

Sept 27, 2021

Mon, 9/27 2:44PM 37:45

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

jesus, people, church, pray, disciples, worship, god, calls, command, obey, missionaries, gospel, authority, life, means, friends, scatter, gather, verse, christ

SPEAKERS

Ethan, Dana

Well, good morning, my name is Ethan. I'm one of the pastor's here at Union church. If I have not met yet, I would love to meet you after the service. I'm humbled and thrilled that you're here. grateful that we get to gather together and before we get any further, I just want to pray together. So can we pray together? Father in heaven, you are. God, You are Holy, holy, holy. You are mighty, and glorious, and you're good. And we come to you as weak. And run ragged and beat up and guilty people. But we come to you thankful because Jesus, through your cross through your resurrection, we we aren't coming to clean ourselves up. Because we could never do that. And we come thankful because we aren't coming here to gather as your church to appease you as if you needed anything from us. We are coming because you are a good, majestic, beautiful God, and we're coming to gaze on your beauty. And we're thankful. God, we need to gaze upon your beauty, I can so easily distract myself. We have hearts that are prone to wander. So we pray for your help Holy Spirit, would you help us in this gathering of your people? Would you just take us gently by the chin and raise our eyes up to gaze upon Christ. It's only in beholding you, that we can be renewed and hope. And it's only in beholding you that we can be changed. It's only from beholding you that we can be sent as your people. So Lord God, I just pray that you would use our time, our time in the word today to to show us Christ, and call us to repentance and restore us and send us out. We pray all these things in Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. Well, today we are coming to the end of our first series as a church, we are on the third Sunday into the birth of this new church and you're here on the last Sunday of our first series, it feels like a milestone, maybe we should have a party afterwards. Or maybe I should just go home and take a nap. That might be a better choice. But but we've been in this series that we've just called church, we've started here with a series about the identity and value and mission of the church. Because for some people, churches are a genuine part of their expression of faith. And, and for other people. Church can be just kind of one branch on our busy tree of life. Like we go to our kids sports practice, we, we go to our work, we come home, we have this on Saturdays, and we have church on Sundays. And then for still more people, churches, just kind of one facet of society that they choose not to participate in, right, like, I choose not to go to the gym, and you choose not to go to McDonald's, and they choose not to go to church, right. And for all of us, those who come to church as a genuine expression of our faith, those who kind of just treat churches as one branch of their busy tree and, and those who choose not to participate, I think in all of those spheres, many of us are operating with a faulty understanding of what it means to be the church, and to gather as God's people. And just like you can take a tool. And if you don't know how to use it, or what it's for, you can hurt yourself, or you can hurt other people. In the same way if we engage with the church, but we don't know its identity, we don't know its purpose, then we are liable to wound ourselves or wound other people. And we live in a society

that loves to talk about how the church wounds people, don't we. And so as we begin as a new church in Livingston County, before we even tried to get you to rah rah around our vision as a church, we just want to say this is what God's word says about his church. So let's let's start on the right foot and guard ourselves from using this thing that God has ordained improperly, right?

So the hope is that we paint a true picture of what the church is supposed to be. Not so much to correct. But to paint something for you to gaze upon the beauty of what God's up to and that you might be compelled to engage with it because of the beauty of what God's up to. So two weeks ago, we opened in First Peter, we talked about the identity of the church. And we said that the church is a people called out of darkness, and into God's purposes. And God does that for His glory and for our joy. So, so God is building a new people through Jesus Christ, as he as he rescues us, he reorients us around his purposes, as with our new identity as members of his family, members of his kingdom. And then last week, last week, Pastor Kyle took us to Ephesians four. And he made the point that as God's new people, we are called to gather. And we gather as God's people so that we might be united in Jesus, and so that we might grow into Jesus we gather for, for the betterment of one another as we grow into Christ. So part of the identity and purpose of God's new people, is that when he makes us new creations, he designs us to punctuate our life with a rhythm of corporate gathering, where believers unite and spirit and in truth, in love, and in purpose around Jesus Christ. And this week, godly this microphone is gonna bug me. This week, we're going to end our series by saying that God calls his church, not only to come out of darkness and gather, but to scatter. God calls his church to scatter as missionaries who make disciples of Jesus, wherever we go. And to get there. I want to look at Matthew chapter 28. So why don't you grab a Bible and let's turn there, if you don't have a Bible, you can grab one from the connection station in the back, we love to get our eyes on the book, as we get through, get into the word on Sunday. So Matthew 28, if you grab it, if you have one of the Bibles from the back, it's on page 835. I'm going to turn there myself. We're going to start in verse 16. says, Now the 11 disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when he when they saw him, they worshipped 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 the Son of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you. And behold, I'm with you always to the end of the Ah, this is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Father, thank You for Your word. I just pray that as, as I preach that you would make my words useful, and that they would only serve to direct us to your truth. We pray that you shape us by your word this morning. Speak to us Holy Spirit. In Jesus name, amen.

So I've already told you what I want us to take away from this passage, you might have caught it earlier. God calls his church not only to gather but to scatter as missionaries, making disciples of Jesus Christ, wherever we go. That's the point that I'm going to be drawing out of this passage. And honestly, I think if any one of us sat down with this part of the Bible, and we're given the assignment, Hey, take a few minutes, study this and then just summarize it for us in your own words, like, even if you're not a follower of Jesus, even if you've never opened up this book before, if you were given that assignment, just summarize what the passage is trying to teach. I think we'd land in pretty similar places. There are some parts of Scripture that are less clear than others, but this is not one of them. The main point that Jesus is trying to get across is

He's saying, tell people about me offer them salvation in my name. And, and so despite the clear calling of Jesus in this part of the Bible, in my experience as I engage with other Christians, as I take part in, in churches, I've grown up in church. And so I've had a fair amount of experience with other Christians and, and been a part of a lot of a lot of churches and expressions of church. Even as I walk with Jesus in my own faith, I find that most of us would probably kind of treat this passage, the clear command of Jesus, like, like some of us treat like organic, vegan food. Like, is it good for you? Yeah, it's really good for you. Do you want to try some? I don't know if I want to try it. Well, and then you always get that one person who's like, come on, try it. It's really good. You'll never believe it's not butter or hamburger or whatever. And then you try it. And you're like, immediately your body just reacts and you're like, never Nope, you're not fooling me ever again. I'm never gonna try that again. And then, for me, at least I get curious over time, and I'm suckered into trying other gross food that's supposed to be

good for me. And for some of us, I think that's how we treat the great commission that we find here in Matthew 28. Like, like his obedience to Jesus command, good for his people. Yeah, if you're, if you're a church person, you say, yeah, it's good for us to obey this command. Do you want to try? Do you want to tell your neighbor about Jesus? saloon comfortable. And then, if you're like me, you have stories of people who've convinced you to step out and try and it's so uncomfortable, that it takes you years to kind of work up the courage to try again, right? Some of you have the gift of evangelism and talking about Jesus with you can talk about Jesus with anybody, I envy you, that is not me. And so for many of us, we have this kind of paralysis, when it comes to obeying the clear command of Jesus in His Word. I think we have anxiety, we have fear. Every time we try to dip our toes into obedience, it becomes difficult and, and we we, we are unable to build the habit of obedience in our life. So Jesus explicitly calls his church to scatter as missionaries who make disciples but, but so many individuals, and so many churches are like people who skip leg day. And my hope is that as we look harder at the book, and just kind of Behold what Jesus has to say in it, we understand what it means to come and worship Him and to be under his authority. We understand the promise that he gives us in this text that we would be compelled to obey that the things that make us anxious and overwhelmed, would would shrink smaller and smaller. And that it would seem more and more attainable for us to be a people who scatter with the gospel as missionaries to the world around us. So let's look again at Matthew 28. Look, look at the book with me. Look at verse 16, where we started reading. Now the 11 disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And then verse 17, when they saw him, they worshipped him. But some doubted I love those two little sentences. I love them for a couple of reasons. Let me tell you why. First reason is, there's something going on that that we don't catch on first glance, if but if we were to read through the whole Bible, and just note, every time God does something with his people on a mountaintop, we'd see a really interesting theme take shape. God meets with his people in in special ways. Throughout the narrative of the Old Testament. He meets with Abraham, on a mountaintop, he gives the law to Moses on the top of the mountain. He situates the temple on the mount on Mount Zion. That's temples where people come to, to worship God and to meet with God. And so the implication that God the Son is about to reveal himself to them, setting the trajectory. And then we see the disciples respond to Jesus, it only underscores this reality. Look at verse 17. When they saw him, they worshipped him. They worshipped him, because he's God meeting with them. And this is the epitome of what it means to worship. We see God and we respond to him with an overflow of our hearts, an overflow of praise. So the disciples come to the mountain, they see Jesus God, the son who died for their sin and rose again and conquered the grave, and they see him and they worship Him. And so as we consider this command from Jesus, that He gives His church that we're supposed to obey just a couple of lines later, I want to just ask you to consider, have you seen the risen Jesus? Have you seen him like, I know we don't see him in the way that the disciples saw him on the mountaintop, but have you really considered him? Have you dwelt on the reality that you were dead in your sin, you were without hope in the world. And God, the son became flesh and stepped into the creation that he himself spoke into being and lived a sinless life, died on the cross to conquer death, so that you might be rescued and reconciled with God in brought out of the dominion of darkness into His marvelous light, have you considered what he has done for you? You know, I, we see people all the time, every day, I see my wife, I see my, my kids, I see my friends. And yet, there are moments when the beauty of my wife, captivate captivates me all over again. Right, or when my kids laugh, and it's like, time stops a little bit, and my heart is full to bursting. Or when I just sit back, and I'm able to appreciate the richness that my friendships have brought into my life. Like we see people all the time, but when those moments happen, we are really seeing them. You follow me? And so how many of us hustle through life, and we see Jesus. But we haven't really be held him. If we would just just be hold Jesus, if we would just really consider him. Our hearts would overflow with worship, like the disciples and and that worship does something in us that worship fuels something in us. There's a pastor named John Piper. And he once wrote that worship is the fuel of mission, which is what we're getting at when we talk about this command that Jesus gives us in Matthew 28. to scatter our worship of Jesus is what fuels our obedience to His command. So this pastor, he wrote, passion for God in worship precedes the offer of God in preaching, and you can't command what you don't cherish. So missionaries will never call out, let the nations be glad. who cannot say from the heart, I rejoice in the Lord missions begins and ends in worship. So have you seen the risen Jesus and have you worshiped him? As we consider the reality that God calls his church to scatter as missionaries who make disciples of Jesus Wherever we go, and we start to get a little squirmy, a little bit uncomfortable about what that means in our lives. We begin to make allowances for ourself about why we don't necessarily need to obey that command today or right now.

The way that the scriptures are going to lovingly correct our hearts is by saying, Have you worship Jesus? Have you seen

Jesus? Have you have you submitted yourself and stirred up the passions of your heart before the Risen King. And, incidentally, I have to say this just because it's there in the text in verse 17, it says, they worshipped him, but some doubted. As if, as if it's possible, to do both at the same time, to worship Jesus. And doubt. I think the text is saying it is friends. And so let this be an encouragement to you. If you're someone who struggles with doubt, your doubt does not disqualify you from worshipping Jesus. Your questions don't keep you from coming to him. they worshipped him, in some doubted, and in the words of Jesus that come next are for all of us. And I think they're particularly for those of us who, who have questions that we wrestle with.

Listen to what Jesus says next. In verse 18, he gives this statement to them that's connected to our worship of him. But it's, it's incredibly important and distinct. He said, it says, Jesus came to them, and said to them, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So before Jesus gives his church, this command, to go and make disciples of all nations, he lays a rock solid foundation. For the command, Jesus is saying, something that is immovably true about himself. And he says, this thing that's true about himself in order to motivate us toward obedience, all authority in heaven, and on earth has been given to him, Therefore go and make disciples. So there is no hidden meaning in the Greek. For for when for when Jesus says, All authority, in heaven, and on earth, all authority means all authority is that means he's the ultimate CEO, he's, he's the king, he's the ruler over all creation. That means there's nobody before him. There's nobody above him. There's nobody that's more powerful than him. There's not one neutron that's orbiting around the nucleus of an atom billions of miles across the universe that is outside of his control. He's king over all of it, he has dominion over all of it. He's King of kings and Lord of lords, he, he causes every planet to orbit around every star, and he causes every breath to come in and out of your own lungs. He is King over the big and over the miniscule, he has all authority, and he holds all things together. And the reality of his authority has massive implications for what it means when he calls his people to scatter as missionaries to make disciples for him wherever we go. And the first thing that it means is that to worship Jesus means to submit yourself beneath the authority of Jesus, you have to submit yourself to the King of kings. And so that means friends, that when we gather together, when we worship in song, when we when we pray, when we read the Bible, even when you give a good amen to a sermon, it doesn't matter how many goosebumps you get. It doesn't matter how good you you feel. It doesn't matter how many tears you shed, how much zeal you bring.

If you will not submit your whole self in every nook and cranny of your life to Jesus, then you aren't really worshipping Him. To worship Jesus means to submit yourself to Him. And so when Jesus who has all authority commands his people to go and make disciples, right worship of him means that we obey we say, Yes, Lord, send me. But it also means that no matter what we encounter, when we are sent, the our dad can beat up their dad. Now, theologically speaking, we wouldn't really call Jesus our dad, but go with me.

If we will obey Jesus, and his command to gather to scatter as missionaries, and make disciples Wherever we go, it's very likely that we will encounter things on the range from from disk, discomfort, to dangerous. and everything in between, depending on where he calls us. Depending on where he calls us, we might even be called upon to give our very lives. But no matter what we come up against, we have a security. And it's the security of knowing that God has the authority, no matter what's in front of us, which means that God is in control, which means that he has the ability to make good on his promise to work all things for the good of those who loves him, which means that even if I sacrifice my life, for the sake of the gospel, I will get something that is for my good. I will.

And so because Jesus has all authority, we can be like the Apostle Paul, and he wrote in Philippians, one, yes, I will rejoice. He rejoices while he's in chains in prison. He says, For I know, that through your prayers, through the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance. It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed. But that with full courage now, as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life, or by death, to live is Christ, and to

die is gain. And we only gain that sort of resilience when we have the confidence and the security of knowing that Jesus has all authority in heaven, and on earth. And so when we behold Jesus, and worship Him, that must awaken our heart to obey. And when we understand that the God we worship has all authority in heaven, and on earth, that must compel us forward, it must bolster our confidence as we as we OBEY Him.

And it's after Jesus reminds him, of his all encompassing reminds them of his all encompassing authority. That's when he says, Go, therefore, because of who I am, go and make disciples of all nations. And I've already said, that verse, verse 19, where he begins, go there for make disciples of all nations. That's the clear part.

That's the part that that we can all summarize really easily. Jesus is clearly calling his church to go and make disciples. And yet, there's something even in this verse that I think can help us something that can help us kind of overcome the paralysis, the fear, or the apathy that we have when it comes to obeying this command from Jesus. And it has to do with the Greek, I just made a joke a minute ago that you don't need to know the nuances of Greek to study your Bible. And that is true. You don't need to know Greek, your Bible is trustworthy. And you can gain many good things from it, if you would just study it and read it. The translation that you have is good. The translation in our Bibles isn't wrong, but there's a nuance that we don't catch in English. So in the Bible, it says, Go therefore, and make disciples. And we often read those words go therefore. And we insert a picture of somebody who has been sent far away, to do radical things in the kingdom of God, to spread the gospel. And in doing that, when we insert the picture of the people who've been sent far away, we kind of inadvertently create this special class of Christians. They're the special ops team who've been sent to fulfill the great commission from Jesus. And surely many people will be called far away into dangerous places into uncomfortable places and hard places to take the gospel. I pray that the Lord would send people from union church Sunday to do that.

But the text isn't creating that special ops special class of Christian, the text isn't doing that. When the text says go there for you could also translate it to say, so as you go. So Jesus says, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. And so as you go, it has this sense of like, as you're walking through your life, as you're on your way through life, as you go throughout life, take the gospel with you, wherever you find yourselves. So I know

couple of their names are Jared, and Melanie. And they have taken their family to live in the jungles of Papua New Guinea for the last 10 years, and they've, they've entrenched themselves with an unreached people group called the dem tribe. And they've been learning the language. And after just recently, after 10 years, they finally have learned the language to a point where they can start teaching about Jesus to the people, and they posted a picture on Facebook, it's glorious. There are more people than could fit in this room gathered around this little hut to hear the truth of Jesus. That is amazing. Jared and Melanie, are there testimony of obedience to Jesus command is incredible. And I also know a couple named Andy and Karen. And Andy and Karen are suburbanites. They have three kids and a dog and a fenced in yard and a pool. And they take their kids to sports practice and piano lessons. And they have people around their homes and they meet people in coffee shops, and they're busy like the rest of us just like, go go go all the time. And guess what? They're also praying for their neighbors all the time. They'll walk through their neighborhood, and pray, Lord, Lord,

bless that house. Let people come to know you in that house. And if two people are in the front yard, they'll say, Hey, how are you? We've been praying for you. Is there anything any way that we can kind of fill in the blank of our prayer more specifically, any way that God can bless you? How can we pray for you in those conversations lead to conversations about who Jesus is and what it means to follow him. They'll they'll talk to their barista, and my wife, witness, Karen, just say, Thanks for our order. You know, we love Jesus. And we believe he answers prayer, how can we pray for you, Andy, at his job, just just

had to basically, tell him, I can't I can't do the unethical things that this company is doing. And I have to, I have to step back from my job because because I'm a follower of Jesus. They're they're following Jesus in everyday life. And you know what's happening, they're taking people with them, because they're ready to share the good news about Christ, wherever they go.

So I beg God to raise up Jared and Melanie's who will go to the ends of the earth, and insert themselves into dangerous situations for the sake of the gospel. But I'm praying that that sort of calling would rise up out of a union church that is filled with Andy and Karen's, who just want to take the gospel with them wherever they go, because they know they're called as missionaries. And they know that union church is a missionary outpost here in Livingston County. They know that Jesus is in creating a new class of special ops followers when he gives us this command to go he's calling all of us into everyday mission, wherever we find ourselves, to bring the gospel to our homes, to our families, to our neighborhoods, to the nations.

And I need to be done soon. I'm gonna tie a bow on this. But there's a good word from Christ to end on. Look, look at the second half of verse 20. He ends his command to the church with a promise, Jesus says, and behold, I am with you always.

I am with you always, to the end of the age. Friends, as we scatter as missionaries, Jesus promise is that he will be with us. The God who has all authority will be with us. The God whose glory compels you to worship Him will be with us. He will be with you as you prayer walk your neighborhood. As you ask your neighbors how you might pray for them, he will be with you. As you invite your co worker into a Bible study with you he will be with you as you teach your kids the gospel. He will be with you as you build relationships with your barista or the people who serve you in order to share Jesus with them. He will be with you as you welcome lost people around your dinner table. He will be with you as you pray for opportunities to share the gospel with your friends, or your family members. He will be with you as he calls you to be missionaries in your home and in your neighborhoods. And he'll be with you. If he calls you to Afghanistan or Iran or Africa or India or to the ends of the earth he will be with you no matter what. Friends always remember this Jesus, who has all authority as king over the whole universe is merciful and gentle, and kind and his heart is disposed to be gentle with you.

And so here in Matthew 28, he is giving us a clear command. It's a firm command, we are to obey. We must be a missionary people union Church must be a multiplying church scattering with the gospel Wherever we go, we must I pray that it would be true here. But look at the kindness of Jesus, he, he's like our big brother. And he just takes us by the hand. And he says, Let's do this together. I will be with you always. I know you are scared. I know this seems difficult, but I will be with you. Jesus calls his church to scatter as missionaries who make disciples, wherever we go. He promises to be with us as we go. So friends, let's obey him together. If you're a follower of Jesus, let, let's obey our king. Let's Let's be creative, and how we take the gospel to our neighbors. Let's be diligent and sharing the gospel with our family. Let's patiently pray steadily, unceasingly for those friends who have walked away, who we pray will come back to the faith. Let's have hope that Jesus can transform the darkest, most difficult people as he brings them out of darkness and into their mark into His marvelous light. Oh, that we would trust that Jesus will make good on his promise and be able to obey. Let's pray.

Our Savior be glorified through your church. Lord Jesus, would you plant seeds in us that will bear fruit? I can only I can only be an arrow. The best sermon can only be an arrow that points to to your power, your goodness and your truth. Only you can cause real growth. I pray that you'd help us to obey with joy for Your glory.

Pray in your name Jesus. Amen.

