



KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE

MARKETPLACE MISSION TRIP: WEEK 4

WARM-UP

- Ask the group how their appreciation week went last week
- Ask whether someone has a story to share related to the mission trip so far

PRAYER

Spend 10 minutes in small prayer groups.

- Exchange your *10 Most Wanted* cards
- Spend time praying for co-laborers

LESSON

We understand the personal motivation to get ahead in our careers. But when someone works hard so they can help and serve others, our coworkers don't understand that motive nearly as well. It just doesn't add up. Each time you go beyond what is expected, simply because you follow Jesus and want to serve others, some of the people around you may get curious. Eventually, you

may be asked, *“Why are you doing this?”*

First Marketplace Minister

Jesus commissioned a marketplace minister in Mark 5:1-20.

First, He healed the man of demon possession. But because of the spectacle this caused, the local people asked Jesus to leave the area. As Jesus was leaving, the healed man asked if he could go with Jesus, but Jesus told him no. “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you” (Mark 5:19). With nothing more than a one-sentence training session, Jesus sends him alone into a land where no one else knows or follows Jesus.

What has Jesus done for you?

Can you “report to them what great things the Lord has done for you and how He had mercy on you?”

As you continue to appreciate others (last week’s focus), you may get any number of questions. *“Don’t you have something better to do?”* ... *“Why would you stay late and help me?”* ... *“Why did you buy treats?”* ... *“Why are you asking me to forgive you for gossiping?”*

Other forms of the question

Another question we hear is *“Why are you doing this?”* When you stay late to help a coworker with no reward or when you go out of your way to serve others, they won’t understand your motives. For some, you will get an opportunity to

explain your faith, but like first impressions, first explanations matter.

Therefore, we suggest participants practice answering these two questions: “*Why are you doing this?*” and “*Why do you follow Jesus?*” And we recommend four key principles for your response.

Four keys

1. The answer needs to be genuine. Begin by writing out your answer to each question like you’re answering someone who doesn’t know who Jesus is or what he has done.
2. Use “I” and “me” statements. Try to answer the question you’re asked. Most people won’t ask you for a gospel presentation or how to get to heaven. They’ll ask why you’re doing this act of service. So, make

sure your answers us “I” and “me” statements.

3. Include Jesus. Hopefully, your action was initiated because you follow Jesus. Then make sure to give him the credit. You’re not doing this because you’re a good person. You’re doing this because Jesus transformed you and gave you the job of helping others to know and follow him. So, make sure the person who asks you knows that Jesus was involved.
4. Make your answer somewhat brief. Try to keep it to a couple of sentences. Your answer will give them the first seed. God will direct you in your answer, and He will also prompt them to ask you more.

I generally say, “I’m doing this because my life changed when I began following Jesus. He went way out of his way for me, and so I try to go out of my way to help others.”

GROUP EXERCISE

If your group is more than four, break into sub-groups of no more than three people each. Take turns following these steps.

STEP 1: Imagine you just bought someone’s lunch or went out of your way to help a coworker. They ask, “Why are you doing this?” Share your answer here or with your group.

STEP 2: Now improve it. Someone in the group should ask, “But why?” Now

what do you say? State your answer more clearly.

STEP 3: But why? Go ahead, write out the next answer.

STEP 4: But why? Again, write or share your answer.

Did you get clearer as you went? Do you have a good feel for how to answer this question so that Jesus is part of the answer?

DAILY ACTION STEPS

DAY 1

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Today, practice rejoicing about everything, that happens at work, both

good and bad. And pray for your coworkers, customers, and vendors. Ask God to show you who you're forgetting or overlooking. Who else can you pray for? Write any ideas you get while you pray, and consider those as action items!

DAY 2

Read Mark 5:1-20, especially 19-20.

Write out your answer to why you follow Jesus. Think about and begin listing the "great things" God has done for you. Lookup a definition for the word "mercy." How has God had mercy on you? Then, pray for your coworkers today on the way to work. Ask God to show you who you need to get to know better.

DAY 3

Read Colossians 4:5-6

Get treats for the office or invite someone to lunch, your treat. Do anything over and above the call of your job. And practice answering the question, “Why do you follow Jesus?” Think about your answer and help a friend with theirs.

DAY 4

Read Colossians 3:1-11

Continue praying for others and practice your answers again. Consider asking someone else if they ever think about spiritual things. Ask for their opinion without offering your own. Ask to learn. And write a thank you note or give

someone a special “thank you” gift. Try to extend your regular practice further as you set your mind on things above.

DAY 5

Read Colossians 3:12-17

As you pray for your coworkers today, ask God to bring someone to you who asks about the hope they see in you. And if he gives you an idea during or after your prayer time, figure out a way to do it. Stay late and help someone in their job or come in early to help out. When God gives you an idea, act.

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