

# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE SUNDAY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

February 2021 Live Sent Month

## OVERVIEW

Every February, Shandon Baptist Church elevates Missions by celebrating Live Sent Month. During the four Sundays in February, everything we do at Shandon will point to the concept of “leveraging your life” for the sake of the gospel. This year, our Sunday School Curriculum, **Leverage Your Life** equips every Sunday School teacher to challenge their class members to make an impact in 2021. We ask that every Sunday School teacher use the structure of this curriculum, along with their own unique teaching plans, to teach God’s Word.

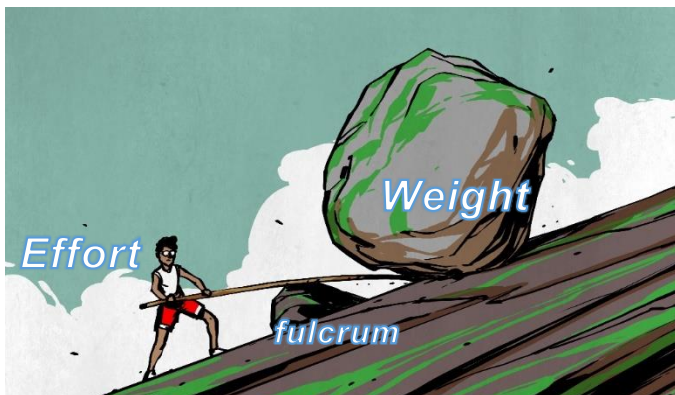
## From WE to ME

***Live Sent:** Leveraging who we are and what we have been given for the sake of the gospel wherever we are and wherever God takes us.*

Our Mission Statement is written for all of us, which is why we use the pronoun “WE.” This is a mission statement for our whole church. This February, we are asking each member to make the mission statement personal, like going from “we” to “me,” so to speak. Ask yourself “How am I offering who I am to God’s mission? How am I offering what I have been given for the Great Commission?” Let this be a month of offering yourself to God in prayer, seeking His call on your life. He made you and gifted you uniquely with your own SENT IDENTITY. Would you pray a prayer like this?

*God, I offer who I am and what I have been given to you. Thank you for making me the way you made me and putting me where you have me. I want my life to be for you and for your mission. You are worthy of worship of all peoples, the ones across the street and the ones across the world. I trust that if I walk with you and join you in living out the Great Commission, you can use this broken vessel, me, to make an impact in this broken world. Amen.*

## How a LEVER works – the power of the CROSS



Before we teach “leverage,” we need to review the basic concept of how levers work. It is so simple that most kids can get it. As a teacher, you might want to use a lever as a visual aid to teach the content. Every lever has three main parts: a fulcrum (pivot point), load (weight), and force (effort). This tool increases a person’s ability to lift something greater than they would have otherwise. In the same way, God’s power makes us able to leverage our lives for exponential impact. How awesome that God empowers us this way! When we join in what God has called us to, overflowing in His grace, we have impact far beyond our abilities.

The “weight” of the world is heavy, its needs too heavy for man. None of us are strong enough to make an impact by ourselves in our own strength. Even if you add all of us together, we do not have what it takes to right every wrong and reach every nation, BUT GOD is at work, and He is in us. When we walk with Jesus and overflow with the gospel, our lives can be “leveraged” for impact way beyond ourselves. Because of God’s Power, you can obediently “Leverage Your Life” for a broken world, for your own little world, and for the unreached world. Also, because of God made us His church, we will leverage our lives TOGETHER.

# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR A BROKEN WORLD

February 2021 Live Sent Month – WEEK 1 – Overview Page

## Focal Verse

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? And the King will answer them, “Truly, I say to you, as you did to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”

Matthew 25:37-40

## Ask Yourself

How is God calling you to leverage who you are and what you have been given for the “least of these?”

The weight of the broken world we live in is so heavy, it’s like we cannot make much of an impact; however, God’s Word teaches us this powerful concept: if we simply leverage our lives for one person, it is as if we ministered to Jesus himself.

**Main Idea:** Every believer should impact ONE of “the least of these” in 2021, as if ministering to Jesus himself. He empowers us to join Him in healing a broken world, one person at a time.

**Key Question:** How can you leverage who you are and what you have been given for the least of these?

**Focal Passage:** Matthew 25:31-46

**Blessing 1:** Minister to those in poverty for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself. (hungry, thirsty, needing clothes)

**Blessing 2:** Welcome a refugee, international student, or immigrant for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself. (stranger)

**Blessing 3:** Care for sick and the prisoner, for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself.

## Conclusion & Local Missions

### Highlight:

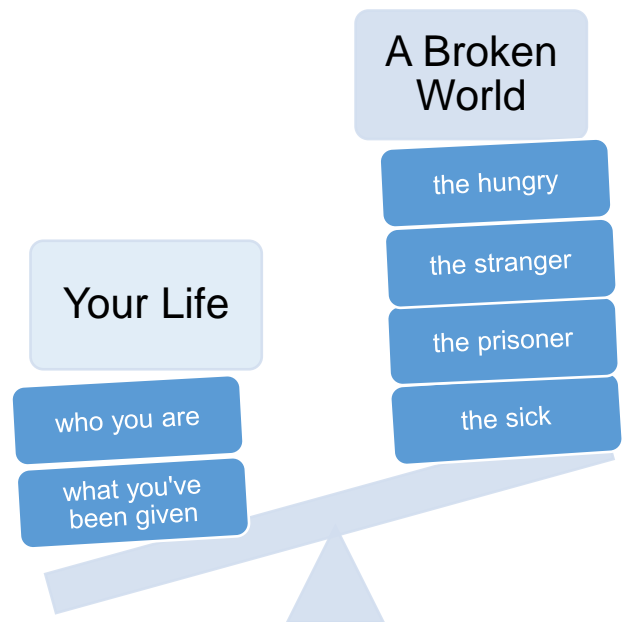
One way you can see how we “welcome a stranger” at Shandon is to join our field trip on

the last Saturday of February to Colony East Apartments. Find out more in the lobby today about this awesome opportunity to bless refugees in our city. You can also meet several of our strategic local mission partners

## Supporting Scriptures:

**Jeremiah 29:7** “But seek the welfare of the city.”

**Micah 6:8, Hebrews 13:1-3, Matthew 8:20**



# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR A BROKEN WORLD – TEACHER NOTES – WEEK 1

**Main Idea:** Every believer should impact ONE of “the least of these” in 2021, because of the blessings of ministering to Jesus himself. He empowers us to join Him in healing a broken world, one person at a time.

## Introduction

**SAY:** Let us be honest. The thought of being a missionary is quite intimidating. The idea of ‘living sent’ can seem overwhelming to us. You read stories of great missionaries like Hudson Taylor, Jim Elliott, and others. People who have poured out their lives to reach the lost. That is a hard example for some to follow.

Today, as we consider leveraging our lives for the sake of the Gospel, we will see that it is something all God’s children can do. Every one of us can have an impact. Each of us can bring comfort and healing to a world that is broken. We can, when we remember we do this in Jesus name, one person at a time.

There is no doubt that all around us are hurting people. We see them, we pass by them, we work with them, go to school with them, etc. It is the goal of this lesson to have you answer this one key question: “*How can I leverage who I am and what I have been given for the least of these?*”

## Scripture

**Read:** Matthew 25:37-40

*Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’*

## Pray

**Pray:** If you have not already done so, pause to pray with your class. Ask God to open your eyes and hearts to His Word concerning ministering to the least of these, in His name.

## Main Teaching Points:

- 1. Minister to those in poverty for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself. (hungry, thirsty, needing clothes)**

**SAY:** In this passage, Jesus tells of a beautiful time when believers are welcomed into Heaven. He tells these blessed ones to enter, for they gave Him food, drink, and clothes when He was in need. What is interesting is the reaction of the blessed. You can almost see the bewildered look on their face. “Lord, when did we see you hungry? Thirsty? Naked? Sick?”

Who would not stop if they saw Jesus in need? Who would not go the extra mile to minister the Son of God? This is the power and challenge of this passage! Jesus commends them for they did it, of their own choice and from the generosity of their heart, to the least of these. They ministered to the weak and frail, not the great teachers or leaders. Jesus Himself could relate to those in need:

*“Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” – Matthew 8:20.*

The blessed ones are the ones who take the time and make the effort to minister, to help, to give to those who cannot help themselves. To bring comfort to the hurting ones who cross their path. In doing so, they bless the Lord with their faithful ministry.

**ASK:** What are some ways that you can minister to the least of these? How can you position yourself to give aid to the hurting ones around you?

## **2. Welcome a refugee, international student, or immigrant for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself. (stranger)**

**SAY:** Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you knew no one? Have you ever been lost in a strange place? Have you been in a situation where you felt cutoff, different? Imagine being a foreign student, coming to school in Columbia. Put your mind in the mind of a person who has fled to the United States from a foreign country, leaving all they knew and loved behind. Try and comprehend how much they may be hurting.

Then, imagine the blessing of having someone reach out to them. To have someone offer a smile, an invitation to sit with them. To welcome someone into their home or go to theirs. The book of Hebrews also makes this point:

*“Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” – Hebrews 13:1-2*

There is a hurting world, all around us. We can be a blessing. We just need to have our eyes and hearts open to see and react to the opportunities that are around us. Hospitality to strangers links us both with God and with others. It is a wonderful way of experiencing the presence of the Holy One and bless Him through faithful service.

**ASK:** Jesus identifies with the stranger, the lonely. How can you develop His mind/attitude? What are ways that you can intentionally be welcoming?

## **3. Care for the addicted and afflicted, for the blessing of ministering to Jesus himself. (sick, prisoner)**

**SAY:** The amount of people struggling with addictions is staggering. There are so many people who are sick...the COVID infections and deaths for one breaks the heart. There are many families who have ones they care about in prison. What should we, as believers do about this?

*“Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body.” – Hebrews 13:3*

We need to remember them. We recall them. We pray for them. Notice what the verse says....as though we were in prison with them; the mistreated as if we share the same body, suffer the same blows, etc. How would you pray if you were in prison? Being mistreated? We need to truly ‘feel their pain’ and let that feeling move us. To pray. To give. To reach out. Whatever God places on the heart to do.

**ASK:** How can you develop and cultivate an attitude and action that moves you to care for the sick, the imprisoned?

### **Conclusion & Call to Action**

**SAY:** Notice again Matthew 25:40: *“And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these **my brothers**, you did it to me.’* The hurting, the poor, the sick, the mistreated, Jesus calls them His brothers! He cares for them. He died for them. He lives for them. We, His church, need to prayerfully go through our days with the least of these on our hearts and minds. And be willing to minister to the lives He places in our path, as He did while on earth. One by one.

**ASK:** Did you know that during 2020 God opened many doors in local missions for Shandon. To continually grow our involvement locally, Allison Caldwell has stepped into the role of “Local Missions Director.” Today would be a great day to touch base with Allison or with any of our local missions partners in the lobby.

In 3 weeks, on Saturday February 27, Allison Caldwell, Charis Taylor, and others will lead a field trip for anyone interested in serving refugee families at Colony East Apartments. This is a wonderful opportunity to take the gospel to unreached people groups living in our own backyard. You can sign up in the lobby today with Allison.

You can also email [missions@shandon.org](mailto:missions@shandon.org) to get involved or ask questions.

# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR YOUR OWN LITTLE WORLD

February 2021 Live Sent Month – WEEK 2 – Overview Page

## Focal Verse

<sup>29</sup> But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ... <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ... <sup>36</sup> Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” <sup>37</sup> He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”

Luke 10:29, 33, 36-37

## Ask Yourself

How is God calling you to leverage who you are and what you have been given for the people God has put in front of you?

The weight of your own little world can be intimidating to the point we neglect sharing the gospel with the people closest to us. God’s Word reminds us to start with prayer.

**Main Idea:** Every believer should walk closely with Jesus and pray specifically for those near them, because only God’s power can transform lives. God can use you to reach your “neighbor.”

**Key Question:** How can you leverage who you are and what you have been given for the people you come across in your normal, everyday life?

**Focal Passage:** Luke 10:29-37

**Define Neighbor:** Someone who lives near, regardless of background.

**Pray:** Pray first for the salvation of our lost “neighbors” and second for the opportunity to share the hope of the Gospel with them.

**Share:** Learn IPOC3 from Larry McCrary, author of

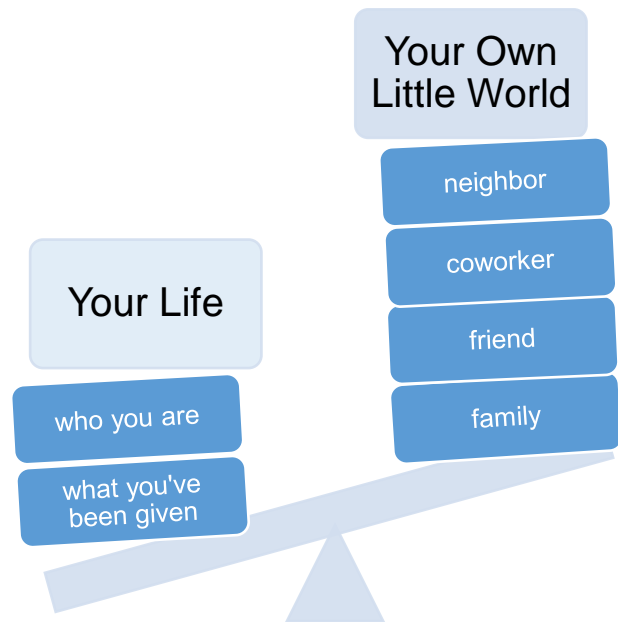
*Tradecraft* about intentionally being a gospel presence right here!

**Conclusion & Call to Action:** Today at lunch in the gym Billy Judge will be interviewed by David Taylor on the following topic: “How young churches live sent to their neighbors, classmates, and coworkers.” We would love for you to participate in this free lunch, to hear how God is at work through our first Shandon Church plant, and to pray God would use you for His Gospel!

## Supporting Scriptures

**Eph 4:25-32** “Be kind to one another...”

**Luke 10:1-7** “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few...”



## LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR YOUR OWN LITTLE WORLD – TEACHER NOTES – WEEK 2

**MAIN IDEA: EVERY BELIEVER SHOULD WALK CLOSELY WITH JESUS AND PRAY SPECIFICALLY FOR THOSE NEAR THEM, BECAUSE ONLY GOD’S POWER CAN TRANSFORM LIVES. GOD CAN USE YOU TO REACH YOUR “NEIGHBOR.”**

### **Introduction:**

**SAY:** The average amount of time a person spends at work over their lifetime is 90,000 hours. We often devote at least one third of our lifetime to our work. The average employee spends more time with their coworkers than they do with their own families. This statistic may not fit you specifically, but there is a large probability that instead of coworkers there are people in your own little world who you are most with each day (EX: classmates, the mom next door you have play dates with, the delivery driver who has you on his route). With this time, how are we leveraging our lives for the sake of the Gospel? Have we been intentional about mentioning God to a coworker? Have we prayed for the salvation of our lost next-door neighbors? Through this passage, let us look at who our neighbors are and how we can partner with God as we leverage every ordinary, daily moment of our lives.

### **Scripture**

**READ:** Luke 10:29-37

**29** But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”**30** In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. **31** A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. **34** He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next day he took out two denarii[a] and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’**36** “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”**37** The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

**Pray:** Lead your class to ask God to allow you to look beyond yourself and place specific names of neighbors on your heart with which He is calling you to share the Gospel.

**Markerboard:** Have the class give examples of neighbors they run into and write them on the board. (Ex: next door, in the neighborhood, coworker)

**Ask:** Now, after reading this passage, what characteristics do you see that make up a neighbor?

**Answer:** In verse 37, the lawyer answers “The one who shows mercy.” The lawyer did not say “the one who looks like me” or “the one who is easy to love.” What makes a neighbor is someone who lives near to you, who has the same life rhythms as you, who you see in your “neck of the woods.” A neighbor is who God has placed in front of you. This includes next-door residents, co-workers, family, friends, etc.

**Ask:**

1. List all the ways that the Good Samaritan took care of the man he came across.
2. After listing these, how far do we feel the Lord is asking us to go in willingness to take care of our neighbors?

**Answer:**

- Took pity on him.
- Bandaged his wounds by pouring oil and wine.
- Placed him on his donkey.
- Brought him to the inn.
- Paid the innkeeper with a promise to pay any further costs needed.

*The Samaritan cared for the man with abundant mercy. He attended to every need and even anticipated future needs.*

**Say:** Now that we have defined who our neighbors are and how we have been told to care for them, let us zoom out and identify how God can use us to live sent in our “own little world.” If most of our time is “ordinary” and most of our lives are spent doing mundane tasks, have we sought to bring God glory in this? To care most for a coworker, to love a neighbor in a God-glorifying way, is to share the hope of the Gospel with them. This can be difficult because we feel so much pressure to not rock the boat or make our daily lives awkward. However, this is our mission field, and this is where God has called us to leverage our lives for His glory.

## **Conclusion & Call to Action**

**Ask:**

How can we apply the message of the Good Samaritan to our everyday lives?

1. **PRAY** We can pray specifically for the Lord to work in our neighbors’ hearts, to bring them salvation. Salvation comes through God’s work alone, only He has the power to save. To pray and plead with God to save your neighbor is the kindest thing you can do. We can also pray for the Lord to grant us opportunities to share the Gospel with our neighbors. Let us walk in bold faith and pray for our neighbors intentionally, because we are confident that God is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.
2. **IPOC3** explains how, beyond prayer, we can be a gospel presence where we live, work, and play.

THE FOLLOWING 3 PAGES OFFER SUPPLEMENTS FOR “PRAY” AND “IPOC3”



PRAY:

GREEK GUIDE: Paul uses 4 words to describe evangelistic prayer to Timothy: entreaties, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings. Below are the Greek Meanings. Let this give insight to the ways we can pray evangelistically.

1. Entreaties
  1. δέησις (deesis) – The root of this Greek work is “urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God.” (p. 213, Danker)
  2. The shade of meaning of “Entreaties” is that we need God to supply our need in evangelism, that we do not have what it takes and he does
2. Prayers
  1. προσευχή (proseuche)- “petition addressed to a diety” (p.878,Danker)
  2. The shade of meaning of “prayers” is the Godward, reverent, worshipful nature of these evangelistic prayers
3. Petitions
  1. ἐντεύξεις (enteuxis) – “a formal request put to a high official or official body, petition, request” or “intercessory prayer” (p. 339, Danker)
  2. The shade of meaning of “petitions” is that we are getting involved with specifics of prayers, praying with insight and empathy
4. Thanksgivings
  1. εὐχαριστίας (eucharistias) – “The rendering of thanks” (p. 416,Danker)
  2. The shade of meaning of “Thanksgivings” is that we are fully grateful that the gospel has come to us and will come to those we pray for

Frederick William Danker, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*,

3rd Edition. (University of Chicago Press, 2000.)

## IPOC3

### LEARNING MISSIONARY SKILLS: IPOC3 (From Larry McCrary, Upstream Collective)

All of us have a Great Commission responsibility. Some people are called to live out this calling in another cultural context, but all of us are called to live it out wherever we are. It is about having a life of obedience, following Christ wherever he may lead us. It is about having an identity as a sent one wherever we live, work, and plan. That is what living missionally is all about. Living missionally does not come down to a formula, but I (Larry) must admit I was inspired by a certain brand of computers in regards to how to think and live missionally wherever I am. This little non-formula is called “iPOC3”.

I am not a huge fan of acrostics, but iPOC3 reminds me of some basic things that I can do daily, no matter where I am, to participate in God’s mission:

## I PRAY

Prayer should be the foundation for all we do. Through prayer, I have seen people who were previously closed to spiritual things really open. I have seen hard-to-reach areas become receptive through prayer. Prayer is the essential framework for living a Spirit-dependent, missional life. We often make space for prayer during our quiet times, but prayer should also be an active part of the rest of the day. As you move about in your daily life, pray. Pray for open doors. Pray that God will show you people with whom you can talk. Pray for opportunities. Pray that God will open the hearts of the people wherever you are.

The problem is, prayer can be challenging in our current mania for technological entertainment. Wherever we are, our iPhones and tablets alert us to interesting events, store sales, and a barrage of news articles at every moment of the day.

As Jordan Monson put it, “For two thousand years, the most private and undistracted place was behind the closed door. Now, the noise has relocated indoors. If our computers and devices are near, it is the worst place to try to pray. Walking through Times Square is less distracting than sitting alone in a room full of technology.”<sup>1</sup> His advice is to utilize the handy Do Not Disturb feature on our phones and to go prayer walking.

While prayer walking may sound archaic, it really does make sense. When you are walking alone, you have no choice but to focus on what is going on in your head. You are not checking your email, shooting a quick text, or flipping television channels. A change of scenery might be just the thing you need to listen to what God is telling you.

## **I OBSERVE**

As you pray, you also observe where God is at work. Observe the people and discover possible needs you can meet and ways you can connect with them. Observe the city and neighborhood where you live. People are greatly affected by the places in which they live, and by studying their environment, you can learn quite a bit. The more you know about your city, the more you know how to pray for the people in it. Check out our book, *Tradecraft: For the Church on Mission*, for tips on mapping your city and learning to observe how God is working there.

<sup>1</sup> Jordan Monson, “Private Prayer Walk,” <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/private-prayer-walk>

## **I CONNECT**

This part can involve almost anything as you relate to people. Connecting with people can be striking up a conversation with a post office clerk. It can be walking with an elderly person as he or she crosses the street. It can be helping someone carry his or her groceries when it is clear the load is a little too heavy.

We can also connect with our closest friends and family members. If you want to deepen these relationships, you must get to know their likes and dislikes, their hobbies and favorite shows, their flaws, and goals. If we do not know these things about our friends, we will struggle to connect. It will be harder for us to share the gospel with them if we do not know what angle of the good news they need to hear. After all, the gospel is usually shared in the context of a relationship. People want to

know that you care about all of them, not just their spiritual beliefs. Meet them where they are and give the relational space to grow.

At the end of the day, evangelism is more than a simple formula. It is your posture toward people. Evangelism is highly relational, and God will provide you opportunities to connect with people if you seek them.

### **I SEEK SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS CONTINUOUSLY**

The second and third Cs of iPOC3 drive home the importance of seeking to enter spiritual conversations continuously with people as you connect and as God opens doors. You may even be able to strike up a lasting friendship with someone during a typical day. If that is the case, who knows, you may even find the person is interested in spiritual things and open to hanging out regularly to talk about life and spirituality. It may provide you the perfect opportunity to share the gospel with them. From my experience, that is a much better, less threatening, often more sensitive option than simply taking that person to a local church in order to be taught more. That is because, as followers of Jesus, we are all equipped with the ability to speak truth into others' lives and tell them about Jesus. If that sounds intimidating, go back to Acts 1:8: "you will be my witnesses," Jesus says. He will give us power and help us in this. He promises.

#### **To recap, iPOC3**

comes down to ... I pray, I observe, I connect, and I seek spiritual conversations continuously. It is simple, it is straightforward, and hey, it's often a lot of fun!

Do not stress that iPOC3 is another program or yet another item on your checklist to do in your church. It is simply an easy way to remember what we should be doing as we go about our day. Living missionally is about who we are and what we are becoming. Pray and seek out what God might want that to look like in your daily life.

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# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR THE UNREACHED WORLD

February 2021 Live Sent Month – WEEK 3 – Overview Page

## Focal Verse

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Revelation 7:9-10

## Ask Yourself

How is God calling you to leverage who you are and what you have been given for the unreached so that every nation and tribe knows Jesus?

The extent of the unreached world is so vast and so far beyond our own little worlds. Would you consider going on a mission trip this year to see our big God at work in this big world?

**Main Idea:** Every believer should GIVE, PRAY, and/or GO for at least ONE unreached people group in 2021, because God the King sent Jesus the Lamb to bring salvation to ALL NATIONS.

**Key Question:** How can you leverage who you are and what you have been given for an unreached people group? Will you GO and/or GIVE to take the gospel across cultural lines?

**Focal Passage:** Revelation 7:9-12

**OT Commission/Gen 12:1-2:** “All Peoples will be blessed through you”

**Definition of an Unreached People Group:** Joshua Project

**Matthew 24:14:**

“All Nations” for God’s Kingdom

**Conclusion &**

**Call to Action:**

GO on a mission trip in 2021.

GIVE to the Live Sent Offering.

PRAY for an unreached people group.

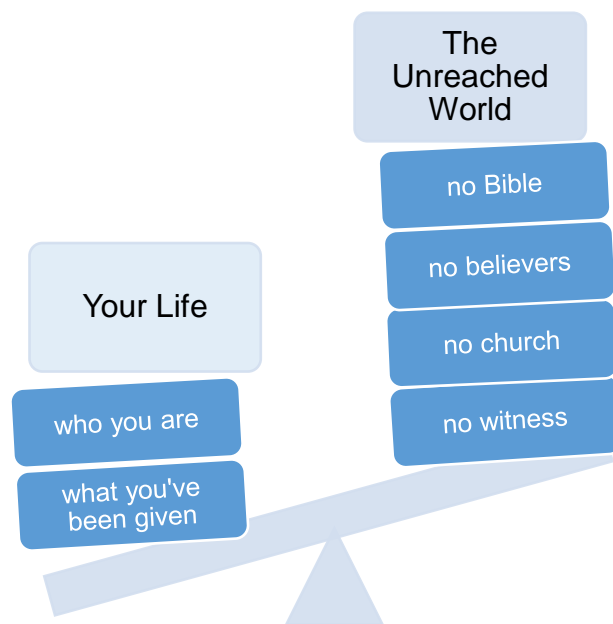
SEND our people of Shandon who are called to move

across the sea so that all people groups will be reached the with gospel and will worship around the throne of God.

**Supporting Scriptures:**

**Revelation 5:6-10** “for every tribe and language and people”

**Matthew 24:14** “As a testimony to all nations”



## LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE FOR THE UNREACHED WORLD – TEACHER NOTES – WEEK 3

**Main Idea: Every believer should GIVE, PRAY, and/or GO for at least ONE unreached people group in 2021, because God the King sent Jesus the Lamb to bring salvation to ALL NATIONS.**

### Introduction

**SAY:** We hear a lot about the global mission of God, and the missionaries who give their lives for the sake of that mission. After all, the Apostle Paul was technically a missionary who sought to bring the gospel to people in many different cross-cultural contexts. This is also true throughout history. You may have even heard stories of famous missionaries like William Carey and Amy Carmichael to India, Hudson Taylor, and Lottie Moon to China, Adoniram Judson to Burma, and Jim Elliot to remote tribes in Ecuador. Additionally, we see this in our own church family at Shandon. Many of us may know the Gestring family, who is currently serving in Southern Africa. Or the Dinkins family who is serving in East Africa, or Leslie Wolfe who is serving in West Africa, or the Brookshire family or Hannah Roberts or Caroline McDowell, all of whom are currently serving in different regions throughout the Middle East. All throughout history, the gospel has always gone out from the people of God, not only to their immediate surroundings, but also to the ends of the earth. Today, we want to look at why the mission of God demands that the gospel go out to the nations.

### Scripture

**Read:** Revelation 7:9-10

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

### Pray

**Pray:** If you have not already done so, pause to pray with your class. Ask God to open your eyes and hearts to His Word concerning reaching the nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

### Main Teaching Points:

#### 1. From the beginning, God's plan was for every nation to worship him.

**SAY:** When we read the Old Testament, it is clear that God chooses the nation of Israel as his chosen people. After all, God makes several covenants with the Jews, He rescues them time and time again, and he consistently raises up prophets from the Jews. Have you ever considered why God chose the nation of Israel? What was God's purpose in having a nation that was set apart?

To answer this question, let's look at the covenant that established the Jewish people – God's covenant with Abraham. Here is how Genesis 12:1-3 describes it: Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, **so that you will be a blessing**. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**." God makes it very clear from the beginning of the covenant that His goal is to use Israel to bless all the families of the earth.

Later, when Paul references this passage in Galatians 3:7-9, here is what he says: “Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.” This means that even from beginning, when God made a covenant to establish his chosen people, He did not only have the Jewish people in mind, but He had all nations in mind. Jesus was the ultimate fulfillment of this blessing that allows all people, Jew, and Gentile, to know and worship God.

**ASK:** How does the fact that it was always God’s plan to reach every nation change the way that you read the Old Testament?

## **2. God’s plan is not complete until the gospel is proclaimed to all nations.**

**SAY:** In Matthew 24, Jesus’ earthly ministry is coming to an end, and so Jesus stands up and delivers one final sermon so that he could instruct his disciples on the end times. During that sermon, Jesus teaches his disciples many things about what will happen between his death, burial, and resurrection and his return. One of these teachings is relevant for us in this study. In Matthew 24:14, Jesus says this: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” So, we know that God’s plan is not complete until there are no more unreached people groups.

Joshua Project, a ministry that seeks to reach unreached people groups with the gospel, defines **Unreached People Groups** as “*a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance. This means the people group is less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Professing Christians.*” Today, there are 7,414 Unreached People Groups in the world, which make up 3.23 billion people. That means roughly 42% of the world’s population currently has little or no access to the gospel message. Jesus invites all his followers to engage in his global mission. God’s mission is not complete until the gospel is proclaimed to all these nations.

**ASK:** Knowing that God’s plan is not finished until the gospel is proclaimed to all people groups, how does this change or reinforce the way that you view your mission as a Christian?

## **3. God’s plan ends with all people groups worshipping him for eternity.**

**SAY:** Regarding God’s global mission, John Piper says this: “Missions exist because worship doesn’t.” This is a helpful statement because it shows the goal and ultimate end of global missions – worship. Our earlier Scripture reading in Revelation 7 gives us a glimpse into God’s plan for eternity. In the end, we know that “a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages” will be worshipping our God in unison. Because Jesus was ransomed for people “from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9), we will be gathered around the throne with our brothers and sisters from all over the world. This is the end of God’s plan for his people to be reconciled to him forever.

This has been God’s plan from the beginning, and God in his infinite power will accomplish this mission through His Church. Through the power of the cross, death is defeated, Christ has defeated the cause of the enemy, He has robbed the grave, and He has taken the sting out of death. Now there is an abundant harvest waiting to be gathered from every people group. Everything that we do to further this mission will be eternally significant.

**ASK:** God's ultimate plan is that every people group and nation would worship him for all eternity, and every believer is called to be a part of advancing this plan. Have you experienced or heard any stories of God's plan advancing in the nations that have brought you encouragement?

### **Conclusion & Call to Action**

**SAY:** This is God's plan throughout the entire Bible. As his people, we are invited to join in the global mission of God. In worship today, you will hear Rob Ransom's story of how his first mission trip changed him. Are you willing to let God work in your life by engaging in this global mission? There are several options for you no matter where you are in your walk with God. Here are a few ways that you can potentially get involved in God's global mission:

1. **Go:** One way to get involved in the mission of God is by going on a short-term mission trip this year! For more information on upcoming trips, please contact david@shandon.org.
2. **Give:** Another way to get involved in the mission of God is through financially helping others go to take the gospel to those who have never heard it. The "Live Sent Offering" is an offering that will be taken during the month of February, and it is a great way to support global missions at Shandon Baptist Church.
3. **Pray:** Another way to get involved is through prayer. God loves to move through the prayers of his people. Joshua Project has a Mobile App and a website that you can download called "Unreached of the Day." This App will give you an Unreached People Group to pray for each day to supplement your time with the Lord.
4. **Send:** God has sent many long-term missionaries and church planters from Shandon. Will you commit to pray and support these church family members who need to be known by their sending church family?

**ASK:** Will you consider committing to one or more of these to take the gospel to unreached peoples around the world?

Today in the lobby, you can learn more about mission trips for 2021. In addition, you will be able to meet some of our missionaries who have been on stateside since Spring of 2020 because of Covid. Finally, we will host a 2021 mission trip interest meeting after all services today. We would love for you to participate in the meeting so you can either go or give to these important trips.

# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE TOGETHER

February 2021 Live Sent Month – WEEK 4 – Overview Page

## Focal Verse

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in<sup>[b]</sup> the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

## Ask Yourself

How is God calling you to leverage who you are and what you have been given TOGETHER with Shandon Baptist Church?

We all have a “sent identity.” This “sent identity” includes our common call to the Great Commission, but it also includes unique ways God is calling YOU to make an impact. Use the “sent identity journal” as a way of considering that unique call.

**Main Idea:** Every believer can bring the Gospel TOGETHER to a world in need by trusting God 3 ways.

**Key Question:** How can you leverage who you are and what you have been given to fulfill the Great Commission?

**Focal Passage:** Matthew 28:16-20

**Trust God’s Authority:** All authority is given to Jesus. We are sent in His authority, not our own.

**Trust God’s Presence:** Jesus promises to be with us in the mission until the Kingdom comes.

## Trust God’s

**Intent:** God’s Plan A is that His church would take the gospel TOGETHER to the world.

## Conclusion & Call to

### Action:

Pastor George Wright has called us to give

generously to the Live Sent Offering, in ways that would prioritize the Great Commission. Would you give to the Live Sent Offering as unto the Lord, trusting we are leveraging our lives together? Would your small group or your family consider opportunities to LIVE SENT TOGETHER in 2021?

## Supporting Scripture:

**John 13:34-35** “Love one another...”

**Ephesians 3:10** “So that now, through the church...”

**Acts 1:8** “Jerusalem...Judea...Samaria...to the ends of the Earth.”





# LEVERAGE YOUR LIFE TOGETHER – TEACHER NOTES – WEEK 4

**Main Idea: Every believer can bring the Gospel TOGETHER to a world in need by trusting God’s authority, God’s presence, and God’s intent.**

## Introduction

**SAY:** Over the past few weeks we have been discussing what it means to leverage our lives for the sake of the gospel in obedience to the Great Commission: go and make disciples of all nations. We have discussed how to leverage our lives for a broken world, for our own little worlds, and for an unreached world.

This week we will be discussing what it means to leverage our lives as a church body to obey the Great Commission together. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, he did not give it to a single disciple, but a group of disciples. The disciples are commissioned to live sent together.

## Scripture

**READ:** Matthew 28:16-20

*16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

## Pray

If you have not already done so, pause and pray with your class. Pray that God would give you faith to trust God’s authority over all things, God’s presence with us, and God’s intent of using his church to make disciples of all nations. Pray that deeper trust in these things would lead your class to take steps of obedience in God’s call on their lives.

## Main Teaching Points

**We can apply this passage by fighting to trust God in 3 ways.**

### 1. Trust God’s Authority

**SAY:** One of the most powerful claims Jesus makes is in Matthew 28:18, and it is the very first thing he says in giving us the Great Commission. He says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Here, Jesus says that everything in all creation, in heaven, on earth, in the sea, on land, in every country, state, government, household, every living thing, every natural process, every natural disaster, every molecule in the universe is under the authority of Jesus. Everything you could possibly imagine is under His authority. Jesus rightly claims all authority because he lived the perfect life we could never live, died the death we deserved, and rose victoriously defeating sin and death forever. Sin, suffering, death, and Satan no longer have any authority because Jesus has defeated all of it!

Paul speaks of the authority of Jesus in Philippians 2: 9-11 and says, “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” This is Paul’s way of saying that Jesus has all authority. So, why does this matter? And how does trusting in God’s authority help us bring the gospel to a world in need? The promise that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth gives us confidence as we obey this commandment. We are not sent to

make disciples in our own authority, but we are sent in the power and under the authority of Christ. We would be right to be timid and fearful to go make disciples in our own authority because we have no authority! But Jesus commissions us to go and make disciples under his authority. The authority of Jesus gives us confidence to leverage our lives for the sake of the gospel because we are joining a mission that is unable to fail.

**ASK:** How does the truth that Jesus has all **authority** encourage you to leverage your life for the gospel?

**ASK:** Where in your life do you need help trusting Jesus' authority?

## 2. Trust God's Presence

**SAY:** The second way we can apply this passage is by trusting God's presence. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus concludes the Great Commission with "And behold, I am with always, to the end of the age." Jesus does not end the Great Commission with "ok good luck!" or "you can do it!". He ends the Great Commission with the comforting promise of his presence. Our comfort and confidence in leveraging our lives for the sake of the gospel is that the One who chose us, saved us, called us, and sent us, will always be with us. Jesus promises to be with us in the mission until the Kingdom comes and we are with him face to face. We can leverage our lives where we are now and wherever God takes us because wherever we may be, he will always be with us. Jesus begins the Great Commission with a powerful statement of his authority and ends the Great Commission with the comforting promise of his presence. As everything Jesus said, this is intentional. It is important that we realize that the One who promises to never leave us and to be with us always is the same One who has authority over the entire universe. This gives great context to the Great Commission. We are sent to make disciples of all nations by our Lord Jesus who has authority over everything and will never leave us. What a joy and privilege to join Christ in this mission that cannot fail because he has all authority and will never leave us.

**ASK:** How does Jesus' promise to be with you always encourage you to leverage your life for the gospel?

## 3. Trust God's Intent

**SAY:** The third way we can apply this passage is by trusting God's intent in the Great Commission. God's plan A to reach a dying and broken world with the gospel is his church. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, he did not give it to a single disciple, but a group of disciples. The disciples are commissioned to live sent together.

According to Jesus, the Christian community is one of the strongest apologetics we have to a broken world. Jesus told his disciples in John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Jesus tells his disciples that people will know we are his disciples by the way we love one another! God's plan A to reach a broken world with the gospel is his CHURCH loving one another and leveraging our lives TOGETHER for the sake of the gospel wherever we are and wherever God takes us. This is such a gift! Not only has God empowered us and given us his presence through his Holy Spirit to live sent, but he has also given us one another to live sent WITH. God's design for our flourishing and the advancement of his kingdom is for the body of Christ to work together to bring the gospel to a world in desperate need to hear it.

**SAY:** A few weeks ago, we talked about how to live sent in "our own little worlds". Now, we will spend some time brainstorming how we can live sent in our own worlds **together**.

**MARKERBOARD:** Ask the following questions and after each question write your class' answers on the board.

- What activities you do every day?
  - (ex. Eat dinner, go to work, walk the dog, etc.)
- What activities you do every week?
  - (ex. Go grocery shopping, go to the gym, go to dinner, kids' soccer game, etc.)
- What activities do you enjoy?
  - (ex. Going hunting, going to Soda City market, game nights, etc.)

**ASK:**

- What activities can you invite other Christians or even other members of this class to do with you?
- How can we do these things **together** with the intention of starting spiritual conversations, sharing the gospel, and ministering to our neighbor?
- What is one practical step you can take this week to live sent with the church?

*\*\*Teacher's note: Write these down and follow up with your class next week.\*\**

**Pray**

Spend time praying for your class this week to take bold steps of faith and for God to bless their obedience and move in mighty ways in our city.

**Conclusion & Call to Action**

**SAY:** On the first Sunday of February, Pastor George Wright called Shandon to give generously to the Live Sent Offering in ways that would prioritize the mission, support the church budget, and spill over to bless our youth group.

**ASK:** Would you give to the Live Sent Offering as unto the Lord, trusting we are leveraging our lives together, in his power?