



INTRODUCTION BY **TIM HARLOW**



**GREETINGS!
WELCOME
TO LIFE ON
MISSION!**

When I look back at the months it has taken to put this study together, I'm grateful to be surrounded by such a great team of people who have spoken into these lessons. They have shared their lives and their passions, and I can hardly wait to see how God is going to use all this to bring more people into the kingdom!

I've said repeatedly that our backyard is now the largest and most diverse mission field in the world. It's almost as if God said, "Well, if My people are going to slack off from going to the world, I'm going to bring the world to them!"

I can almost bet your neighborhood is multi-cultural. The people on your street may speak different languages and live different lives than you do, but they are exactly the people Jesus had in mind when He said, "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).



Now we know that “all nations” means the world – to the very ends of the earth. But I think we’ve forgotten that it also means the house next door, the end of the block, and around the corner.

It’s time, brothers and sisters, to refocus our lives and redefine what it means to live a life on mission. We haven’t been given a new mission. We’ve been given a chance to re-engage with the longing of God’s heart – to transform lives by bringing heaven to earth today, and earth to heaven for eternity.

Take this opportunity to meet with other Christians and to encourage one another to lovingly reach out, in word and in deed, to the people around you. Ask God to help you discover what He has planned for you: *a Life on Mission.*

Glad we’re doing this together!

Tim Harlow



CONTRIBUTORS

A special word of thanks to our guest pastors and teachers, and those who shared their testimonies with us in this study guide and on the website at www.lifeonmission.com. Couldn't have done it without you!

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Thanks, also, to the friends who provided technical services and our teaching locations.

Angelo Lazzara Productions, Chicago, IL

Body Tech, Mokena, IL

Jim Melka Landscaping & Garden Center, Mokena, IL

Marley Church, Mokena, IL

Video Editing by Michael Smith



USING THIS WORKBOOK

(STUFF TO HELP YOU HAVE A GREAT SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE!)

1. Notice in the Table of Contents there are three sections: Sessions; Appendices; and Small Group Hosts. Familiarize yourself with the Appendices resources.
2. If you are facilitating or hosting a small group, the Small Group Host section beginning on page 121 will give you some hard-learned experiences of others that will encourage you and help you avoid many common obstacles to effective small group hosting.
3. Use this workbook as a guide, not a straightjacket. If the group responds to the lesson in an unexpected but honest way, go with that. If you think of a better question than the next one in the lesson, ask it. Take to heart the insights included in the FAQs beginning on page 114.
4. Finally, enjoy your small group experience! We believe that you can't grow spiritually unless you are connected relationally. God designed us that way. God wants to use other people to grow us, and He wants to use us to grow other people. That's because life-change happens best in community.



P | 19



OUTLINE OF EACH SESSION

Each session of this *Life on Mission* study provides a healthy balance that includes teaching, evangelism, ministry, and practical exercises. As you apply truths from each section in your discussion every week, it will be exciting to see how God works in the lives of your group members and their families.

A TYPICAL GROUP SESSION FOR LIFE ON MISSION INCLUDES:

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSES

For each session, we have provided a Memory Verse that emphasizes an important truth from the session. This is an optional exercise, but we strongly encourage you to give this habit a try because one of the best things we can do is to regularly fill our minds with God's Word.

HANGING OUT

Developing relationships with a few people who really know you and have earned your trust can help you to live the life Jesus wants you to live. The HANGING OUT section is a fun time where we can get to know each other better and get comfortable before we dive into the weekly teaching.

WATCH AND LEARN / DVD TEACHING SEGMENT

Every session combines video teaching segments from Pastor Tim Harlow, along with leadership insights and many inspiring, personal stories of men and women demonstrating real life-change.



FIGURING IT OUT

As a follow-up to the video teaching, this section includes questions designed to encourage discussion and to help you get the most out of what the leaders and speakers shared from their experiences, as well as from God's Word. The focus is not on accumulating information, but rather on applying insights practically and creatively - in the heart as well as the head. (NOTE: Questions in this section with an * indicate the best ones to use if time is short.)

LIVING IT OUT

Nothing that we learn in this study will mean a thing if we don't allow it transform our everyday lives. In James 1:22, we are told to be, "doers of the Word, not just hearers." As His disciples, Jesus wants us to help people connect with Him in a close and personal way, and to live life according to God's Word. This section provides practical ways that we can reach out to those around us, and to go beyond Bible study to biblical living.

DIGGING DEEPER

If you have time and want to dig deeper, we've provided additional Bible passages and questions. This section is useful for homework, additional group discussion, and personal study.

DAILY QUIET TIME

With each session, we provide daily Scriptures to reflect on between group meetings. We suggest you use these QUIET TIME pages to seek God on your own throughout the week. This time at home should begin and end with prayer. Don't hurry; take enough time to hear God's direction.





SESSION ONE

OVERVIEW



What does it mean to be a witness? In a courtroom, witnesses are called to tell their stories - to testify about what they have seen or experienced. Why? Just because they have interesting stories? No. It's because their stories impact others, and have the potential to change the destiny of many.

Jesus calls us as His followers to be witnesses - to tell our stories. We don't have to be experts in theology

or know all the answers about the Bible. We do have to be willing to tell people why we believe, and how we have been changed by the hope that is in us.

Really, that's what it means to live life on mission. To see opportunities right in front of us: opportunities to tell our stories in a way that will change someone's destiny.

Welcome to your *Life on Mission*.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WITNESS?
THAT'S WHAT THIS FIRST SESSION IS ABOUT.



MEMORY VERSE

But 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.

Acts 1:8



P | 23



HANGING OUT

Open your group with prayer. Be willing to be real and honest. Remind the group to respect confidentiality; commit to keeping prayer requests and current needs within the group.

Over the next six weeks, we're going to start every session by praying together and just hanging out so we can get to know each other a little better.

So relax, settle in, and let's get started!

1. As we begin, what's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the title of this study, *Life on Mission*?
2. What is the most extraordinary thing you have ever witnessed?
3. During today's video teaching, Pastor Tim is in downtown Chicago, one of the largest cities in the world. If you had to choose, are you a big city or small town person and why?





P | 25





WATCH AND LEARN



Watch the DVD teaching for this session, using this **Teaching Notes** section to fill in the blanks, and record key thoughts, questions, and statements you want to remember or look into further.

OVERVIEW

The problem is, telling people about Jesus has become such a _____!

If _____ isn't applied, it's _____.

Christians are supposed to make things _____.

A _____ relationship is the key.





TEACHING NOTES

[illegible]



FIGURING IT OUT



*If time is short, the questions marked with an * should be given priority.*

1. What comments from the DVD teaching impacted you the most?

2. * Think about your life. Where has God given you influence? (For instance, your school, neighborhood, workplace, etc.) In other words, where are you already connected with other people?

3. How often do you spend time with other people who aren't Christians?
When you find yourself in social situations with people who don't know Jesus, do you feel:

- a) comfortable and friendly
- b) somewhat uncomfortable
- c) anxious
- d) I am rarely in social situations with non-Christians.

Now take a minute to elaborate on your choice.



FIGURING IT OUT

4. * Think about people you know who don't follow Jesus. How would you describe them? When you think about building a friendship with them, what's your gut reaction?

5. * Lee Strobel shared Jesus' metaphor about being salt and light, and said that Jesus tells us to, "live lives that are salty, that make people thirst for God." How can the way you live your life make people thirst for God?

6. **Read Ephesians 2:8-10.** God has planned some things for you to do. What do you think they are?



LIVING IT OUT

IN THIS SECTION, TALK ABOUT HOW YOU WILL APPLY THE WISDOM YOU'VE LEARNED FROM THE TEACHING AND BIBLE STUDY. THEN THINK ABOUT PRACTICAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE IN THE COMING WEEK TO LIVE OUT WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED.

According to Rick Warren, there are two things you can't do in heaven; you can't sin and you can't tell people about Jesus.

Which of the following most accurately describes your view on sharing your faith:

- a) It makes me so nervous, I go out of my way to avoid it.
- b) I'll answer questions if someone asks, but I don't bring it up.
- c) I feel guilty that I don't do it more often, so occasionally I'll try.
- d) I evangelize regularly and start conversations about God with strangers all the time.

For more *Life on Mission* resources, visit
www.lifeonmission.com.



Pastor Tim said we were called to be witnesses: not judges, defense attorneys, or prosecutors. Generally speaking, how can we expect people to react when they feel they're being judged and attacked versus being compassionately told good news?

Read Acts 1:8. When you think of Pastor Tim's phone and current location analogy from the DVD teaching, who are the people in your family, neighborhood, or workplace who need some salt and light?

Read Matthew 9:37-38. The need is obvious and immediate. How does this inspire you to live a life on mission?

CLOSE IN PRAYER



P | 31



If you feel God nudging you to go deeper, take some time between now and our next meeting to dig into His Word. Explore the Bible passages related to this session's theme on your own, jotting your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

DIGGING DEEPER

READ LUKE 15:11–32.

The parable of the prodigal son may be the best known of Jesus' stories. It's actually the story of three people: father, son, and older brother. Each of us might identify with any of those characters in His lesson. Each person in the story also represents a mission - a way of living with a certain purpose in mind. The main lesson, of course, is that at some point, each of us plays the role of the prodigal child who needs to come home. The underlying challenge in the parable is the question; how long does it take to develop the father's heart?

1. Verse 11 says, "Jesus continued." He's already told the parables of the lost coin and the lost sheep. How does the shift from coin to sheep to son make these three stories work together?

2. In each of these three parables, something is lost, and then found. What conclusions can we draw about people who are "lost" and how God feels about them?



3. How does this story change the way you see people who are rebelling or wandering away from God?

4. If you met the prodigal son today - a promiscuous young man who was squandering his inheritance on partying - what would you think of him? How is this different from how the father sees him?

5. In what ways do we sometimes act like the older brother in this story? In what ways could we call him a prodigal/wanderer, too?



P | 34





DAILY QUIET TIME

Each day, read the daily verses and give prayerful consideration to what you learn about God, His Spirit, and His place in your life. Then record your thoughts, insights, or prayers on the lines below each verse.

DAY 1: "Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest." (John 4:35)

What "fields" are around you? What keeps you from seeing "the harvest" (the people who need to know Jesus)?

DAY 2: "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:10)

How does it make you feel to realize that God and His angels have rejoiced over you? How will living life on mission lead to rejoicing?



DAY 3: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." (Colossians 2:6-7)

**What practices or habits will help you to stay "rooted and built up in Him"?
What is one thing in your life that would change if you were continually
"overflowing with thankfulness"?**

DAY 4: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

How has God demonstrated to you that you are dear to Him?

DAY 5: "But 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." (Acts 1:8)

In this verse, Jesus restates His commission to His disciples. To what degree would you say this is a description of your life? What needs to change?
