

Sent to bring life

New series. Unleash church to bring life to city. Who we are - City Life.

Alan Scott. Scattered Servants.

Bev, last week, talked about being authentic community together - filled with the life of God, open and inclusive, bringing life to others.

She quoted **Alan Scott**:

The sharing of the good news of Jesus happened in everyday ordinary moments rather than in strategic locations. When gathered together believers received exceptional teaching and generosity, but scattered they had authority and opportunity to bring hope to hurting humanity through both communication and demonstration.

This week our topic is — Sent to bring life. More than simply scattered – not dispersed in all directions in fear, but purposefully equipped and commissioned.

We see this in **Jesus, our perfect example – Christian – little Christs, He is our model.**
We are:

- **Purposed** in Jesus. I have come that you may have life and life to the full...
- **Shown/Taught/Equipped** in Jesus. Seen in action - healing, miracles, kingdom.
- **Commissioned** in Jesus. He sends us - he sent his disciples (Luke 10 - chaplaincy). He sends us (Matt 28). We don't go alone. His promise is that He is with us.
 - **Sent** – with power and authority

We are immersed in him, wrapped in his life, his life breathed into us so we can replicate that life in the world. Resurrection life bringing the dead to life - blazingly alive!

Personal - challenge. Words. Healings. For more than inside these walls.

At one-point words of knowledge seemed to come easily. Became harder over time – partly felt the call to greater intimacy – to draw closer for the whisper of God – as though God didn't want to make it easy as then it was too easy for me to stay at a distance, but wanted to draw me in. More recently I feel as though it is also partly because there is a call to go beyond these walls (Chris Abington word in March, which Bev mentioned last week – going out to the neighbour next door) – I spend time asking God for words during celebrations, before and in preparation for celebrations – words that will release life to people, set them free, release healing in place of sickness. If I do it here where the majority of people already carry God's life and healing in them, how much more is it needed out there. Why am I not doing the same in preparation for and during governors' meetings, or on the school run and in the playground, or when meeting other community leaders?

Authentic community is great - it is attractive, and people want to join, but it is only truly authentic in Kingdom terms when it is a sent community – the Kingdom's nature is to advance (Matt 11:12 – and Parable of mustard seed – grows wild, gets everywhere, takes over – teems with life) – to go into places where it is not yet and be established – it is our role to establish it.

CLIP: Monty Python, Life of Bryan - What have the Romans ever done for us?

Roman envoys were sent to re-create Rome wherever they went – they established laws, cultures, structures to replicate the life of Rome in whatever land they found themselves in. They drew people into the culture.

Kingdom of Heaven is like this – we, as church, are it's envoy– citizens of Heaven sent to , establish it here – bringing the life of the Kingdom.

What has the Kingdom/Church/City Life ever done for us? Education, peace, healing, welcome, family, inclusive community, justice, compassion, hope, joy, love, life...

Acts 2 - gathered together regularly - that suggests they were more scattered and 'out there', than gathered in here - they had to gather, and regularly. If it said they went out regularly, that would imply that they lived more gathered.

This was a sent community - a flow of life, in and out - coming together for fellowship, teaching, encouragement, encounter, in order to be sent back out to establish the Kingdom, release life, healing and salvation - bringing others back in with them, who in turn were also sent out.

What I am bringing into the house had better have a way of being released from the house or it will die in the house.

Bill Johnson word - road runner story (google it if you want to hear it)

Like a pond without an outflow – it stagnates and things die – for life to flourish there must be a flow out – difference between Dead Sea and Red Sea – Dead Sea has no outlet and nothing lives, Red Sea, teams with life.

“When Christians make church the focal point of their lives and ministry, they burn each other like an over-salted dish and blind each other like a room full of spotlights. Salt and light are not meant for themselves. We are not called the salt of the church but the salt of the earth!”

Sunday Adelaja, Church Shift

Sent to bring life. **Not a by product of what we do** - the purpose for our existence as church. The rest are either modes of operating or by products of lives lived to bring life.

Realignment as team - more presence, more power and anointing.

Aligning with God-given dreams and visions - HIA, Dads Group, releasing people into new futures. These are means to release life and release life bringers, rather than an end in themselves.

End of Acts 2 TPT - added to their number, those who were coming to life.

This means they were not alive before, not alive spiritually, not alive in God - it was as the community of believers lived their sent lives, bringing life where they went, that others were brought to life - we carry salvation, resurrection life in us and our purpose, what we have been commissioned for is to release this - to teach others all we've been taught immersing them in the atmosphere of the Kingdom and the very presence of God. (Matt 28:20)

Immediately after these verses in acts 2 we see this demonstrated in daily life. In the very next verses at the start of **Acts 3 - Peter and John healing**. Opportunity to release life – releasing life means it won't stagnate in us – more life is the result of us giving life away to others – it multiplies!

Let's not limit ourselves by what we see as practicalities and lack of physical resources. As with Peter and John, God has abundance to release in and through us and His life is ready to burst forth from within us. Let's live as those sent to bring life.

Questions to consider:

- Where has God sent us to bring life? (let's recognised that we are sent, we are not where we are by accident or chance)
- What life do we carry that others need? (Hope, peace, faith, encouragement, healing, salvation, provision, family, joy – speak/prophecy into one another about the life they have to bring)
- What opportunities are present to us? (Look at the example of Peter and John in Acts 3 – don't be limited by practicalities)
- How can we live more mindful of our call to bring life, and more purposefully each day? What one step can we take towards this?

Let's pray.