

Last week, we looked at the power of Christ from Matt 28:18, and this week we begin a three-week series on Matt 28:19 and the plan of Christ (missions, discipleship, church planting), then we'll see the presence of Christ. Power, Plan, Presence: That's a lot of P's. I feel super Baptisty. If you missed last week / we saw that Jesus didn't say go make disciples, but go, therefore, and make disciples. The authority of the risen and reigning Christ is the foundation for our going. He is the King, the Chief Executive Officer of the universe, who is enthroned at the right hand of God. Kuyper said there ... Mission is the summons of the lordship of Christ.<sup>1</sup> Mission equation: if there is one Lord to whom all people belong and owe their allegiance, the people of that Lord must promote this reality everywhere.<sup>2</sup>

And we saw God's heart for the nations. Right from the beginning, God formed his people to be a means to an end. Gen 12, he calls out Abraham and promises to bless him and his family, and through him he would bless all the nations. Blessed to be a blessing to all the nations. The Great Commission of Matt 28 is basically a restating of the promise to Abraham. All nations will be blessed through the offspring of Abraham. We saw OT passage after OT passage where God will in fact place an authoritative king over all the nations.

After the resurrection and ascension, Jesus has been given *all* authority. Jesus is alluding to Dan 7 and the Kingdom of God. He uses 6 of the same words: Daniel 7:13-14: "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given (*edothē*) authority (*exousia*), glory and sovereign power; all nations (*panta ta ethne*) and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion (*exousia*) is an everlasting dominion (*exousia*) that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

This is God's mission. All nations worshipping the enthroned Son of Man. OT scholar Chris Wright defines the MoG this way: "to rid his whole creation of evil and create for himself a people redeemed from every tribe and nation of humanity as the population of the new creation."<sup>3</sup> The global purpose of God is the glad praise of the risen and reigning King and the display of his glory through the church among the nations of the world. If his purpose is praise from the nations, we must get the good news to the nations. That's why missions exists. As Piper puts it, missions exists because worship doesn't. We want the nations to worship the risen and reigning King, so we get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

And how will he become King of all nations. How does the Kingdom spread? Through us! God uses means. He commissions us. **28:18-20** (784). Listen to the way Eugene Peterson paraphrases the Great Commission: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in the way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."<sup>4</sup> Three options for us this morning: Go, Send, or Disobey:

**I. Go** - We need to do some grammar real quick. I have a **diagram** for you. The main verb is "make disciples." That is the main point and we'll look in depth at that aspect next week. But he tells us how to make disciples with three participles: going, baptizing, and teaching. He starts with "Go." Jesus frontloads this participle and it has the force of a command. Jesus says, "Go." Because of who he is, we **go** and make disciples.<sup>5</sup> But it takes on

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Blauw, *Missionary Nature of the Church* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2003), 89.

<sup>2</sup> John Dickson, *The Best Kept Secret of Christian Mission* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 31, 35, 115..

<sup>3</sup> Wright, *The Great Story*, xiii.

<sup>4</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2006), 1474.

<sup>5</sup> France, *Matthew*, 1115. Matthew uses a similar grammatical style elsewhere, e.g. 9:13 "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'" He is not saying leave where you are to go learn about mercy, but as you go. Or Matt 10:7, which has the participle "going" before the verb but is translated: "And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" Here is the point: if you claim Jesus as

the command. Go means don't stay here. As we have seen, God wants his Kingdom to come on earth as in heaven. He wants all nations to submit to the King. That means his people must move this gospel out to the ends of the earth.

In light of God's heart for the nations, and in light of this command from the authoritative King, what would be the obstacle or fear in your going? Some of you need to go. To give up your life that you, and others might gain life. If you are considering full time missions, let us know. Let us walk alongside you. As JD Greear puts it, you don't need to wait for a voice when we have a verse. Go therefore and make disciples of the nations.

Start with short term. **Here are the opportunities** we have before us. We are sending a team to Bogota this week, to Greece in August, to Barranquilla in September, and in January, Sharjah in Feb, India, Colombia this summer, Colombia this fall.

College students, use a semester or summer to impact the nations. Three of our members just got back from the RTIM Practicum – 6 weeks overseas. The IMB has lots of options: Hands On semester, Summer Sojourner. You are freed up right now in a way that makes it easily doable. It is not about your current ability but a heart of availability. Put your yes on the table and let God do the rest. / MS and HS students, go ahead and plan now to give a summer or semester to the mission of God.

Rom 10:14-15 (a M support letter): "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

If God has you here for now, you can still pursue his heart for the nations by seeking out internationals that God has brought here. Find out where they are. Seek them out. Be hospitable. Befriend refugees and international students.

There are still millions of unreached people groups (UPG's). A people group is an ethnolinguistic group with a common self-identity that is shared by the various members." An *unreached* people group is "a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance. The original Joshua Project editorial committee selected the criteria less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Professing Christians." There are around 7,000 people groups where Christ is largely unknown. 3 billion people. 40% of the population with little to no access to the gospel. 95% of UPG's are in the **10/40 window**: between 10 degrees latitude and 40 degrees latitude between N Africa and SE Asia. THUMB: tribal, Hindu, Unreligious, Muslim, Buddhist. Less than 3% of our missionaries are in the 10/40. There are over 350 UPG's living here as immigrants, refugees, or international students.

Paul's aim was to get the gospel to the UPG's of his day: Rom 15: "For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as

it is written, “Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.” (18–21)

**II. Send** – We want to be good senders. We have **partners** all over the globe. Domestically, we support church plants in El Paso, Austin, Fort Worth, and Boston. Internationally, we have partners in Bogota, Medellin, Barranquilla, 3 partners in India, Morocco, Turkey, Iraq, Sharjah, Indonesia, Germany. Your giving supports all these works and more. We give a percentage to IMB, SBTC, RTIM.

Sending is praying, giving, encouraging. 3 John 5-8: “Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore, we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.” Give, pray, encourage.

Give! Did you know that Americans spend more money on dog food than missions annually? Start praying and planning now about what you will give for Lottie Moon Christmas offering, that all goes to international missions. / Goal: give 10% to the local church, and 2% missions.

Be a good sender by praying. Every day in the directory we provide a UPG. Use the Joshua Project or Operation world. Every day at family worship, we close out by praying and reading about a UPG of the day, and we pray alongside a couple thousand every day. Jesus said, the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send our workers into his harvest (Matt 9).

Encourage them. The easiest way is to sign up to receive newsletters from our missionary partners. Sign up in Welcome Center. Work with their advocate to send a care package. If you have ideas, go for it. Let us help you help them.

Be a good sender by helping people get on the mission field. Be a mobilizer. Parents, it is surprising how often I hear from students who are feeling called to the mission field, but who receive pushback from their Christian parents. Don't be like that! See yourself as mobilizers for the mission of God. If you are younger, the first step is to have lots of kids. The unreached are growing at 70K a day, 26M a year. Finland, Switzerland, UK, US (where Christianity has had a large influence) all average 2 kids per household. Niger 9, Afghanistan 7, Pakistan 6. Muslim populations are going to outpace us because they overpopulate us. A key part of the expansion of the Kingdom of Christ is through the birth and nurture of kids in Christian families.

And when you have kids, mobilize them. Watch missions documentaries. Read to them about missions and missionaries. American missions was started by a group of college kids. Freshmen in fact! Williams College, 1806. It is known as the Haystack prayer meeting. 5 college students gathered to study and pray for missions to Asia. One of them was Samuel Mills, who ended up forming a missionary fraternity called the Society of Brethren, the first Protestant foreign missions organization in America. Adoniram Judson would become a part of that society, who produced the Burmese Bible and a result of his ministry they went from one to 600K Baptists. Mills went on to form the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), that sent out 1250 missionaries in the first 50 years. Then he formed the American Bible Society, the United Foreign Missionary Society, and a number of others. You know what lit him up at an early age? His Momma taught him about pioneer missionaries. Go or Send Or:

**III. Disobey** – King Jesus simply hasn't left us with the option of un-involvement or apathy. We go, we send, or we disobey. / Church, this is why we exist. This is why Jesus has left us here in this time between the times, this era of witness. Brunner said, "The Church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission there is no church."<sup>6</sup> It is not that the church has a mission, but that God has a church for his mission. Scripture is record, product, and tool of the Mission of God. Ralph Winter said, "The Bible is not the basis of missions; missions is the basis of the Bible."<sup>7</sup>

God may not call you to leave Abilene at this point. That ought to always be an option. Put your yes on the table and let God put it on the map. But if you are here for now, you are *sent* here by Christ. John 20. The command is make disciples, going, baptizing, and teaching. Going. As you go. For some of you, your mission field is Abilene, TX. You are sent here. Are you living like an informal missionary? Job/Neighborhood (names)/Work/Recreation. Redeem your rhythms. Be intentional. You have heard me quote this sentence half a dozen times in the last 6 years: "Major events have a role to play in church life, but the bedrock of gospel ministry is low-key, ordinary, day-to-day work that often goes unseen. Most gospel ministry involves ordinary people doing ordinary things with gospel intentionality."<sup>8</sup>

We *get* to be a part of the mission of God. King Jesus is on the throne. He has all authority. His Kingdom is progressing, and the means He uses is his church. Check this **pic** out. I have a **video** for you.<sup>9</sup>

Here is where it is headed: Rev 5:9: "And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

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<sup>6</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World* (London: SCM Press, 1931), 108.

<sup>7</sup> Aaron Little, *Water the Earth* (London: Christian Focus, 2014), 31.

<sup>8</sup> Tim Chester and Steve Timmis, *Total Church* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 63.

<sup>9</sup> <https://vimeo.com/113801439>