

## READ 1Corinthians 9: 19-27

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Can you paraphrase in your own words what Paul is saying here?

What are the key criteria for his actions and the way he restricts himself?

To what extent should we modify our behaviour as Christians in order to share the gospel?

To what extent should we be involved in our culture and its activities so as to understand it and to be part of it?

How might we adjust our lifestyles in order to reach people in various subcultures?

Do you feel like an athlete in training as you attempt to live as a Christian?

What do you need to focus on to “run the race”?

An artist was engaged to paint a picture of a “dying church”. It was assumed that he would portray a ramshackle building, with broken windows and neglected grounds. But when it was unveiled the painting was of a fine Gothic Church, stately, elegant and expensive – glorious stained glass, carved wooden stalls, a rood screen, a great organ and comfortable pews. Everyone was bewildered, but one day an old man who had spent much time looking at the painting solved the problem. There in an inconspicuous corner, the artist had painted-in a box on the wall labeled: **‘FOR MISSION’**  
Covering the box were cobwebs.



**‘FOR MISSION’**

Was the artist right in his assessment

# Going Together I



When ferocious cannibals captured a hapless missionary he had the privilege of giving them their first real taste of Christianity

*Sauce unknown!*

There are many stereotypes about what Christian Mission is all about. They usually involve overseas activity and “professionals” doing the outreach but that has never been an accurate picture of how the Gospel is meant to be shared.

What do you understand by the terms:

**MISSION, EVANGELISM, OUTREACH?**

Who do you see as being involved in such activities?

As a church we are connected to the Council for World Mission (CWM)

It has been suggested that what Mission should involve is

**C**ommunity Action

**W**inning people for Christ

**M**aking disciples

What do you think?

We have been looking at what it means to live the Christian faith under three headings:

We now consider the way in which we are called to “Go out” to share our faith



NB. The Roman Catholic term ‘Mass’, their title for Holy Communion, derives from the same Latin word as Mission and from which we get dismissal – “being sent out”. You leave the church after Communion to serve God in the world and share your faith.

Whenever the Church considers 'Mission', it normally begins by looking at the so-called Great Commission at the end of Matthew's Gospel....

**READ Matthew 28: 16-20**

Matthew tells us that there were different reactions to the presence of Jesus with them at this time and place. What were they?

How do you understand these 'contradictory' responses? This Great Commission contains a Statement, a Command and a Promise.....

What are they and how are they linked and related to each other?

How might what happens here cause problems for someone brought up as a Jew?

What three things does Jesus expect his followers to do?

Is the order in which he lists them significant?

Do you feel challenged by these words? In what way?

We need to hear these words of Jesus against the backdrop of the understanding that the Lord God had chosen the Jewish people to be an example to the nations of the world and as he promised Abraham – through his descendants humanity would be blessed and they were to be witnesses of his mercy and grace.

(cf. Genesis 22: 18-19; Isaiah 43: 8-13; 44: 6-8)

**Church: The only society  
on earth that exists for the  
benefit of non-members.**

WILLIAM TEMPLE  
Archbishop Canab.

Do you agree?

Temple also declared:

*Knowledge of God can be fully given to man only in a Person, never in a doctrine. Faith is not the holding of correct doctrine, but personal fellowship with the living God.*

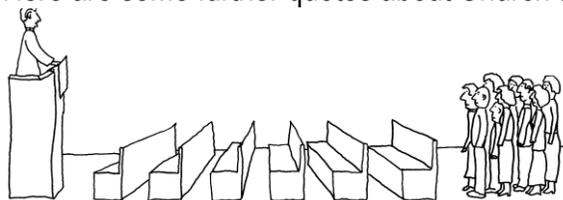
This helps us to recognise that the sharing of faith always has a personal dimension and is not just a matter of the passing on of facts and truths.

Around the same time as Temple was active the theologian Emil Brunner made a declaration of the importance of Christian mission:

*The Word of God which was given in Jesus Christ is a unique historical fact, and everything Christian is dependent on it; hence every one who receives this Word, and by it salvation, receives along with it the duty of passing this Word on; just as a man who might have discovered a remedy for cancer which saved himself, would be in duty bound to make this remedy accessible to all. Mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church; mission is its cause and its life. **The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning.** Where there is no mission, there is no Church; and where there is neither Church nor mission, there is no faith. It is a secondary question whether by that we mean Foreign Missions, or simply the preaching of the Gospel in the home Church. Mission, Gospel preaching, is the spreading out of the fire which Christ has thrown upon the earth. He who does not propagate this fire shows that he is not burning. He who burns propagates the fire. This 'must' is both things – an urge and a command. An urge, because living faith feels God's purpose as its own.*

EMIL BRUNNER

Here are some further quotes about Church and Mission:



*There is church because there is mission, not vice versa.*

BACK OF CHURCH SUNDAY

*It is not the Church of God that has a mission in the world, but the God of Mission who has a church.*

*If your church is full of members, you get an occasional missionary, if your church is full of missionaries; the rest is just about geography.*

*The church is the catalyst of mission, not its goal.*

What do you think?

Which of these quotes speaks to you?

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