

Mission Study

Introduction

Do you ever wonder if what you do or say matters to anyone?

God has called you. You are His. He has given you the power to be His messenger through the power of the Holy Spirit. He has commanded you to share His love with others as you go. He has asked that you disciple others who are following you on your journey of faith.

He has also commanded that as we go and make disciples, we are to teach His commands.

What you do and say is important as you share the love of Christ with others. Serving is a great way to connect with others, but Christ commanded that we are to invest in the lives of those we serve. How do you best accomplish this? By being obedient to teach His commands.

What you do or say really does matter.

Session Goals

Our goal for this session is to help believers take Jesus' command to heart. By reading what Jesus says and applying it to our current context, we are better able to fulfill the Great Commission. God has challenged all of us to go; we are all empowered to make disciples; we are all commissioned to teach His commands. As you pray for the focus ministries for this year's offering, pray for those who go and teach. Pray for those who hear the instruction that they will experience personal transformation as they learn about Jesus' love.

Preparation

Consider who you will include in the Mission Study. You can use this material with any adult group. You might even consider including other churches in your area or planning an association-wide gathering. Your goal is to help equip believers and churches to engage with missions serving, missions discipleship, missions giving, and missions praying as a result of your time together.

Set a goal for your church offering. Challenge church members to give sacrificially. Use multiple avenues for disseminating the information about the offering and any events your church will have to share the stories celebrating the life transformation that occurs through these ministries.

Decide on a time to gather for the study. Publicize in your church, community, or association. Invite those attending to bring a Bible. Order Week of Prayer material from iamtexasmissions.org. You will want to order enough Prayer Guides and envelopes for everyone who will attend the Mission Study.

Read the Mission Study and make sure you are familiar with the content.

Pray for those who will attend.

Be prepared to pray for missionaries at the event. You can find the missionary birthdays in the *Missions Mosaic* magazine available from wmustore.com. You can also find their names listed online by visiting wmu.com/prayercalendar. Texas Baptists Missionaries can be found at wmutx.org/prayercalendar. Plan a time during your Missions Study to pray for the missionaries serving around the world.

BEFORE THE EVENT:

- Look over the icebreaker activity and prepare the items needed for playing S.A.L.T. bingo.*
- Order Mary Hill Davis Offering® Prayer Guides from iamtexasmissions.org. Provide one per person.*
- Look over the discussion questions for the Mission Study and decide how you want the group to participate. Make copies for each table or have questions written on a whiteboard or large post-it paper (for walls).*
- Purchase saltshakers (one per person).*
- Print out a S.A.L.T. label for each saltshaker at iamtexasmissions.org/order.*

Icebreaker Activity

Session Plan

BEFORE THE EVENT:

- Download and print out an assortment of the five bingo cards available at iamtexasmissions.org/order, enough for one card per person.
- Purchase the “fun size” packages of M&M’s, enough for one package per person.
- Download and print the Allocations Report available at iamtexasmissions.org/allocations. Print enough copies for one per table.
- Download and print S.A.L.T. Table Tents at iamtexasmissions.org/order. Print one copy per table. You may want to print the Table Tents on cardstock paper.

AT THE EVENT:

- Provide a Mary Hill Davis Offering bingo card and small package of M&M’s for each person.
- Provide a S.A.L.T. Table Tent at each table.
- Provide one copy of the Allocations Report per table.

S.A.L.T. Bingo – Icebreaker (5 minutes)

As people enter, direct them to join a table.

Designate one person per table as the bingo caller. You may want to invite them in advance and ask them to be a table host. They will read one of the ministries from the Allocation Report. Using the S.A.L.T. Table Tent as a guide, players will decide which S.A.L.T. category the ministry best fits. Use the M&M’s as bingo space markers.

Mission Study

20 MINUTES

Present the Mission Study content. You may want to invite someone to share from each of these four categories.

1. Teach them My Commands
2. Teach them to Pray
3. Teach them to Give
4. Teach them to be S.A.L.T.

1. Teach them My Commands

Have someone read Matthew 28:18-20.

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

Teach the following: (10 minutes)

Review:

Over the past two years, the theme verse for the Mary Hill Davis Offering® for Texas Missions has been the Great Commission. Each year, a different section of the verse has been emphasized.

We first understood that we are all called to

GO. Jesus was given all authority in heaven and on earth. He tells us that as we are going, we are to do some things to further His kingdom. As we go we are to ...

Make disciples.

Year two taught us what God has called us to do. He is specific by stating that the disciples we make are His disciples and they are made up of all nations. Everyone is invited to become a disciple. As we are making disciples, He reminds us of the importance of following in believer’s baptism. Our baptism claims God as our Father, Jesus, the Son as our Savior, and the Holy Spirit as our source of power who will comfort, teach, train, and provide all we need as disciples. When we are following the command to make disciples, we do this by ...

Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Here we pause this year to unpack the truth

of the message of Jesus.

Jesus tells us to teach.

I don't think He meant we all had to receive advance seminary degrees and hold large gatherings to impart His great truths to the masses. Certainly, some are called to teach in that way. But we "regular folks" are still called to teach. But we can teach in a variety of ways.

We teach in the way we love God.

The greatest commandment according to Jesus is that we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Do you live out a sold out love for God? Do others see Him in you in the way you spend your time and resources?

We teach in the way we love others.

The second greatest commandment is like the first. Jesus said we are to love others as we love ourselves. God has shown us what true love looks like. Jesus reminds us in John 10 that there is no greater love than one willing to lay down his life for another. The question we must ask ourselves is, do others see the unconditional love of Christ through us as we serve?

We teach when we open God's Word and share His truth.

We don't have to stand before a group of people to teach God's word. Some of us teach while sharing a cup of coffee with a friend. Others teach when we listen and respond with God's comfort to a hurting neighbor. We teach when we talk to our

children about things that are important to them, and sharing God's perspective when they have a decision set before them.

Discussion: (5 minutes)

Invite the group to discuss the following questions:

- Share your thoughts about different ways you can teach.
- If God has placed a particular group on your heart, share how you can engage with that group in some way.
- What are some practical ways you could obey the command to teach in your neighborhood or community?

You may want to have the questions printed or written on a whiteboard for the group to see. Let the group discuss by table, then stop and have everyone share with the larger group.

Teach the following: (5 minutes)

We have established that Jesus wants us to be teachers, and that we teach in different ways. But what is the lesson He asks us to teach? Jesus tell us to teach disciples to obey everything He has commanded.

Jesus is specific. He uses two words to clarify what we are to teach.

Obey.

Jesus tells us to teach others to obey. Jesus doesn't tell us to respond based on how we feel or how things appear. Jesus never taught relativism. He taught in absolutes. Right and wrong. Good and evil. Righteousness and

unrighteousness. Saved and lost. Heaven and hell. When He says we are to obey, he means it. And He means that we are to obey ...

Everything.

Jesus said we are to obey everything He commanded. We can't excuse it because we are having a bad day. We can't rationalize because it goes against our culture. We can't water-down, sugar-coat, or explain away Jesus' requirements. He has a high standard for His disciples. We are to teach others to *obey everything* He has commanded us.

Discussion: (5 minutes)

- Why do you think people have such a hard time with the word "obey?"
- What can you do to reframe the perspective of that word based on God's word?
- What are some difficult teachings of Jesus that would be included in "everything"? Why?
- How should we handle those difficult topics where Jesus' teaching is clear?
- Discuss ways to lovingly share the gospel of Jesus' love for all without condoning sin.

Again, you may want to have the questions printed for each group or written on a whiteboard for the group to see. Let the group discuss by table, then stop and have everyone share with the larger group.

2. Teach them to Pray

Teach the following: (5 minutes)

The only thing Jesus' followers specifically asked Him to teach them was how to pray. Instead of asking for help in healing or performing miracles, the disciples wanted to learn how Jesus prayed. They must certainly have understood that the power to do all the other things was released by Jesus' time with His heavenly Father.

We are no different. We can only act in the power of God when we release the power of God in prayer. Lives are not transformed by your actions, but by the power of God released in their lives when we pray.

The ministries supported by the Texas Missions offering are only as successful as the prayers offered on their behalf. Yes, funds are required for ministry. But the real work, the true-life transformation in others, only happens as we pray.

Use the Prayer Guide to help you pray specifically for ministries where God is at work around the state. How can you most effectively pray for those who are sharing the gospel? What ministries has God placed on your heart to engage in prayer? Perhaps you are challenged to learn more about a particular Mary Hill Davis Offering missions emphasis you have heard or read about. Spend some time learning more about it so you can pray more specifically.

Provide a copy of the Prayer Guide for each person to take home.

Invite each table to pray together using suggestions provided below as a guide. (5 minutes)

Pray for those serving in these ministries.

Pray as Paul did in Philippians 4:19 that “my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”

Pray for divine appointments for those serving.

“Pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.” Colossians 4:3-4

Pray for those who need to know Christ.

“I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart.” Jeremiah 24:7

for Texas Missions fund over 80 ministries across our state. We may not be able to go, but we are able to give to help support those who do.

Look over the Allocations. Let this list encourage you, knowing that because you give, lives across Texas are being transformed. Encourage others to give. Share the ministries with your small group and encourage them to participate in giving.

Perhaps one of the ministries is connected to your community or to a people group nearby. Find ways to engage with them and give not only your resources, but your time and talents. Listen to the Lord as He may burden your heart to connect with one of the ministries funded by the offering.

Provide an offering envelope for each person. Encourage them to give.

Visit iamtexasmissions.org for more information on the specific ministries funded by your gifts.

3. Teach them to Give

Teach the following: (5 minutes)

Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. Philippians 4:16-18 (ESV)

Your gifts to the Mary Hill Davis Offering

4. Teach them to be S.A.L.T.

Teach the following: (5 minutes)

In Matthew 5:13, Jesus tells His followers, “You are the salt of the earth.” As present-day disciples, we are called to the same. As you consider the ministries receiving funds from the offering, think about how you can be S.A.L.T.

The ministries can be categorized into each of the letters of the acronym.

Serve Ministries

Caring for the whole person demonstrates the gospel and often opens the door for more effective sharing of the gospel.

Advance Missions Leadership

These ministries challenge both clergy and laity to have a missional mindset and provide tools to equip their congregations to be more effective in reaching their communities by sharing the gospel as they serve others.

Love the Least of These

Special needs adults, victims of human trafficking, single parents, men needing employment/life skills, and people living in poverty and needing help are among “the least of these.” These ministries seek to minister to those who are often overlooked.

Tell Ministries

What sets apart the followers of Jesus? As we share God’s story of redemption

through Christ, we open the door for others to receive Jesus’ gift of grace, giving them opportunity for eternal life. Tell ministries equip Texas Baptists to be a witness.

Closing

As you close, provide each participant with a saltshaker. Saltshakers can be purchased at a dollar store. Instructions for how to print out a S.A.L.T. label are available at iamtexasmissions.org. Print these out and attach them to the saltshaker. Encourage participants to keep the saltshaker as a reminder to pray for Texas Missions throughout the month of September.

A month-long daily prayer calendar is also available at iamtexasmissions.org.

About the Writers



Frankeya Riley-Tucker

WMU of Texas Staff



Teri Ussery

WMU of Texas Staff



Mary Hill Davis

Mary Hill Davis, president of Texas WMU from 1906 to 1931, saw Texas as a rich harvest field with its mixture of Anglo, Black, European, and Mexican populations. In 1910 she led the Baptist women of Texas to set aside a week to pray for the needs in the state and to take up an offering as was done for foreign and home missions. Following her death in 1934, the Texas missions offering was named in her memory.

S.A.L.T. Bingo Card 1

S	A	L	T
A	T	L	S
L	A	L	A
T	T	S	S

S.A.L.T. Bingo Card 2

S	A	L	T
T	L	A	S
S	A	L	T
T	L	A	S

S.A.L.T. Bingo Card 3

S	A	L	T
A	L	L	S
L	A	T	A
T	S	T	S

S.A.L.T. Bingo Card 4

S	A	L	T
A	L	S	T
L	S	T	A
T	A	L	S

S.A.L.T. Bingo Card 5

S	A	L	T
S	A	L	T
S	A	L	T
S	A	L	T



TELL MINISTRIES

These ministries enable Texas Baptists to be a witness by sharing God's story of salvation through Jesus Christ.



LOVE THE LEAST OF THESE

These ministries seek to serve those who are too often overlooked such as special needs adults, victims of human trafficking, single parents, men needing employment/life skills, and people living in poverty.



ADVANCE MISSIONS LEADERSHIP

These ministries equip both clergy and laity as they share the gospel and serve others.



SERVE MINISTRIES

These ministries open the door for more effective sharing of the gospel.



SERVE MINISTRIES

These ministries open the door for more effective sharing of the gospel.



ADVANCE MISSIONS LEADERSHIP

These ministries equip both clergy and laity as they share the gospel and serve others.



LOVE THE LEAST OF THESE

These ministries seek to serve those who are too often overlooked such as special needs adults, victims of human trafficking, single parents, men needing employment/life skills, and people living in poverty.



TELL MINISTRIES

These ministries enable Texas Baptists to be a witness by sharing God's story of salvation through Jesus Christ.