**Series Road Map**

**Series Overview:** We live in a westernized, individualistic culture. In that, we can lose sight of the fact that the Gospel is for EVERYONE. When Jesus commands his disciples to be his witnesses everywhere, he means to all people—ethnicities, backgrounds, languages and cultures. How do we reconcile this in 2021 and beyond? How do we unleash a generation to the world to spread the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ? That’s what we’re going to explore in this series entitled, “The Nations.”

**Week Overview:** What does it mean to share the Gospel with the Nations? To preach the Good News—as Jesus commanded his disciples to do—to the ends of the earth? It means developing empathy and a generous spirit to care about the problems that our brothers and sisters in Christ—around the world—are facing. It means providing resources and aid for the poor, the brokenhearted and the lost. It means doing something and helping somewhere.

***Outline:***

**Grab the Room (Intro):** Share statistics about world poverty.

**Tension (what’s the struggle):** There are so many problems happening in the world. How do we choose what to help with?

**Text: Acts 1:8-9, Psalm 41:1-3, 1 John 3:11-18, Mark 1:40b-45a**

**THP**: Do SOMETHING. Help SOMEONE.

**Personal Story:** International story of generosity that impacted you

**Supporting Points:**

Generosity is the front door us to deliver Good News. To help someone in need establishes credibility in a relationship to teach and preach about Jesus.

Generosity not only changes the future of the person you’re being generous towards, but it actually changes our hearts. It reminds us how much we have to be grateful for and how good it feels to give of ourselves.

**Application (call to action)**:

Practice: Generosity

Begin tithing – giving 10% of whatever income you make.

If you don’t have money, give up your time. Volunteer with an organization who helps people worldwide.

Monthly “rice and beans” night.

To bring the gospel to the ends of the earth, we must seize the opportunity to care for others around the world who are less fortunate than us. We must make it a priority to be known for our generosity if we are to spread the Good News around the globe.

**NVS DOLLAR CLUB**

*Red – Scripture*

*Blue – Personal Story*

*Green – Prop*

***THP/Main Points – Bold***

**The Nations**

**Week 3**

**Northview Church**

**Intro:**

[General Welcome]

Over the last month, we’ve been breaking down Jesus’ charge to his disciples from Acts chapter 1, verse 8 where Jesus says that, *“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

The last couple of weeks have allowed us to look at what it’d mean to implement practices like hospitality and justice that we see Jesus use repeatedly in his attempt to witness to Jews (or those doing life with him), Judeans and Samaritans (or those surrounding him), and to humanity (or those all around him).

We talked about that if we’re ever going to fulfill this charge to be Jesus’ witnesses worldwide, we must develop an inner peace and discernment to live in step with the Holy Spirit. And as that discernment becomes developed, it grows within us our capacity to love those around us. We’re able to love our brother or sister, mom or dad, we’re then able to love the person on our team or in our club, then we’re able to love the kid who sits alone at the lunch table or the bully everyone fears and eventually, we begin to grow compassion and empathy for the lost, the lonely, the poor, the less-fortunate who are living RIGHT NOW, around the globe, without hope.

Jesus COMMANDS us to witness—to LOVE and CARE for—THOSE people. Now, you may be thinking, “how in the world am I supposed to do that as a \_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, Indiana?” We’ll get to that. But in the meantime, commit to being attentive tonight and receptive to whatever the Holy Spirit wants to say to you. I firmly believe that God is on the move amongst our community. May tonight be a night of breakthrough for all of us as we seek to more firmly apprentice under Jesus.

Hear the Word of the Lord from Psalm 41:1-3. It says, *“Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble, the Lord delivers him; the Lord protects him and keeps him alive; he is called blessed in the land; you do not give him up to the will of his enemies. The Lord sustains him on his sickbed; in his illness you restore him to full health.”*

Let’s pray.

*Prayer.*

*Amen.*

**Tension:**

It’s easy to become so consumed, so engrained, so narrow-minded with what’s happening in OUR lives, OUR community, OUR corner of the world that we forget just how blessed and fortunate we are when looking at what WE have compared to what parts of the rest of the WORLD has.

According to World Vision, 698 million people live on less than $2.00 a day. You can barely buy a candy bar for $2.00 anymore—you couldn’t even buy a gallon of gas for $2.00. Children and youth account for 2/3rds of the world’s poor, and women are the primary representative in many regions. About 70% of people who are older than 15 and live in extreme poverty have no schooling or only some basic education. According to Richard Stearns—president of World Vision from 1998 to 2018—if you have a parent who makes $50,000 or more per year, you’re in the top 1% of wealth in the entire world.

Think about that. The top 1%.

Now, I don’t say this to guilt you or make you feel bad, but I do tell you this to put everything into perspective. We’re blessed. We’re fortunate. We have SO much to be thankful for.

And the natural tendency when all of this is put in proper perspective is to see what we have and what the world lacks and to say, “okay, what do I have to do to make this right?” As followers of Jesus—a Savior who says to, “invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and blind” to our table—to take care of, to feed, to befriend those whom society has marginalized, we have an obligation to do whatever we can with the means we’ve been given to pursue justice and mercy for the cultural outsider.

However, if you really take this command seriously, it won’t be long before the feeling of anxiety overwhelms you. Why? Because there’s 698 million people to take care of! There’s 400 million children who are starving. There’s 150 million people who cannot afford to learn to read! As Jesus said, “the harvest is great, but the workers are few” (Matthew 9:37).

Micah, how in the world can we help all of these people? How can we make a difference? We’ll never be able to make an impact with all of the hurt and lost and lonely souls in our world.

And so, we give up. We decide it’s not worth it. That while helping the poor sounds noble and it sounds brave and it sounds honorable, we just don’t have what it takes to make a difference.

*I don’t make enough money.*

*I’m too young.*

*I don’t have a job.*

*I’m too busy.*

*I don’t know where to start.*

*I feel incompetent.*

*I’m nervous I’ll do it wrong.*

*What if I fail?*

Excuse after excuse until we talk ourselves out of our God-given mandate and end up doing…nothing.

There are so many problems happening in the world. How in the world do we decide how to help?

What if there were practices or rhythms that ALL of us could adapt, that ALL of us could be apart of, no matter where you find yourself at tonight?

What if tonight was the night that you went past your fears, doubts and insecurities and you chose—in faith and with courage—to step into the future God is asking you to be a part of?

Would you obey the call?

**Text:**

John 3:16 has to be one of, if not the MOST well-known verse in the Bible. If you HAD to summarize the Gospel into 1 verse, it’s John 3:16 which says, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

But there’s actually another John 3:16 that we’re going to focus on tonight that I think will guide us through the call of defending and aiding the less fortunate in our world. But, we’ll get to that in a moment. For now, turn with me in your Bibles to **1 John (repeat)** chapter 3. 1 John chapter 3 and I’m going to start reading in verse 11. But, before I do, let me set up for just a moment what exactly John is saying in this passage.

1 John Chapter 3 is all about the immense, lavish, undeserved love that God has for us. That we’re so undeserving and so unworthy of God—the God of the universe—loving us, but because of the cruciform sacrifice of Jesus Christ—God’s only begotten Son—we have the opportunity to not only experience eternal life but to reclaim and restore a union or relationship with Him.

John talks about how our natural response to God’s amazing love for us is for us to love God and love others. That if we’re going to pledge our allegiance to Jesus, then we must be willing to do what Jesus did which is sacrifice Himself for the good and love of others and of God. And so, with that, we pick up the text in 1 John, chapter 3, starting in verse 11. It says,

*For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil, and his brothers were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.*

But look at this, pay attention, verse 16:

***This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.***

We could end the message right there. How do we know what true love is? It’s Jesus laying his life down for us…but it’s also us laying down our lives for our brothers and sisters in Christ. How do we do that? What does that look like? If you have material possessions and you see someone and need, show pity on them!

John’s saying don’t just talk about it, BE about it!

“Micah, I don’t know what to do, I don’t know how to help!” John’s saying—and this is really what I want you to leave with tonight—here’s your charge: **THP:** **Do SOMETHING, Help SOMEONE (repeat)!**

**Personal Story:**

*International story of generosity that impacted you*

*I’ll never forget the first time I went to a developing nation. My basketball team and I went to the Dominican Republic my sophomore year in college, and we went down there with 2 intentions: play basketball and help people. Those were our two objectives. We wanted to play basketball and we wanted to help people! And so, all week, we’re working on houses and we’re digging a well and we’re playing with kids and we’re serving soup to low-income family and putting on a basketball clinic—we’re doing all of these things and they’re great. But by far, the person who was impacted the most on this trip was my friend Grant.*

*Grant was our point guard and Grant went into the week and he decided that he was going to listen to the Holy Spirit and whoever the Holy Spirit called him to love, he was going to go all in on loving that individual.*

*And so there were 2 days where we went to the coastline—to the beach. The first day was for work, we were there to pick up trash and love on some locals and just be hospitable to some people at the beach. But the last day was for play and for fun. We were there to go snorkeling, to lay on the beach, to exhale after a long week.*

*But for Grant, he met someone on the first day that changed the course of his life. He met a young girl—the same age as many of you in this room—probably 14 or 15 years old. Our first day down there, this girl was sitting on a street corner with her arms and legs crossed into a ball with her head tucked in between. Even though she was on the busiest street of the beach, she looked like she didn’t want to be seen by anyone. For whatever reason, the Holy Spirit tapped Grant on the shoulder and said, “hey, that’s your person this week.”*

*And so, Grant was obedient, he wasn’t sure what to do but he decided, you know what? I’m going to do SOMETHING. I’m going to help SOMEONE. And so Grant, took out a $20 bill and he bent down and he handed it to this girl. Just $20. The girl’s face lights up and she disappears, and I thought we’d never see her again. Fast forward 4 days and we’re back on the beach. The rest of our team is out having fun, but that girl finds Grant on the beach and approaches him. She hadn’t said a word the first day and she ended up never saying a word. As Grant interacted with her, Grant learned that she was deaf and mute. She could only communicate through sign language and a little bit of writing. And over the course of the next 8 hours, Grant—awkwardly, with difficulty—captured pieces of this girl’s story. He learned that she was sexually abused as a little girl, that she had sold into sex slavery at age 10 and that 14/15 years old, she was on the run as she sought to make life happen on her own with a crippling disability. That’s how she had ended up on the street.*

*Grant, continued to love on her and play with her, he bought her lunch and then dinner that day and just continued to be present with her and eventually, they struck up a conversation on the napkin they were using about Jesus. Grant asked, “Jesus? Do you know?” She said no. And grant, with point-point precision began to share the Gospel with this sweet girl who ended up accepting Jesus into her heart that night. It was one of the most profound interactions I’ve ever witnessed and it marked our entire team and really, impacted Grant unlike any other interaction I’ve ever encountered.*

**Truth:**

*But for me, it was this beautiful picture of the power of generosity. Here we were, thousands of miles from home and Grant was fulfilling his call to love his neighbor as himself. He sacrificed! He sacrificed money, he sacrificed time, he sacrificed fun, he sacrificed sleep to love on this girl the best he could.*

*Grant decided to* ***Do SOMETHING and to Help SOMEONE.***

See, here’s what’s so powerful about generosity, oftentimes, generosity is the front door us to deliver Good News. To help someone in need establishes credibility in a relationship to teach and preach about Jesus.

There are so many times that Jesus’ generosity leads to the opportunity for the Gospel Message to spread. Mark 1 is just one example that comes to mind where a man with leprosy comes to Jesus and says,

*“If you are willing, you can make me clean.”*

*Jesus was indignant.[[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark%201&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-24257i" \o "See footnote i)] He reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!”****42****Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.*

***43****Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning:****44****“See that you don’t tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them.”****45****Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. (Mark 1:40b-45a NIV)*

Like, Jesus even tells this guy, “don’t tell anybody!” But when someone has been so generous to you, when someone has given you something that meets a need or that answers a prayer, they’re open to hearing what you have to say. Your generosity has established credibility and trust! The opportunity to share the WHY behind your generosity—because you possess an eternal hope in Jesus—has the power to impact someone’s eternity and it can all begin with a simple act of loving thy neighbor.

See, it’s in those moments—moments where we get to interact with someone from another culture, someone from another country, ethnicity, color, socioeconomic status—that the potential to offer sacrificial love is so high. Those moments where we can love on the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor, the outcasts, the nobody’s, the invisibles—it’s these moments that we’re able to fulfill Jesus’ charge to be his witnesses to the ENDS OF THE EARTH.

And the front door, the way through, the way to someone’s heart—is love, it’s care, it’s kindness, it’s generosity.

**Application:**

Okay, okay Micah. This all sounds great—cool story—but I don’t have any opportunities to go around the world. That costs a lot of money, I’m here in Indiana—how in the world am I supposed to be a witness of Jesus to the ends of the earth?

Could it be that there are practices and rhythms of Jesus that we could implement that would allow us to be a witness of Jesus worldwide? I believe there are. It’s the practice of generosity. And I’m going to give you 4 ways that you can begin participating RIGHT NOW—TONIGHT—in being a witness to the world. Are you ready to Do SOMETHING? Are you ready to Help SOMEONE? Then become a practitioner of generosity. I’ve got 5 things you can do RIGHT NOW.

1. **Begin tithing**

Tithing is a practice that occurs all throughout Scripture. Starting with Abraham in Genesis, through the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament, tithing was a practice of giving a portion of what we’ve been given back to God as a reminder of His provision. The usual amount the Bible exemplifies is giving 10% but my charge to you tonight is the same: Do SOMETHING, Help SOMEONE. Start by giving whatever you can. Give 1%, 3% or 5%. Give a fixed amount. Give $5, $10 or $20 a month or every pay check. Begin the practice of tithing now because 1) it’s the greatest reminder that we’re not owed anything—that everything is God’s but also, 2) it’s an opportunity for the Church to be the Church. A large portion of the money given to churches goes towards funding global missions’ partners or missionaries who—through your generosity—can act as an extension in being a witness of Jesus, through you, to the ends of the Earth.

1. **Give Time**

If you don’t have money, give up your time. Volunteer with an organization who helps people worldwide. Go online and begin looking at ways that you can serve with organizations like World Vision, Food for the Hungry, The End it Movement. There are so many incredible organizations that are devoted to fighting global issues and loving our global neighbors. Give up your time for one of these causes and allow your time to be the way that you witness to the ends of the earth.

1. **Monthly “rice and beans” night.**

No money? No time? No problem. Begin a monthly “rice and beans” night. Once a month, instead of eating that fat piece of steak or the really good-looking vegan bowl, cook up some rice and beans. It’ll cost you $1 and it’ll remind you of the diet that many of those millions of children are living on for their usual 1 meal per day.

A “rice and beans” night allows us to offer solidarity and empathy for the poor as we attempt to step into their shoes. This furthers our motivation to want to love them and serve them in whatever way that we can.

1. **Go Trips**

For the first time in 3 years, we’re going to get to go on a Go Trip. Northview provides these trips every year for us as a community to go to these countries and to practice loving our global neighbor. We must be committed as it requires a lot of resources to pull off and we have to fundraise to go but it allows others to participate—through you as you raise support—in witnessing to our global neighbors. If you’ve never been, I want to highly encourage you to go on a Go Trip.

1. **NVS Dollar Club**

And lastly, just give $1. Do SOMETHING. Help SOMEONE. Give $1. Tonight, maybe you brought $1, $5 or $10 for candy or soda or whatever. Give $1. Because, see, if everyone in this room gave a dollar tonight, we’d be able to help a child eat for a little over 2 months. If everyone gave $2, we’d save a child from starving for 4 months. It may not seem like a big deal, but when put together, a dollar can go a long way in loving our neighbor and using generosity as trailblazer to someone on the other side of the world experiencing the love and kindness of Jesus for the very first time.

**Inspiration:**

To bring the gospel to the ends of the earth, we must seize the opportunity to care for others around the world who are less fortunate than us. We must make it a priority to be known for our generosity if we are to spread the Good News around the globe and be Jesus’ witnesses to the ends of the earth.

It’s your choice. Are you in or are you out? Are you ready to Do SOMETHING? To Help SOMEONE? What are you willing to put on the line? To sacrifice for the good of another? How are you going to show the love of Jesus to someone on the other side of the world? How will you be a global witness? It’s going to begin with your generosity.

**Closing:**

Tonight, the band is going to come up to close our time together and while they do, these buckets are going to be passed around and the venmo accounts of some of the organizations I told you about are going to be put up on the screen. In the next 4 minutes, just pray about 1 way that you can Do SOMETHING and Help SOMEONE.

Will it be through tithing? Volunteering? Eating rice and beans? Going on a Go Trip? Giving $1?

*“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

Let us go and BE THE WITNESSES Jesus has called us to be. In our community, in our city, in our world—as it is in Heaven.

Let’s pray.

*Prayer.*

*Amen.*