

Identifying Your Sentness

TO WHOM HAVE YOU BEEN SENT?

Why is this such an important question?

- Our identity as sent people should be expressed in a people and/or place. (Matthew 2:23, John 1:45)
- Jesus was able to clearly articulate the people to whom He was sent. Matt 15:24
- Answering this question gives direction as to who we are to take relational next steps with.
- Knowing who we are sent to moves our faith from being intellectual and vague to relational and tangible.
- Helps clarify where we are not sent. It sets boundaries that help sustain us in mission.
- If we fail to answer this question we will run the risk of operating out of an old paradigm where we expect people to come to us rather than us, the missionary people of God, going to them.

Clues to discerning our “sentness”

- Where is the soil good? Where is the Spirit leading you?
- This is a journey. Experimentation, trial and error are part of the process.
- This isn't about adding more onto your life. What are the spaces and places you already inhabit? e.g. Where do you live, work and play? Who are the people you already see consistently who do not follow Jesus?
- If you are part of a family unit where do you collectively spend time?
- Remember the people you have been sent to are not projects. There should be a mutuality in relationships where we are receiving as much as we are giving.

Common questions concerning "sentness"

If part of a family unit, why must I include other members of my family in sentness?

Our sentness should be expressed collectively. Also, it is difficult and unsustainable for a family to extend or incarnate into multiple places of sentness.

Can I have multiple contexts or places of sentness?

This is difficult because it keeps you from incarnating deeply into a single place. It is difficult to extend yourself or your family into multiple environments. When we over extend, we overvalue the transfer of information and undervalue deep-rooted relationships. It is through relationships that the Gospel transfers best. Deep-rooted relationships allow people to hear the Gospel being announced and to experience it over longer periods of time.

Can a ministry be context or a place of sentness?

Potentially. You must ask, “Am I able to move in, alongside, or near those whom I am ministering to? Does this take me away from my day to day life?” If not, it doesn’t mean you have to abandon your ministry. It might simply mean you are sent somewhere else in this season. Consider including those you have been sent to in your ministry as a way of discipleship.

Am I able to change context at a later date?

Yes, pray and discern to the best of your ability and then engage. Over time the Spirit will clarify and guide, and you will sense His continual leading. You will also be able to better discern where there is “fertile ground” and where to take relational next steps.

If you are only answering this question for yourself, where then have you been sent? e.g. neighbors in your building, community around your kids’ school, people in your co-working space.

If you are only answering this question for you family, where then has your family been sent?

You?

Your family members?

Where is the overlap? (This is your collective sentness)