

GREAT MISSION OF THE CHURCH
10-2-16

Matthew 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

Matthew 28:17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Today starts our Missions Month. Each Wednesday we have special missionary speakers at our church. Missions Month is one of the highlights of the year in my mind. My family loved having missionaries over at our house this time of the year. Wonderful to meet preachers from around the world and hear challenges on fulfilling the Great Commission. What a blessing also this morning—we have two who will be getting baptized in obedience to the second command of the Great Commission. Today we will be observing the two great ordinances of the church: We will celebrate the Lord's table, and we will obey the Lord in baptizing those who believe on the Lord.

In light of all this, I thought it would be good to talk to you about the Great Commission of the church. This is the great mission of the church and the main reason the Lord has left us to tarry till he returns to set up His kingdom.

We find the command given to His disciples in Matt:28-18-20

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

CONSIDER WHAT WE WERE COMMANDED OF THE LORD

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

In the book of Acts the Lord rephrased this commission this way..

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**I. THE FIRST PART OF THE COMMISSION IS THIS -
YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME.**

THE GREAT COMMISSION OF THE CHURCH IS TO BE WITNESSES.

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

1. Notice there is a tendency on the part of God's people to get sidetracked from our commission:

Acts 1:6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

Acts 1:7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

Christ is now parting from them, and parts in love; and yet He gives them this rebuke, which is intended for a caution to His church in all ages: to take heed of splitting upon the rock which was fatal to our first parents, an inordinate desire of forbidden knowledge, and intruding into things which we have not seen because God has not shown them.

How many people are zealous to support prophetic books and papers and other things that tantalize our curiosity, but yet they have no zeal or heart for witnessing or missions.

There are so many things in this life that would sidetrack us from the true commission of our Lord.

We desire to spend all our time satisfying and entertaining our fanciful imaginations and hearts, but how little time we give to witnessing and the support of worldwide missions and church building..

2. WHAT DID JESUS MEAN WHEN HE SAID, YE SHALL BE WITNESSES OF ME?

A. To witness means we should be willing to stand up and bear record to what our Lord stood for. In this case we become like Him and may be rightly called martyrs.

The Greek word for “witnesses” is the word, “martus,” from which we get the word “martyrs.”

AV - witness 29, martyr 3, record 2;

1) a witness

1a) in a legal sense

1b) an historical sense

1b1) one who is a spectator of anything, e.g. of a contest

1c) in an ethical sense

1c1) those who after his example have proved the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by undergoing a violent death

ONE COMMENTATOR WRITES:

They shall prove this, shall confirm their testimony, not as witnesses do, with an oath, but with the divine seal of miracles and supernatural gifts: You shall be martyrs to me, or my martyrs, as some copies read it; for they attested the truth of the gospel with their sufferings, even unto death.

Same word is translated “martyr” in Rev. 2:13 ...

Revelation 2:13 I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

So we see that being a witness for the Lord is a willingness to suffer for the cause of Christ.

B. TO WITNESS OF CHRIST INFERS THAT WE MUST BE LIKE HIM IN THIS WORLD:

John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

John 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

John 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

John 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

John 15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

C. TO WITNESS MEANS WE NEED TO TEACH PEOPLE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

In Matthew he gave another meaning to the word, “witness,” when he said to go teach.

Romans 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Romans 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Romans 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

D. WHAT DO WE NEED TO TEACH PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE GOSPEL?

Good news—that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and arose again.

If we believe the gospel, we can be saved.

II. THE SECOND PART OF THE GREAT COMMISSION IS TO CHALLENGE PEOPLE TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO CHRIST.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

1. HIS METHOD STARTS OUT WITH WITNESSING.

II. AFTER A PERSON RECEIVES OUR WITNESS, WE ARE COMMANDED TO BAPTIZE THOSE WHO BELIEVE.

BAPTIZING IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST:

Baptizing and witnessing go hand in hand..

Acts 8:26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

Acts 8:27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

Acts 8:28 Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

Acts 8:30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

Acts 8:31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Acts 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

Acts 8:33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

Acts 8:34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

Acts 8:35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

Acts 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

Acts 8:37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Acts 8:38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

Acts 8:39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Acts 8:40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

We shouldn't support any missionaries who do not baptize by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The commission of Christ to his early disciples included the command to baptize.

So we need to propagate this commission—and this is part of missions.

- A. *Baptism should only be for people who are saved and believe the message.***
- B. *BAPTISM IS A PICTURE OF THE GOSPEL: Death, burial, resurrection.***
- C. *Baptism is a step of obedience after you believe. It shows sincerity of faith and a willingness to obey the Lord.***

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

III. *THE THIRD PART OF THIS COMMISSION IS TO PERPETUATE TEACHING AND PREACHING OF CHRIST TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE.*

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

This includes:

- 1. *Learning new truth: To some the truths of Scripture will be all new, to those who are new to the faith.***
- 2. *This includes rehearsing what we already know, exercising our spirits and minds in godly thoughts and being reminded to continue in these things.***

An example of perpetuation - the ordinance of communion. Is it a new truth? This is perpetuation and keeping all things commanded of the Lord.

- 3. *This involves doing the work of the ministry of helps, good works and being involved in supporting and fulfilling the Great Commission of our Lord.***

IV. THIS COMMISSION NEEDS TO BE FULFILLED IN AND THROUGH A LOCAL CHURCH.

The primary job of missions then is to fulfill this commission in and through a local church.

All we do is wrapped around these three things. Witnessing, baptizing, and teaching people all things commanded of Christ.

So our Missions Budget goes to support men who endeavor to fulfill this great mandate that we call the Great Commission.