

## Series: All for Jesus

# “All Out on Mission”

## 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Today we continue unpacking the new vision statement of Crosslink Community Church. Over the past year, the pastors have been praying, studying, and discussing where we are as a church and where we believe the Lord is leading us. The mission at Crosslink has been and will continue to remain the same – Impact the Valley and Bless the Nations with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God is calling us to do that by making disciples right here and then going out to multiply by planting churches throughout the Valley in areas of need. Our mission field is right in this beautiful Valley, and it extends to the ends of the earth. This will continue to be the driving focus of the church, and as we talk about the vision, we are beginning to discuss how we will accomplish the mission. The vision of Crosslink is very simple in terminology, but it is impossible to accomplish without the Holy Spirit working in every heart and life. Our vision is to be a church where we are “All In, All Together, and All Out for the Glory of Jesus Christ.” This means that each of us must be “All In with Jesus,” fully trusting in Him, identifying with Him in baptism, and surrendering to His leading in our lives. We are also called to be “All Together as the Church.” When Jesus calls us to a relationship with Him, He also brings us into the family of God. In Christ, we belong to one another as brothers and sisters, and our new relationship with Jesus impacts our relationship with one another. Being all together as the church means that we are committed to growing, praying, giving, and serving together for the glory of the Lord. Today we come to the third aspect of this vision statement that we are to be “All Out on Mission” for the glory of Jesus.

I wonder what comes to mind when you hear the word “missions.” Perhaps someone with a military background thinks of a specific charge or task, an operation to be accomplished. Most familiar with the church likely think of nations and peoples who need the Gospel. I wonder what you think of when you hear the word “missionary.” Perhaps you envision a few select people who accept a call to take the Gospel to a foreign land. While this is an applicable and understandable mindset, we have done a great disservice to the idea of missions and missionaries by assuming that this only applies to the few who take the Gospel across the ocean. Scripture is very clear that the mission of every follower of Jesus is to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere we go. The mission of Jesus is not limited to the select few but is for everyone who bears the name of Christ. Jesus told us in **Acts 1:8**, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” This means that every Christian is a missionary for Jesus. I praise God for the many who are directly called to specific people throughout the world, but we are missing the heartbeat of God and the purpose of our calling if we fail to understand that we, too, are missionaries. So, what does that mean for us today? How can we live as a missionary in the Shenandoah Valley? I pray that we wrestle with these questions and come to a clear understanding of what it means to be “All Out on Mission” for the glory of Jesus Christ.

As we open our Bibles, we’re going to do something a little differently. So far in this series, we have looked at the example of the Early Church in Acts 2. I intended to preach a third sermon from the book of Acts today, but as I read through Acts this week, the Lord would not allow me to hone

in on one specific passage. The Early Church throughout all of Acts was highly missional. Through everything they faced, everywhere they went, and everyone they met, they shared the Gospel. As a result, we find that the Lord continually added to their number. For example, **Acts 2:47b** says, “And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” **Acts 5:14**, “And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number.” **Acts 6:7**, “The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.” The same result takes place in Acts 4, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 28. God was working in a great way in the book of Acts, and one of the illustrations given in Acts 17 is a reference to the church in the city of Thessalonica. As we look at our passage today, we’re going to see a case study on what it looks like to be “All Out on Mission.” I pray that God will convict us and show us how He can work through us as we live “All Out on Mission.”

### **Show Text**

These words were some of the earliest writings of the Apostle Paul to a young church in the city of Thessalonica. This church was established in Acts 17 when Paul traveled a hundred miles from Philippi to Thessalonica to proclaim the Good News of Jesus. Paul says that this Gospel had come to them in “power and conviction of the Holy Spirit” (vs. 5). The word “gospel” in Greek means “glad tidings, a good message, or good news.” The Gospel is the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. The reason that our mission is focused on the Gospel is because it is the only Gospel that has the power to bring mankind to salvation. It is the Good News that through Jesus our sins can be forgiven, our soul saved, and eternal and abundant life can be ours, but I believe there’s a major problem in the Church today. We claim to believe that the Gospel is Good News, but we live as if it’s a lie. When there is good news, we can’t help but share it. When there’s good news of a baby we share it with others. When there’s good news of someone’s healing, we shout it from the mountains. When there’s good news about an engagement or wedding, we promote it everywhere. When there’s good news of a team’s victory we shout and hug people we’ve never even met. But when there’s good news of the salvation for man’s soul we largely keep it quiet? How is this possible? It is one thing to claim that the Gospel is Good News, but we must also live it out. What does this look like? How can we do it? I believe there is much to learn through this illustration. Verses 1-5 remind us of the foundation. Having received the Gospel by faith, they were “all in” with Jesus, and they were now clearly “all together” as the church, faithfully fulfilling the “work of faith and labors of love.” But this foundation now led them further in fulfilling the mission of the church. Notice three primary things that I believe God wants us to see today:

#### **I. “All Out” on Mission Means that We Sacrifice Joyfully (vs. 5-6)**

Many don’t like the word “sacrifice.” It means “to offer as a sacrifice, to suffer loss, give up, or renounce.” With “sacrifice” we think of a cost that is implied or a pain that is experienced. It is laying oneself aside or letting go of something precious for a greater purpose. This, though, goes completely against our culture and our human nature. We want things to be easy, simple, and pain-free, living for ourselves and doing the things we want, but we must be willing to sacrifice for the cause of Christ. **Pastor Phillips Brooks** exhorts us, “Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.”

Most do not like sacrifice unless it is something that someone is doing for us, but as followers of Christ, we understand that the greatest sacrifice ever offered has already been given for us. Jesus gave His very life as a sacrifice for our sins. It is important that we also remember that the Lord also calls us to give our lives as a sacrifice for Him. Jesus said, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me,” **Luke 9:23b**. We will not be faithful followers or witnesses of Christ unless we are willing to sacrifice for Him. Many things may hinder us from sharing the Gospel with others, but at the heart of them is the simple reality that we do not want to be made uncomfortable. When a person has truly done what Jesus requires, then nothing that He asks of us is too great. If we have truly died to self and taken up our cross to follow Jesus, then anything He calls us to do and anywhere He calls us to go, we will gladly and willingly go because we belong to Him. He is our Savior, our Friend, and He is our Lord and Master. We live our lives now for His glory, pleasures, purposes, and mission, not for our own. Think of all the things that we give our lives to and devote our time to – our political party, the travel ball team, the workout regiment, the long hours at work, etc. These things may not be wrong, but what if we spent the same effort and energy giving our best joyfully to the Lord? What sacrifices are you personally making for the Lord today? And are you making them joyfully for the Lord? We will never be the witnesses that Jesus calls us to be if we’re not willing to sacrifice joyfully for Him. I believe we see this evidenced in this church in three primary ways:

#### **A. They Received the Gospel in Tribulation**

The word “tribulation” in Greek means “persecution, affliction, distress, and anguish.” It is most commonly used to describe the internal pressure and affliction that one feels when there is no way of escape. From the start of this specific church, they had experienced many hardships for the cause of Christ. **Acts 17:4-8** records the background of how Paul and Silas took the Gospel to Thessalonica. **Show Text**. In the previous chapter (Acts 16) Paul and Silas were in Philippi preaching the Gospel, which resulted in them being imprisoned, beaten, and fastened in the stocks. Still amid their persecution, at midnight they sang songs of praise to God. This led to the jailer and his whole household trusting in Jesus. Still, they were run out of Philippi, so they made their journey 100 miles to Thessalonica where once again they preached the Good News and, again, several of the Jewish leaders rose against them. When the angry mob could not find Paul and Silas, they instead found Jason who had welcomed them into his house. They brought Jason and several others before the city authorities and made false accusations and threats against them. It was in this hostile scene that “a large number of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women” turned from their sin and trusted in Jesus to be their Savior. Because they had heard the Good News and responded by faith, they were not concerned about the outward attacks from the self-righteous crowd because they had the assurance that they now belonged to Jesus. Interestingly, Jesus Himself uses the same word for tribulation in **John 16:20-21** saying, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy. Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the **anguish** because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.” In other words, the woman pays no mind to the tribulation or anguish because of the joy of knowing the new birth. Similarly, those who truly follow Jesus pay no mind to the attacks of the world because they know the joy of being born again and the joy that awaits them beyond this world.

## B. They Relayed the Gospel through Tribulation

Paul says, “You also became imitators of us.” This imitation is seen in the way that they suffered for the cause of Christ, but we must not miss that the reason for this suffering is that they were openly sharing the Gospel of Jesus. If Paul and Silas had been silent and just committed to being kind, living a certain way, and hoping that people would just understand the reason they were so different, they probably wouldn’t have suffered at all, but because they openly spoke of Jesus it brought persecution against them. The same was now true of this young church in Thessalonica. I keep calling them a young church because the apostle Paul was only in Thessalonica for about three weeks. For three Sabbaths he openly preached in the synagogue of the Jews, with his ministry continuing throughout the week in the various places where the new believers were gathering. Then in just three short weeks, he was run out of town. The religious mob assumed the same as they did with Christ. They thought if they crucified Jesus and got rid of Him that would stop the movement that God was doing. Of course, we know that Jesus rose again from the grave, commissioned His disciples to go into all the world, the Holy Spirit had come, and now the church was spreading like wildfire all across the land. Now the religious leaders assumed that if they got rid of Paul and Silas then these ignorant new followers would now fall by the wayside. They could not grasp that these individuals had experienced a soul-saving, life-changing encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ and there was nothing they could do to silence their witness of Christ. So even as they are pressured to be silent, they continue to boldly tell others the Good News of the Gospel. They were like the believers in Acts 4 who were threatened to be quiet about Jesus. They didn’t complain about their circumstance, throw a pity party for their persecution, or ask God for an easy life. Their prayer in **Acts 4:29** was simple, “And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence.” What was the result? “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness,” **Acts 4:31b**. The same was true of the Thessalonians.

## C. They Reflected the One Who Overcame the Tribulation

Paul says, “They became imitators of us and the Lord.” Even though these were new believers, they understood the fact that Jesus Himself suffered and died for them. During those three weeks of ministry, **Acts 17:2-3a** says, “And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ **had to suffer** and rise again from the dead.” Jesus suffered the greatest trial ever known to man, yet He willingly endured it to make a way for our salvation. It was through His suffering that salvation was available to all. As a result, the Thessalonians were not surprised when they, too, faced suffering for the cause of Christ. We must understand that when we face persecution for the cause of Christ, it is Christ who is seen through our actions. Jesus prepared us for this but also promised us in **John 16:33**, “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.” There are some sufferings and trials that we simply will not understand this side of heaven, but take comfort, Jesus has overcome the world. It is oftentimes through the trials and afflictions that we face for the cause of Christ that Christ is most seen through our lives and actions. God said in **1 Peter 4:14**, “If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and God rests on you.” It is humanly impossible to think of the revival movement that was spreading among the Thessalonians and the ancient world on the

heels of just three weeks of ministry, but this is the kind of work that God does as we love Him, live for Him, and labor for Him even at great sacrifice. In all of these sacrifices, they experienced the joy of the Holy Spirit. Their leaders were persecuted, but they had joy in the Lord. They were persecuted as they shared the Gospel with others, but they had joy in the Lord. They were suffering for the cause of Christ, yet they had joy in the Lord. This is a joy that is not found in the world but only in the One who has overcome the world – Jesus. Are you sacrificing joyfully for the Lord? Is your life being lived for your comfort and convenience or for His calling? One of the many reasons the Church is in such great decline is because we have bought into the lie of the world that we are to live for our comforts and pleasures rather than the callings and purposes of God. May God convict us and forgive us!

## II. “All Out” on Mission Means that We Share the Gospel Courageously (vs. 8a, 9-10)

What would you do if you could not tell anyone about Jesus? What would you do if you were threatened with beatings, imprisonment, and possible death? Our human nature would be to lay low and not bring unnecessary conflict, but the Holy Spirit within us will not allow us to be silent about the things God has done in our lives. Notice how the Thessalonians responded. Paul said, “The word of the Lord has sounded forth from you.” The word in Greek means “to sound like a trumpet.” In that day it was common for a trumpet to be sounded in the streets to draw attention for a herald to announce a message. Paul uses this as a picture of how courageous their message was about Jesus. **John Phillips** explains, “They did not hide timidly behind closed doors and whisper the Gospel into the ears of their most trusted friends. They shouted it from the housetops. They preached the Good News loudly in the marketplace. They told it to everyone. What they had discovered in Christ was too good to be kept to themselves...they became fearless ambassadors for Christ and earned the resentment and active malice of the Jews as a result.” They followed the example of Paul in **Romans 1:16**, “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” These young believers were not **ashamed** of the Gospel, nor were they **afraid** to share it. They knew the souls of men were desperately lost without the hope of the Gospel, so no matter the cost, they openly and courageously shared it with others. I pray that God will give us that same type of courage and obedience today. If we are going to see a revival in America, it must begin in the hearts of God’s people who become hungry for Him and hungry to see Him move. This implies that we must also be willing to do whatever it takes regardless of the cost. I pray we get back to a day when we are more concerned about God’s approval than we are about man’s. It would be easy to dismiss this and say, “Well that was good for them, but that’s not for me. Oh sure, that was great for the Apostle Paul, but that’s not what I’m called to do.” Remember, as followers of Christ we are called to be missionaries taking the Gospel to the lost. Here in 1 Thessalonians, Paul explains that their actions led them to become “an example to all the believers,” which still applies to us today. So what did they share? What did their message consist of? There were two primary things:

### A. They Shared Their Testimony

A “testimony” is a telling of our experience. It is sharing with others the things that we have seen and heard. If you are called into a courtroom to give a testimony, you are telling the things that you have witnessed. When Peter and John were threatened to no longer tell people about Jesus, they said in **Acts 4:20**, “For we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” No matter what threats came against them, they could not stop telling people the truth

of what they had experienced in Christ. It is not merely a narrative but a true, real-life story of how a person experiences Christ. **\*\*ILL:** Even the world knows the power of one's story. American Idol and other shows won't even let you on the air unless you've got a story that will make people cry or give them hope. 😊 Some of those are likely real and some are likely just to keep you watching, but the best these can offer are stories of perseverance about the human resolve to press on. They don't offer hope for your soul, or tell you how you can be forgiven of your sins and enjoy the abundant life that is found in living for Jesus. They can't save your soul. Your testimony is your personal story of what Jesus has accomplished in your life. It is three basic truths – **Where** you were, **What** Jesus did, and **Who** you are today in Christ.

As Paul and Silas continued to take the Gospel throughout the ancient world, they were meeting people that were telling them about the testimony of the Thessalonians that they had heard firsthand. Their testimony was that they had turned to God from idols to serve the Living and True God. This is incredible! Remember that Thessalonica was a Gentile people made up mostly of Greeks. A quick study of Greek mythology and religion shows they had a host of gods like Zeus, Hermes, Neptune, and Aphrodite. They had a god or goddess to meet everyone's desire, but when the Thessalonians heard the truth about the One True God and the way that they could know Him by grace through faith, they turned from these false gods and trusted in the Lord God for their salvation. This was their testimony. They once were lost but now in Christ they were found, they once were blind but now they could see. They were dead in their trespasses and sins, but now they were walking in the abundant life of Christ. This is the testimony of **all** who know Jesus. We may have different situations, backgrounds, and sins, but our story is the same – we have been saved by the grace of God. Never minimize or discount your testimony because of where you did or didn't come from. If you grew up in the church and trusted in Christ as your Savior at a young age, then rejoice and praise God. He spared you from a life of hardship and pain, but He still saved you from sin and eternity in hell. If you lived and tasted of the pleasures of the world for most of your life but turned from your sin and trusted in Jesus, then don't live in condemnation of your past. You have been gloriously saved and set free. This is your testimony. Never give in to the enemy's temptation to minimize your testimony. It is your personal story of God's amazing grace in your life, and it is a powerful tool in the hand of God for relating to others where they're at. As the scene in heaven unfolds in **Revelation 12:10-11** the Scripture says, "Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, 'Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.' " Don't dismiss or discredit the power of your testimony of God's working in your life.

## **B. They Shared the Truth About Jesus**

Our testimony is a powerful tool in the hand of God, but our testimony does not tell the full truth that everyone needs to hear. The heart of the Gospel is found in **1 Corinthians 15:3-4** – the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Amazingly, these believers did not have every answer, but they knew everything they needed to know about Jesus. Notice what they shared.

First, they shared that Jesus **rose** from the dead. They explained that Jesus died on the cross for the sins of the world, that His dead body was put into a tomb, and that three days later He

rose again from the grave. Perhaps they shared the evidence of the eyewitness accounts, the encounter that Saul had on the road to Damascus, but they could also share personally how they came to the conviction that He had risen again. They made it clear that Jesus was alive.

Next, they shared that Jesus **rescues** us from wrath. Jesus is the One who rescues us from hell and the punishment of sin, but what is in view here is the wrath that was to come in the future when the Great Tribulation occurs. It is interesting that the word “wrath” is used repeatedly in the book of Revelation to describe what takes place in the world after the Church has been raptured up. The word is used in Revelation 6, 11, 14, 15, 16, and 19. **Revelation 6:17** is a good summary for those who reject Christ, “For the great day of their **wrath** has come, and who is able to stand?” The bold witness of the Thessalonians was simply that Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the grave and all who believe in Him are rescued from their sins and from the wrath to come. Can’t you hear it? They are pleading with people to trust in Jesus, to turn to Him, and to be rescued by the grace of God!

They also shared that Jesus is **returning** again. Jesus promised this in **John 14:3b** saying, “I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” In fact, this focus is the primary theme of 1 Thessalonians. Not only did they share this, but notice the urgency in which they anticipated it. They encouraged people to “wait” for Jesus. The word in Greek means “to wait with patience, confidence, and expectancy.” It’s the idea that they were “waiting up” in anticipation for Christ’s return. **\*\*ILL:** When I would drive home from college, I would always get in very late because it was a 10-hour drive. Yet, every time, by the time I got out of the car my mom was already standing at the door. Why? Because she had been “waiting up” for me. She wanted to see me, wanted to know that I was safe, and wanted to catch up with me. She looked forward to my arrival. Similarly, as followers of Christ, we are to live our lives with an expectation and anticipation that the Lord could call us to be with Him at any moment. This causes us to live our lives differently. 1 John says that those who live with this faithful hope purify themselves. Those who also live with this constant hope will live their life urgently and intentionally by sharing the Good News with others. We don’t know when it will be our last opportunity to share, nor do we know when it will be someone’s last opportunity to hear, so it causes us to live with fervent urgency. Yet so often we miss it. We’re not looking for His return, not readying ourselves for the rapture, and not helping others get ready. We are giving in to the mindless traps of the enemy that waste our time and our lives by not faithfully speaking up and sharing the truth with others. What greater truth could there be than the truth promised in **Romans 10:13**, “For whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved”? Yet many sit around as if we have no responsibility for this promise. “Well, God’s going to save who He’s going to save regardless of what I do.” Friend, that is a lie from the pit of hell, and it leads us to be passive and disobedient children. Right after we have that amazing promise, **Romans 10:14-15** says, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’ ” Why is all this important? **Verse 17** explains, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” People will not believe in the One who saves if they do not hear about Him, and it is our calling as followers of Christ to be missionaries to share the Good News with them.

### III. “All Out” on Mission Means that We Shine Brightly Everywhere We Go (vs. 9b)

As followers of Christ, we are called to be the light in this dark world. Even when life is hard and trials are pressing against us, we must stand firm and be faithful to be a light for Jesus. Jesus said “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven,” **Matthew 5:14-16**. This is who we are called to be as followers of Jesus, but we cannot do this without intentionally leaving the family of believers to take the Gospel to those who still need to believe. What does a missionary do? He takes the Gospel to where the people are. **\*\*ILL:** I was at a conference earlier this week for church planters when one of the speakers called this The Little Mermaid principle. What did she say? “I want to go where the people are”. ☺ As Christians, we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We must be all together as the church committed to fellowship, prayer, giving, and serving, but our primary calling is to then leave from this place encouraged and equipped to go and share the hope of the Gospel with others. This was so evident in the Thessalonians that the Gospel sounded forth from them in Macedonia, their home region, and in Achaia. The distance between these two locations was over 190 miles. They did not have the internet, cell phones, vehicles, airplanes, or any of the technologies we have today. They were going throughout the community and region everywhere they went proclaiming the Good News. The Gospel was shining from them “in every place” they had gone forth. When Paul wrote this letter from Corinth, over 329 miles away, yet even there the news of their Gospel witness was spreading. The people of the world were hearing the explanation of the Gospel and seeing the evidence of lives being changed, and many were coming to faith in Christ. Their witness had such a profound impact that even the Apostle Paul says, “We do not need to say anything.” There was no need for a message because the witness of these believers and the working of God was so powerful that the movement of God was the message. They were “all out” on a mission with Jesus, shining brightly all through the ancient world.

This, though, brings us back to today. If you are a follower of Christ, you are a missionary. **Charles Spurgeon** said it best, “Every Christian here is either a missionary or an imposter. Recollect that. You either try to spread abroad the kingdom of Christ, or else you do not love Him at all. It cannot be that there is a high appreciation of Jesus and a silent tongue about Him.” These are sobering words that we must consider. **\*\*ILL:** I was reminded of the importance of being on mission just a few weeks ago. A few times a year I fly to Texas where I serve on a board for a seminary. When I arrive, I’m normally picked up by one of the seminary students. On this particular occasion, I was picked up by a young man in his late twenties who was not originally from America. He expressed his deep excitement to be picking up a pastor from Virginia. I quickly learned that he is from India and asked why he was so excited to host a pastor from Virginia. He quickly said, “The missionary from Virginia.” Throughout our drive, I learned all about his home country. There are over 1.4 billion people in India. The primary religions there are Hinduism and Islam, but in the region this young man is from that is changing because of God’s work through “the missionary from Virginia.” This young man spoke about the Virginia missionary with such joy and warmth that I assumed that the missionary was still there. I finally asked when the missionary went to India, to which he explained that he went there in the 1940s. As I asked more questions, I learned that the VA missionary served in that part of India from the 1940s through the 1970s and then returned to America due to a health complication. That faithful servant of the Lord served there for 40 years, but the impact of the Gospel throughout his life is still impacting that particular region



of India. Today, there are over 5 million Christians in that region alone, and this young man is in America studying theology with the plan to go back to plant a church. Ever since that conversation, I've been wrestling with the thought. I can still hear the excited tone in that young man's voice, "The missionary from Virginia!" I have found myself ever since dreaming of and praying for the day when we become a people who don't just attend church but when every single one of us becomes the missionary that God has called us to be. That mighty work in India is what God can do with just one missionary. Can you imagine what God might do if we are all missionaries? What might God do if thousands of missionaries leave this place every single week to take the Gospel throughout the streets, neighborhoods, workplaces, and shopping centers to every end of this Valley and to the ends of the earth? God has not called one, He's called us all! Will you be a missionary for Him? Will you put your "yes" on the table and get equipped to take the Gospel throughout this region and beyond? Let's today commit to be the church that God calls us to be – All In with Jesus, All Together as the Church, and All Out on Mission...and all of it for the glory of Jesus Christ!