

18 Years: One Priority. First Importance.

Matthew 22:37-40; 28:18-20

MPS LifePoint Church exists to glorify God and make Jesus known by leading people to be real Christ-followers in life together.

OBJ Every person can understand LifePoint Church's mission by One Priority and First Importance.

INTRO LifePoint Church is 18 years old this weekend! As a parent, the only thing I can really think of is to tell someone, "We are 18!" But it doesn't mean the same thing as an 18-year-old saying this, I don't think. We have been blessed to see the Lord do amazing things among us! I never want to forget where we've come from because every year, every week, has been a testimony to God's grace. And where we are as a church today, and all that is before us, are the most exciting days of our history.

TRANS Today I want to share the very heart of LifePoint. Then, you get to hear testimony from some of our people.

LifePoint Church exists to glorify God and make Jesus known by leading people to be real Christ-followers in life together.

TRANS LifePoint, we have an agenda!

OBJ LifePoint pursues our mission by One Priority and a First Importance.

ONE PRIORITY Matthew 22:37-40

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." **Matthew 22:37-40**

These verses capture one of the most defining moments in all the Bible. The Pharisees try to trap Jesus with a question of greatness. Jesus responds with the simplest answer of most profound significance, which has become known as the Great Commandment. His words are often overlooked because of familiarity. But Jesus reminds us of the greatest of all commandments, and therefore every Christ-followers one priority in life: Love God with your whole being. [Pause] And love your neighbor as yourself. The second part Jesus adds was nothing new. It was already recorded in Leviticus 19:18. But the two commands had never been tied together in this way. **Jesus gives a new command that is not new at all, just forgotten: love for God and love for one another go together.**

Jesus command establishes One Priority for LifePoint. Love for God is only known by one who trusts in God's love through Jesus Christ. This is the good news of the gospel, that God shows His love for us by Jesus dying for us while we were still sinners. But through Jesus Christ His love is given to us so His righteousness can be placed on us. **God shows His love for us in by Jesus' death on the cross, that by faith we might receive His forgiveness and live in His love every day.**

The Great Commandment tells us two things about our lives, by which the first two aspects of a Christ-follower's identity are formed. First, when by faith we trust in Jesus' death on the cross, we receive God's forgiveness to live in His love as a **WORSHIPER**. We are made new creations by Jesus' redeeming work, given a new heart to know God and to live in Relationship with Him. God makes us alive from spiritual deadness to become our life. He becomes our One Priority, who recalibrates our whole life for His glory. **A WORSHIPER grows an all-consuming love in relationship with God to glorify Him with our whole life.**

And because of what Jesus does for us, we live IN God's love to show and share His love with all people. **WORSHIPERS** who live in God's love live to show and share God's love with the whole world as **SERVANTS**. What's most important to you will what is shared most by you to others. Jesus came to serve by laying down His life for us. **SERVANTS live to show God's love by the expression of our whole life in serving others because we have been served by Jesus.**



Now, some of you are thinking, "This sounds familiar. I think I've heard this before." Still others are thinking, "I've heard this so many times I could preach it." And that's exactly the point; the One Priority of our whole agenda.

The One Priority of LifePoint Church is to lead people to live as Worshipers who calibrate their whole life by love for Jesus, so they can navigate all of life to share and show His love with all people of the world as Servants.

TRANS Our One Priority does not stand alone, though. Jesus has not only calibrated our life by the command of His love, but He sends our life by the commission of His Kingdom. And this provides our First Importance in all things.

FIRST IMPORTANCE Matthew 28:16–20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **Matthew 28:16-20**

The last words Jesus gave to His disciples on earth are known as the Great Commission. And yet, like the great commandment, familiarity threatens to cause one to miss His words. There are a couple of very important things we must not miss here. First, Jesus is with His closest disciples. (.16) But second, notice verse 17, "And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted." This is key; following Jesus is a process of being transformed by the Truth of His Word as He renews our mind. **And what does it mean to be renewed?** Doubts of truth and glory formed by incorrect knowledge about God, a sin-stained mind, are corrected by His truth. This "correction", or renewal, transforms life as we walk in His truth by faith. **Renewal is the heart of the gospel at work in the Great Commission that tells us two things by which the last two aspects of a Christ-follower's identity are formed.**

Disciple is not a word unique to Christianity, but the distinctive is the kind of disciple Jesus makes. DISCIPLE, the third aspect of a Christ-follower's identity, is formed by two words, learner and follower, merged to form something altogether new. There were many kinds of disciples in the first century. Many called themselves disciple, but proved to not be. ^{John 6:66} The distinctiveness of a Christian as a Disciple is that Jesus transforms our life to the Authenticity God intended when He created us, to live with Him. **By the truth of the Gospel, we are made as His DISCIPLE when we identify our lives with Jesus and walk by faith to obey Him.**

As the gospel illumines the darkness of sin's stain to renew our mind by the light of His truth, we share this light with others. The gospel becomes of first importance for all of life. ^{1Corinthians 15} Just as it re-calibrates our whole life to God, it also re-orient's our whole life to share the glory of the light of God's truth in the Gospel with others. **New life with God as Worshiper and Disciple compels us to live as MISSIONERS to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people.**

The First Importance of LifePoint Church is to lead people to live as Disciples whose lives are being transformed through a renewed mind by God's truth, and who live to share the truth of the Gospel with all people as a Missioner.

WORSHIPER – SERVANT – DISCIPLE – MISSIONER, this is who we are LifePoint as real Christ-followers.

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