

Neighbors & Nations: Made to Worship

Made to Follow

Matthew 28:16-20

We are grateful for our missionaries from around the world. This series is all about the mission of God, specifically, the purpose behind it. We are missionary people, just like those early disciples.

“And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’”

Matthew 4:19

“From the very beginning, Jesus made clear that everyone who followed Him would fish for men...Scripture knows nothing of disciples who aren't making disciples.”

David Platt

Mission is essentially glorifying God by helping people step into the flourishing that can only come as they exist according to God's design for their lives. God is glorified and people flourish as we go make disciples!

Today's message looks at the great commission through the lens that all people were made to follow Jesus, therefore...

Main Idea: For God's Glory & Their Good We Endeavor to Help All People Follow Jesus

“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’”

Matthew 28:16-20

3 Elements of Helping Neighbors & Nations Follow Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20...

I. Purpose of Disciple-Making – Matthew 28:16-18

Not only will disciple-making glorify God (obedience to his authority), but it will also help people thrive (some doubted, confused about themselves and Jesus). In addition, disciple-making provides the church a mission to unify around. When a military ship has no enemy that infighting, disciplinary issues, & interpersonal friction increases. Why? Because the ship, the crew, & the soldiers were designed to wage war against an enemy & if they don't, they'll make an enemy of one another. Sadly, this is true of churches who don't focus on the mission.

The most common word for people who follow Jesus in the New Testament isn't Christian, believer, or follower...it's disciple (250+ times). What is a disciple?

“Apprentice might be an equivalent term...a disciple, then, is one who has believed on Jesus Christ and expressed this faith by being baptized. He remains in the fellowship of the believers that he might be taught the truths of the faith. He is then able to go out and win others and teach them. This was the pattern of the New Testament church.” **Warren Wiersbe**

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’” **Matthew 28:18**

This mission starts not with a COMMAND (go make disciples) but a CLAIM (all authority has been given to Jesus). If we do not accept the claim, we won't obey the command. Do we really believe that Jesus Christ is the head of the church, the Lord of all creation, and the one to whom all humanity will one day give an account?

“Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” **Philippians 2:9-11**

The purpose of disciple-making is rooted in the fact that Jesus (the one with all authority) has commissioned us to it, and that both God (the designer) is glorified while neighbors/nations (the designed) flourish as they follow Jesus!

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3 Elements of Helping Neighbors & Nations Follow Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20: 1) Purpose of Disciple-Making...

II. Process of Disciple-Making – Matthew 28:19-20a

Jesus instructs us on this process, so that there can be no confusion...

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” **Matthew 28:19-20a**

Process of Disciple-Making Broken Down:

- **When? – Go** – As you are going, when you have gone (present participle)
- **What? – Make Disciples** – learners to make more learners (command)
- **Who? – All Nations** – Ethnos, all people groups, cross barriers, others!
- **How? – Baptize and Teach**
 - **Baptize** – Speaks of an outward sign of inward faith (salvation)
 - **Teach** – Ongoing instruction in OBEDIENCE to the word of God

“It's not so much that the church has a mission, but that the mission has a church.”

Alan Hirsch

It's vital to understand that to make disciples, we must be disciples. Now is a good time to evaluate yourself on these points: Apprenticeship of Jesus? Baptism? Growing in Obedience? Embracing his mission to do the same for others?

“At the heart of our mission is the reproduction in others of what Jesus has produced in us: faith, obedience, growth, authority, compassion, love, and a bold, truthful message as his witnesses. They were learners commanded to produce more learners.” **Stuart Weber**

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3 Elements of Helping Neighbors & Nations Follow Jesus in Matthew 28:16-20: 1) Purpose of Disciple-Making, 2) Process of Disciple-Making...

III. Promise of Disciple-Making – Matthew 18:20b

Too often, we breeze past the conclusion of the Great Commission...Don't!

“And behold, I am with you always...” **Matthew 28:20b**

Literally Jesus says, *I, Myself, and continually with you always until the end of the age*. What a promise (senior adult SS member, young man it ain't a promise...it's a PURE NATURAL FACT).

Paul the Apostle discovered the accuracy of this fact in Corinth when he was attempting to establish a church. In obedience to Jesus, Paul came to the city (Acts 18:1) won people to Christ, baptized them (Acts 18:8), and taught them the word (Acts 18:11). But then things got really tough and guess what...Jesus was there!

*“And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, ‘Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for **I am with you**, and no one will attack you or harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.’” Acts 18:9-10*

Don't Miss the Final Clause: “...to the end of the age.” **Matthew 28:16-20**

The age is going to end; there must be an urgency to our mission to our Neighbors and Nations. They were made to follow Jesus, which necessitate that we are disciples who are eagerly making disciples for God's glory and their good!

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Think about that chef's knife after using it like a screwdriver and trying to pry open tin cans. It's chipped up, missing chunks of the blade, and is no longer effective for what it was made to do. Sounds like a lot of people we know, doesn't it? Think about all the ways our neighbors and nations suffer with things like crippling debt, unhealthy choices, dishonesty, hopelessness, addiction issues, purposelessness, unforgiveness/bitterness, broken relationships, fear of dying, uncertainty about eternity, and so much more. And, what would following Jesus do for them???

“I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities

- **CSB Study Bible** – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- **Message of Matthew** – Michael Green (2001)
- **CCE: Exalting Jesus in Matthew** – Mason, Platt, & Merida (2020)
- **Bible Exposition Commentary** – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- **Holeman New Testament Commentary: Matthew** – Stuart Weber (2000)
- **New American Commentary: Matthew** – Craig Blomberg (1992)
- **Spurgeon Study Bible** – C.H. Spurgeon (2017)
- **Tony Evans Study Bible** – Tony Evans (2019)
- **Let the Nations Be Glad** – John Piper (1993)