

Sermon: Living as the Church in Our Cities

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:5-7, Matthew 5:9, Luke 10:2 (ESV)

Teacher: Jeff Norris

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KINGDOM FLOURISHING

Kingdom Flourishing is rooted in the Hebrew word shalom and the Greek word eirene. These words are most often translated as peace in our English Bibles. Most of the time, we think of peace as being the absence of conflict. While it certainly is that, the words shalom and eirene are much richer in meaning. These words not only signify peace, but wholeness, completeness, welfare, fullness, rest and harmony. At Perimeter, the word that we use to encapsulate this biblical concept is the word flourishing. In Ephesians 2:13-14a, the Apostle Paul says, "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace (Greek: Eirene)." The flourishing that we long for – the fullness of life for which we were originally created – is found only in Jesus and His kingdom as we submit ourselves increasingly more to his benevolent rule and reign. We long to see the gospel go forth into our cities in such a way that people, neighborhoods, local schools, businesses, non-profits, and civic institutions are increasingly experiencing the flourishing of the kingdom of God.

OUR PURPOSE



KINGDOM FLOURISHING

Flourishing is Living out our faith by placing ourselves in *right relationship with:*

GOD First and foremost, Jesus reconciles us to God through faith in Him and His atoning sacrifice and resurrection, bringing peace with God.	SELF As the Spirit of Christ transforms us, a right relationship with self comes into view as we holistically experience a reordering of desires and identity.	OTHERS The reconciling work of God through Christ is not only vertical but also horizontal, breaking down walls of hostility, and making enemies friends.	WORLD As all of creation groans for the day of redemption, we bring the flourishing of God's kingdom not only to the people of the world but to its places as well.
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OUR PURPOSE

Jeremiah 29:5-7 (ESV)

⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.

⁶ Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease.

⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Living in “exile” doesn’t fundamentally mean living simply, being organic, living counterculturally, being radical, or abandoning suburbia for city living. At its core, it means living missionally and intentionally in light of God’s economy of all things. The heart of this missional perspective is perhaps articulated the clearest in the [Letter to Diognetus](#) (c. second century), where the author employs a sticky analogy that encapsulates the essence of an “in-but-not-of” theology of culture—namely, as the soul is to the body, Christians are to the world. “The soul,” the author writes, “is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world. The soul dwells in the body, but does not belong to the body, and Christians dwell in the world, but do not belong to the world.” - Stephen Grabill

From <<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-big-picture/>>

Three Important Questions:

1. **How** are we to live this out in our cities?

By being peacemakers

Matthew 5:9 (ESV)

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

2. **Where** are we to primarily live this out?

In our homes and neighborhoods

Luke 10:2 (ESV)

² And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

OUR APPROACH



HOME



City Impact, like your normal spiritual rhythm, starts in your home with prayer and devotion in God's Word.

Intentional choices: Daily prayer for kingdom flourishing in your neighborhood, community, and city. Use Bless Every Home to pray.

OUR APPROACH



NEIGHBORHOOD

HOME



Once outside the walls of our homes, our usual rhythms in our neighborhood include recreation and transit. **Intentional choices: Getting to know your neighbors and prayer walking. Start a Community Group in your neighborhood. Being in a Discipleship Group with people in your neighborhood.**

OUR APPROACH



Out of our neighborhood, our normal life rhythms in our community of surrounding neighborhoods and school district can sometimes feel transactional. **Intentional choices:** Find opportunities to bless local schools via education ministry partners. See your workplace as God's calling to bring about kingdom flourishing.

OUR APPROACH



For most of us, our weekly life rhythms are multi-city. Where we work, dine, volunteer and play may not be connected. **Intentional choices:** Become a "regular" somewhere. Shop, eat, and build community locally. Impacting needs in the city with our Community Outreach partners.

3. **What** do we start with?
a) Prayer (Radical Dependence)

Luke 10:2 (ESV)

² And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

- b) GBI (Greet | Befriend | Invite)
c) Spiritual Multiplication (Evangelism and Discipleship)
d) Love Where You Live (Create, Cultivate, Care)

You can find these City Impact graphics and the video Jeff played during the sermon at perimeter.org/cityimpact.