



THE LIVING SENT PODCAST: SHOW NOTES

EPISODE: 039

TITLE: **Faithfulness, Not Flash: What Five Voices Taught Me About Living SENT**

Episode Summary:

What does it really look like to live SENT? In this special episode, Justin Wester reflects on five powerful conversations from past interviews with everyday missionaries—each one marked not by strategy or spotlight, but by simple, steady faithfulness. Through these audio clips and personal reflections, you'll discover how ordinary obedience in ordinary places becomes a vessel for God's extraordinary work.

Featured Voices:

- **Hugh Halter** — On shifting from a church-centered life to a kingdom-centered home
- **Lance Ford** — On servant leadership that bends low instead of reaching high
- **Amanda Stanfield** — On mowing grass, planting hostas, and transforming neighborhoods
- **Kai Bowman** — On how prayer was (and still is) the power source for mission
- **James & Kristen Barnett** — On how mission becomes real when it has a name

Discussion Questions for Teams & Groups

1. **Hugh Halter talked about shifting from a church-centered life to a kingdom-centered home.**
 - In what ways can your household become a frontline for mission? What small change could you make this week?
2. **Lance Ford emphasized that true leadership looks like service.**
 - Where are you tempted to lead through control rather than through serving? How can you model servant leadership in your current role?



3. **Amanda Stanfield's story reminded us that faithfulness in small things can make a big difference.**
 - What "ordinary" habit or practice in your life might God be using in extraordinary ways?
4. **Kai Bowman said the early church wasn't ready until they had prayed.**
 - How is prayer fueling your current ministry efforts—or where might prayer be missing?
5. **James Barnett said mission becomes real when it has a name.**
 - Who is someone in your life right now—by name—that God might be calling you to serve or engage more intentionally?
6. **The theme of this episode was "Faithfulness, not flash."**
 - What are some areas of your life or ministry where you're tempted to chase "flash"? How might you reorient toward faithfulness?
7. **After listening to the five clips, which moment impacted you the most and why?**
 - What is one practical way you will live SENT this week because of it?

Full Episode Transcript

Well, hey, everybody, and welcome back to the Living Sent podcast. I'm your host, Justin Wester. And really, if you are brand new to this podcast, this podcast exists to help you live like an everyday missionary, wherever you live, work and play, in household, your. Your neighborhood, your workplace and your city. And today's episode is gonna be a little different, but it's gonna be different, I think, in the best way possible.

You see, over the past year, I've had the privilege of sitting down with some incredible people. They've all been practitioners, every single one of them what I would consider an everyday missionary. And each conversation has been rich. It's been challenging. Many of them have been hopeful.

But as I look back, I started to notice this theme that. That began to emerge, and it was not just from one episode, but from five different ones, a thread, if you will, that kind of tied all of them together. And it was this. It wasn't a platform, it wasn't a strategy, it wasn't flash. It was just simply faithfulness.

Faithfulness in ordinary places with ordinary people doing ordinary things, and over time, with an extraordinary God doing extraordinary things. So in today's episode, I want to take you on a journey, if you will, through five really powerful moments that reshaped how I think about what it means to live in. And I hope it will for you, too. I'm going to introduce each clip, I'm going to let you hear from our guest directly, and then I'm just going to offer a brief reflection on how it connects to our living sent habits that we talk about so, so often. Hey, but before we jump into new content, I want to remind you to get today's show notes.



You don't want to miss these. And you can get them by going to my website@justinwester.com, navigating to the podcast tab, and you can download them there for free. You can use them for yourself to do a deeper dive into the study, or you can use them if you're leading a team or facilitating maybe a small group discussion, however you see fit. These show notes are for you to use however you see fit. And they are always, always, always going to be free.

So be sure to grab those. And. And let me say this, too, thank you to those who are continuing to rate and review this podcast. Every single time you do that, it blesses me. It means the world to me.

And so if you've been maybe a longtime listener or perhaps you're jumping on for the very first time, I wanna ask you to do a Favor. Just take just a couple seconds rate and review this podcast wherever you are consuming it. It will help expand the reach of the Living Sip podcast to those who need it most. So a big thank you in advance. Okay, let's jump into this, our first CL from my conversation with Hugh Halter.

And in this clip, he's going to talk about a major shift, a shift from living a church centered life to living a kingdom centered life. And the question he's going to answer is, where does that start? He says, right at home. Check this out. And so when I started to learn that the gospel is about the kingdom, now that changes everything and it changes your purpose.

You know, I guess if you still think that the. The primary gospel is to go to church, I think we've missed a huge story. The church was actually the people that went on mission. The church was the means by which God did his mission in the world. The church was never to be like a country club where we protect ourselves from the world and wait for God to come back.

The church was the front line of what God was doing in the world, which meant that your family was literally the front line of mission. It was, you know, where Paul says, you're the letter that's read by everyone. People would look into the families, what was going on in the homes with the people, and they would start to, you know, it would bear witness to the story of Jesus. So to me, that's the biggest thing I hope parents get is that they're invited to live into a kingdom story, not a, not just a church story. The Sunday experience is not a big enough story to hold our kids.

It just isn't. And it doesn't hold in the Catholic way. It doesn't hold in the Southern Baptist way. The kids are still leaving at around 16 to 18, as fast as they can possibly get out because they don't want to just go to church. They actually want to feel like God's using them in the world with real people with real struggles.

So that's a long answer to that question, but I think it's probably making a parent realize that the kingdom has to be the focus instead of the church being the focus. I say this towards the beginning



of every episode each month. The goal of this podcast is to equip you to live like an everyday missionary in your. Listen to this. Your household, your neighborhood, your workplace and your city.

So often we forget that first one, the household. The household really should be our primary mission field. So whether, whether you are raising kids, whether you're hosting neighbors, Maybe you're married to an unbelieving spouse. That is the front line of mission. You don't have to wait for a mission trip to be put on your calendar or to have a platform.

Start right where you are. Start right in the household. This next segment comes from an interview that I had with Lance Ford. And this moment, these couple minutes, might just flip your idea of leadership upside down. You see, in the kingdom, leadership is not about status.

It's actually about service. Check this one out. Those disciples, that early church, those people, they knew what a servant was, and it was not a job anybody wanted. So when you're, you know, the person that's washing people's feet and things like this, and they didn't have indoor plumbing and carrying out the port, a pot and different things like this, okay, that's what a servant was. A servant came there to make somebody better, to make their life better, to resource the other person.

So this is what Jesus demonstrated. So that is completely incompatible with our ideas of leadership right now. And so that's why I say that leadership is a product, it's a fruit that should be part of the culture. So you lead by demonstrating. That's what your leadership is.

You don't lead by bossing and all this other stuff and dominating others, which obviously Matthew 20, this is what Jesus forbade. So biblical leadership is not about a platform, about perks, about power. It is about posture. It's about your posture. True servants, just like Jesus, they come to make others better.

They carry the burden no one else wants to carry. This isn't just a leadership lesson. This is a living sent lifestyle. We don't lead by bossing people around. We lead instead by bending low.

Living sent, it means showing up to make somebody else better. At home, at work, in your neighborhoods, and in your church. That's the kind of leadership the world needs. This next clip comes from one of my favorite interviews I've done on the podcast so far from Amanda Stanfield. And it's about lawn care.

Yep, lawn care. But trust me, it is one of the most unforgettable and powerful stories I've heard about faithfulness in ordinary life. Check it out. I think it started with a business card, actually. I think it was either that first year or it was 2001.



It was, it was very, very early on when all of the chaos in the house across the street was going on. That house has been chaos forever. But specifically what we were dealing with, we had a business card in our front door, and it was from a detective. I won't say his name from the Mansfield Police Department. It said, please give me a call with a phone number.

So I called him, and he said, the biggest drug house in Mansfield is across the street from you, and we want to sit in your living room, and we want to do surveillance of that house because we feel like if we could sit here, we could really get a full picture of what's going on. And I thought, that makes a lot of sense, you know, like, that that explains why this is so crazy and why we're losing our minds over here. So we had, it was a long thing. We were very active in our church, and they, they really did cover us in prayer, making that decision. And again, my parents were horrified.

My dad was like, you're gonna get killed if you become an informant. And, you know, it was, it was horrible.

But I, I, we ended up, they ended up not needing to do it. I, I asked the officer, I said, how do you know we're not part of the problem? Like, there's chaos all around us. How do you know that you're asking somebody that's not going to be part of the drug dealing? And he said two reasons.

He said, you mow your grass and you have a flower bed. And my flower bed was four hostas in front of my house. That I weren't no malt. I didn't even have mulch. We didn't have the money for mulch.

We had four hostas and we mowed our grass. That seed of him saying that to me first of all, like, changed my perspective. I started thinking over the years, what about the drug dealers that see that? What about the prostitutes that see that? What about the children that see that we can be a safe place.

We can be show Christ by mowing our grass and drawing attention that way, drawing a positive attention that way. That got us on the path of building a community garden. And then when we got towards this grant with Ohio State, where that eventually led us to the farm, all of it, every bit of it, is from that conversation with him where he said that we mowed our grass. And I just thought, man, that's so everybody can mow their grass. Everybody can plant a couple of flowers.

It doesn't take \$100,000 and a big plan and a board of directors and an agency behind you. It's simple. God. God's just like, can you just do this? Can you just do this and just trust me and stay here and let me show you what's going to happen.

Did you catch that mowing the grass, planting Hostas staying put when things get really hard. That's what it means to embody incarnational mission and ministry. You see, God doesn't always need our



big plans. He just is asking for our small, steady obedience and to trust him to do what only he can do. This fourth segment comes from a moment in my interview with Kai Bowman where he just stopped me in my tracks.

I almost had to go back and replay it over and over and over again in my mind. And he reminded me that the church was born in a prayer meeting, and that prayer really, really, really must fuel everything we do. It's not just the starting point. It's the starting point and the sustaining point as well. Check this out.

I was interviewing a guy years ago for a key role at our church. And toward the end of the interview, I just was summarizing what we were looking for, and I said, I just want to remind you that at our church, two of the driving, you know, forces of who we are are prayer and evangelism. And he kind of was unguarded in that moment, and we'd had a good interview, and he laughed and he said, oh, great. Prayer and evangelism, the two things nobody's good at. And I thought, what?

You know, I mean, he probably. If he'd have thought about it, he wouldn't have said it, but. But it was a. It was a true statement. You know, these are two areas that really scare believers off.

And this has always been a passion of mine, you know, praying and evangelizing. And so Jesus wants us to pray for the lost. And there has never been any kind of spiritual awakening that didn't begin in prayer. We're currently seeing something happening on college campuses that is phenomenal, as I'm sure you're aware, and I won't go into all those details, but all we have to do is Google it. What God's doing on college campuses and all that began and is perpetuated in prayer.

But not only that. You know, D.L. moody once said, behind every great work of God is some kneeling form. And I could go on and on with stories and anecdotes, but the truth of the matter is, without prayer, effective evangelism is impossible. And all you have to do is look at the upper room.

You know, Jesus had his disciples for three and a half years approximately. And they saw him crucified, they saw him buried, they saw him raised from the dead. And Acts tells us that he spent 40 days with them after the resurrection, instructing them about the things of the kingdom of God. You would think, Justin, that nobody on earth would be more prepared to go out and tell the story of Jesus than those 11 disciples, right? I mean, three and a half years, saw every miracle, heard every sermon, sat under the, you know, dark sky around a campfire and listened to Jesus tell stories and parables and instruct them, then watched him get crucified and saw him raised from the dead.

And then 40 days of like a J term with Jesus, you know, right, where he instructs them about the kingdom of God, which I suppose is our New Testament. And yet what did he tell them? You're not ready, you're not ready to tell this story. I want you to wait in the city. Now obviously he wanted



them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

But in that 10 day gap between the Ascension and the day of Pentecost, they interpreted the waiting period as a time of prayer. And they spent 10 days in prayer. And it was in prayer that the church began. And it was in prayer that the power of God fell upon them and they changed the world. And that, you know, in, in a single generation they reached basically the entire Roman Empire.

Some of us don't even know our neighbors names, you know, and we've lived next door for, you know, 20 years. And these guys reached the Roman Empire with the gospel. When travel was as fast as a man could run, or a horse could run, or a ship could sail and a letter could take six months to get to one place and six months to get back. And yet they reached the Roman Empire. So how did they do it?

Well, when you look at the Book of Acts, it's prayer, prayer, prayer and more. Prayer before strategy, before vision, before action. If God moved through prayer then friends, he still does today. So don't let your church or your own life for that matter, be prayerless on your watch. Our final clip comes from an interview that I had with my friends James and Kristen Barnett.

And in this short couple minutes, James talks about a moment that really redefined the way he approached mission and ministry. Not just as solving problems, but as loving people by name. Listen to this one. I saw this greenhouse really letting their theology turn into practice in the way that they welcomed strangers and had people living in their home. It was just a normal, like just picture a normal house, two stories, pretty.

It was an old historic house, downtown Gainesville. But it was also just like a normal person's house. You walk in, there's rooms to the right, a couple bunks in each room to the left, there's a dining room with a piano There's a guy playing piano. There's a dining room to the left with lots of tables. A kitchen in the far back left.

There are chickens in the backyard. There were flowers in the garden, and they were just like, hey, we're not going to solve homelessness, but we can help our friend, you know? Tony, right? Right. Yeah.

And that just like, turned it all upside down for me, man. Poverty got personal because poverty was given a name. And when you give it a name, man, that gets intimate. And it's like, man, I start to care about a person. I mean, I reject the idea that any of us truly at the heart of things, care about, you know, solving problems.

It's more than likely that you may met somebody. You encountered a person who was experiencing



or you heard a story maybe about a person who experienced pain and suffering or lived in precarity. And you're like, man, that matters to me. And then you kind of take up that cross of that problem, but it usually comes from a person. And so this personal element of, like, how to use your home for Christ himself, like, who, you know, appears to us in the distressing disguise of the poor, as Mother Teresa said, like, man, the way they were using their home was just so beautiful.

So that for me really laid the, you know, the groundwork for what I would one day want to accomplish. So this really embodies the concept of living sin in that you are engaging your city with love truth, not because you're trying to fix things, but because you've locked eyes with someone made in God's image. When mission has a name, it becomes real. So there you have it. Five voices, five different stories, but one thread.

Faithfulness. Living sent. Just again, it does not require a seminary degree. It does not require a church staff role or a viral social media post or presence. It just takes eyes to see, ears to listen, knees to pray, and a heart to obey.

And that's what I hope this podcast keeps encouraging you to do. To show up, to be faithful, to live sent. If this episode encouraged you, I want to encourage you to share it with a friend. And if one of these clips stood out in particular, shoot me a message. I'd love to hear what it stirred up in you.

Until next time, remember this. You don't have to live sent. You get to- we'll see you then.