

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SA



Together moving in unity to fulfill
our God-given missional calling!



WHAT IS MISSIONAL?

As a follower of Christ, reflect Him everywhere!
Every AFM member is called to be a witness of Christ!

Equivalent descriptions:

- “Be” church beyond the “church building”.
- Members are called to be witnesses of Christ.
- Members are called to actively represent Christ in their communities.
- Members fully realise they are Kingdom agents.

Definition:

"A missional church is a church where every member consider themselves an active member of the body of Christ, called and sent by God to be light and salt wherever they come."

Key Scriptures:

- Matthew 28:19
- Mark 16:15
- John 20:21
- Acts 1:8



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The term MISSIONAL is a new word but it is vital to understand the real meaning as this is not merely one of the strategic focuses of the AFM, it is the **foundation** on which our strategic plan is built. Being missional is the reason for our existence, the DNA of our church and our conclusive redemptive purpose. While the word "missional" itself was not used or known during our early years, first generation AFM members were however truly missional in their daily living. It's even engraved in our name.

We need to rediscover and re-align ourselves to the Great Commission of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Mt 28:19: "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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Mark 16:15: "And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" John 20:21: "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

To be a missional church, three truths need to be emphasized:

1 - God is really the Great Missionary. He is the first "Sender" and also the first "Sent One" - "For God so loved the world, that He gave..." (John 3:16) The theological term is: Missio Dei - meaning the Mission of God. This is the summary and sum-total of God's redemptive work. The Father sent His Son; the Father and the Son sent the Spirit; the Father, Son and Spirit sent the church. In the Gospel of John alone, nearly forty times we read about Jesus being sent. In John 20:21 Jesus sees himself not only as one sent but also as one who is sending: "**As the Father has sent me, I am sending you**". It is vital that we, the church, should see ourselves - both individually and collectively - as sent by a Missionary-God. It is important to realise that the Great Commission of Jesus was not given to a selected few, to a committee or to some "missionary-minded" people in the church, but to the whole

body of believers - no believer is excluded!

2 - Missional church versus "attractional" church. (Seeker-sensitive) The church service is not supposed to be the primary connecting point with those outside the church - especially in a post-Christendom context.

While there is nothing wrong with attracting people to church and being friendly and sensitive to seekers, the missional church is more concerned about sending the people in the church out among the people of the world, rather than getting the people of the world in among the people of the church. Its primary challenge is not to get more people in the church (building), but to get more church amongst the people of the world. The market place instead of the church-service becomes the main connecting point with the unsaved. Our "**come and see**" approach much change to "**go and be**".

The major part of Jesus's ministry was not church/temple-bound and did not take place in the temple or synagogues:

1 - He called His disciples - not in the temple or from amongst the theologians and religious leaders, but at there workplace - while fishing and collecting taxes. - (Math 4:19, Luke 5:27+28)

2 - His greatest teaching on the Kingdom (the Sermon on the mount) was delivered not in the temple but on a mountain side. (Math. 5-7)

3 - Many of His miracles took place in people's houses and along the way.

4 - He visited the places where sorrow and hurt abound - Bethesda. (John 5:1-8)

5 - He bowed down and embraced little children in the streets of Jerusalem. (Math. 19:13-15)

6 - He was kind to sinners but harsh towards religious hypocrisy. (Math. 23:1-39)

7 - He didn't shy away from parties - Cana. (John 2:1-12)

8 - He even joined some on the job - (Luke 5:1-6)

9 - He did some cross-border mission work and dared to enter a foreign country with strong occultic practices, where a demon possessed maniac ruled and the people begged Him to leave. (Mark 5:1-20)

10 - He touched the untouchables (lepers) and loved the unlovable (tax-collectors - Luke 5:12+13)

11 - He ignored cultural, gender and racial boundaries (Samaritan woman at the well - John 4:1-10)

12 - He socialized with the sinners - was called "a friend of sinners and tax-collectors, a winebibber and glutton." (Math. 11:19) These were the kind of people He mixed with.

The attractional model works relatively well where the general culture is religiously inclined - like in many parts of Africa. The Western culture is however post-Christian and the attractional model has by and large lost its appeal and effectiveness. There is an increasing divide/rift between "church" and "world." In Christ God (the Word) "has become flesh". We call it "incarnation". Being "missional" implies that Christians (the church) in a derived sense will become **Christ "incarnated" in our communities**. (This can also serve as a further definition of a missional believer.)

3. Being a Missional Church implies that we are actively participating in the Missio Dei, or mission of God.

Many times we wrongly assume that the primary activity of God is in the church, rather than recognizing that God's primary activity is in the world, and the church is God's instrument sent into the world to participate in His redemptive mission.

There are basically three kinds of churches today: 1 - Churches who have no interest or involvement in winning the lost; 2 - Churches with a missions

program; 3 - Missional churches. This key distinction clarifies the difference between a church with a missions program and a missional church. A church with a missions program usually sees missions as one activity alongside many other equally important programs of the church. A missional church, on the other hand, focuses all of its activities around its participation in God's agenda for the world. All activities of the church must be focused on and organized around the *missio Dei*. If the church be compared to a wheel, missions is not a spoke of the wheel - it is the hub, the cone of the wheel. Everything should be connected to it.

It is the *Missio Dei*/God's mission that calls the church into existence. In other words, we can no longer see the church as the starting point when thinking about mission. Instead, the church must be seen as the result of God's mission. In the words of South African missiologist David Bosch: "It is not the church which undertakes mission; it is God's mission which constitutes the church." Or stated in a slightly different manner; **"it is not so much that God has a mission for his church in the world, but that God has a church for his mission in the world"** (Christopher Wright)

Application:

Answer this question to determine to what extent MISSIONAL thinking is applied in your assembly:

1. What "church" activities take place outside your church building?

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL OFFICE

Building no.14 | Central Office Park | 257 Jean Ave | Centurion
Gauteng
South Africa

P.O. Box 9450
Centurion
0046

Tel: 27 12 644 0490 | Fax: 27 12 644 0732/4 | www.afm-ags.org



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