

capture

their Attention

Think of the hardest assignment you have ever had in college or elsewhere.

How much time and attention did it require? How did you do on it?

What would have been the consequences of neglecting the assignment?

Optional beginning to substitute: Think of a movie clip to illustrate being in a position where it seems almost impossible to get out. You could watch the actual clip with your group, or at least have someone who has seen the movie describe it in detail. Some possible movies could be: Mission Impossible, Vertical Limit, The Fellowship of the Ring, etc.

What will it take for the character(s) to accomplish their mission?

What if someone (in the group) neglects his or her part? What could happen to the mission?

Expose

their Need

Imagine getting an important assignment, but never knowing it.

Today, we are going to look at an assignment we have all been given, but many Christians aren't aware of it. From a human standpoint, this is truly an impossible mission. But from God's standpoint, it is just part of normal Christian living.

But before we look at our assignment, we need to talk about Jesus.

Think about the different names ascribed to Jesus. What were some of the favorite names or terms Jesus used to identify himself? (Son of God; Son of man; etc.)

Those are favorites. But there is another identifier used by Jesus himself which, John records in his Gospel but we often miss. It is a key for us in understanding our assignment.

Explore

the Scripture

Turn to the book of John. I'll give a series of verses from John and we can take turns reading them. Either write down the reference (so you can look back at them later), or if you like to write in your Bible, circle the key word or put an asterisk by it so you can find them easily. We'll read them quickly. After we are done, we can talk about their implications. (After reading each one, have them circle the word "sent")

<i>John 3:34</i>	6:39	8:26	14:24
4:34	6:44	8:29	15:21
5:23	6:57	8:42	16:5
5:24	7:16	9:4	17:3
5:30	7:18	10:36	17:8
5:36	7:28	11:42	17:21
5:37	7:29	12:44	17:23
5:38	7:33	12:45	17:25
6:29	8:16	12:49	
6:38	8:18	13:20	

What does this list tell you about Jesus? (He was a man on a mission. He was on assignment.)

Let's look back at a few of these verses and see the difference being sent made for Jesus. For each verse, ask: What did he do? What did he not do? Why?

John 5:30
6:38
7:16
7:18

Jesus, of course, accomplished the assignment he was given. Look up *John 17:4*.

But what does this have to do with us? There are two more "sent" verses that we didn't look at. Turn to them now.

John 17:18
20:21

This has been called
JOHN'S GREAT COMMISSION.

In the same way that the Father has sent Jesus into the world, we have been sent by Jesus. We are on the same mission.

When and where is this assignment to be carried out? Look at Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus said this applies in all nations until the end of the age. So it is an assignment for his people at all times in all places. We are on assignment 24/7, and we are to do it just like Jesus did, seeking to please the one who sent us.

SHOW

the difference

Use your imagination and begin to visualize what it would look like if we began to live like sent ones 24/7. What changes do you think this should make in our lifestyles? (Let them discuss this for a while.)

DESIGN

the application

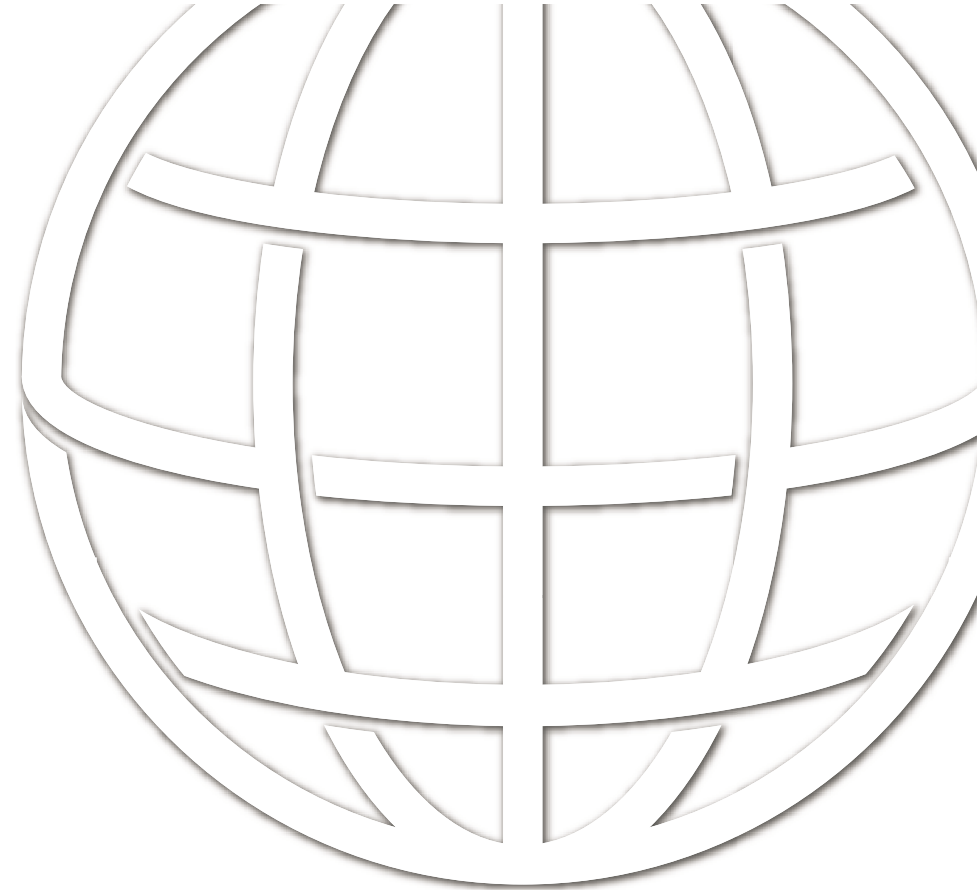
To apply these truths, we are going to spend some time in prayer, talking to the one who has sent us. (Lead the group in a time of conversational prayer.)

Begin by thanking God for the privilege of being sent by him as his workers in the world.

Confess your failures in the past to be doing what he has sent us to do, in the manner that Jesus did it.

By faith, tell him your desire to fulfill your assignment and ask him to fill you with his Spirit and power to accomplish his work.

Pray about a specific application of this truth to your lives (perhaps people you need to faithfully reach out to.)



A Small Group Bible Study on Sending
THE MISSION