12:3]* and moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written *[in the Psalms and Prophets],*

*‘Therefore I will praise [explain] you among the Gentiles,*

*and sing the praises of your name.’*

Again, it says, *‘Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people!’*

And again, *‘Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,*

*and let all the Peoples extol him!’*

And again, Isaiah says *‘The Root of Jesse will spring up, [the King descended from David],*

*One who will arise to rule over the nations;*

*In him the Gentiles will hope!’*

***-* Romans 15:8-12**

…Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
- **Romans 15:15-16**

…I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God

by what I have said and done,

by the power of signs and wonders,

through the power of the Spirit of God.

So from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not build on someone else’s foundation. Rather, as it is written:

‘Those who were not told about him will see,

and those who have not heard will understand.’”

**Romans 15:18-21**

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*Missions is Cross-Cultural Disciple-Making*, directly guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, which produces new disciple-makers among all the nations of the world.

**Introduction:** Unless you count Jesus, Paul the Missionary [Apostle] was perhaps history’s greatest missionary. When he started his adult life, he was trying to destroy a Christian sect while it was still confined in and around Judea. When he finished his life, he had established disciple-making movement churches all the way from Syria to Spain, with dozens of successful church plants in between.

Within 50 years of his death, Roman writers said there was nowhere in all the peoples or nations of the Roman Empire where there were not followers of this “Jesus” fellow. So maybe it’s a good idea to understand what missions truly is—biblically and historically—by looking at words written by Paul the Missionary [Apostle] for Jesus Christ.

1. **Missions is about pushing on to the unevangelized, un-discipled edge—and pushing it back!**

**Read Again:** Romans 15:18-21

**Discuss:** *What* does Paul proclaim?

 *Where* does he strive to go?

 *Why* does he strive to go there?

**Discuss:** *Here’s a Fact*: Forty percent of all language groups/people groups in the world today not only do not have anyone worshipping Jesus; they don’t even have any Christian living close enough to them so they could watch their life and ask them questions. These languages groups represent 3.2 billion men, women and children (42% of the world’s population).

Optional: Watch the incredible [four-minute video](vimeo.com/228755241) by Reality Santa Barbara.

1. **Missions is Cross-Cultural**

**Read again:** Romans 15:8-12

In verse 8 Paul speaks of the “promises made to the patriarchs” which is looking all the way back to the promise made to Abraham in Gen. 12:3 and repeated to Isaac and Jacob. Verses 9-12 are quotes from the Psalms and the Prophets.

**Discuss:** What does this say about the scope of God’s plan? [Help group members see that God’s plan is global and that it’s been global from the very beginning]

In the first section we talked about how 40% of all language groups do not have anyone worshipping Jesus. If God’s plan has always been global praise (v. 11) what is it going to take to go from 40% to 0? [Jesus followers are going to have to leave their comfort zones and cross cultures to make disciples]

1. **Missions is Disciple-Making**

**Read again:** Romans 15:15-18

**Discuss:** Paul speaks of leading the Gentiles to obey God. Read Matthew 28:19-20. What does obedience have to do with making disciples? Why is it important to emphasize obedience to Jesus over knowledge about Jesus?

If obedience is essential for a disciple what are we going to do with Jesus’ command to make disciples of *all nations*?

According to this text, what is the essential heart of missions? “Helping people less well off than we are”, “making lots of converts” or “making disciples who make disciples”?

1. **Missions is empowered by the Holy Spirit**

**Read:** Romans 15:18-19

 *“…leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I’ve said and done, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God.”*

**Discuss:** WHY might signs and wonders occur out on the “unevangelized, undiscipled edge” – the part of the world that knows nothing about the Gospel?

**Read:** Acts 1:8

**Discuss:** What’s the connection between receiving power and going to the “unevangelized, undiscipled edge” in this passage?

**Conclusion:** Paul the Apostle [Missionary] gave us an abundance of guidance on what missions work actually is. Romans 15 is a great source of detailed information about the biblical plan of God which requires that good news reaches all nations—and which is going to require all of His people being a part of His global plan.

**Read again:**

***“****For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed,****19****by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;****20****and* thus I make *it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation,****21****but as it is written,*

***‘Those who have never been told of Him will see,***

***and those who have never heard of him will understand!’”***

Romans 15:18-21

**Application:** What S.P.E.C.K. are you going to take away from this? From what YOU discovered tonight is there a

S…Sin to confess

P…Promise to claim

E…Example to follow

C…Command to embrace and obey or

K…Knowledge about God to believe?

**Pray:** Pray together for God’s help in obeying what His Word teaches about missions and what it teaches about the Nations who don’t yet know his Good News. Go to joshuaproject.net, choose and read about an unreached people group, and pray Romans 15:9-12 over them.

**Challenge:** Download the app “Unreached of the Day” and get daily reminders of people groups to pray for from the “unevangelized, undiscipled edge.”