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The Great Commission for Greater Works; Matt 28:11-20

GPBC

10.9.22

Introduction – Notice that when Matthew writes his gospel account, he says in v15 that story was still being spread among the Jews. Remember, he wrote his gospel to the Jews, in order to expose that lie. But the sad fact remains, if you tell a lie often enough, people begin to believe it's the truth. So what do you do with the truth? You have to cover it up. If you've ever wondered how hardened against the truth a heart can become, just look at the chief priests. They were not willing to believe the eyewitness accounts of the guard, who had no vested interest in the resurrection. They knew it was the truth, and yet they still attempted to cover it up.

Concerning the title for today's sermon. The Great Commission for Greater Works. John 14:12. Jesus' ministry was confined to Judea and Samaria but His followers, beginning with the disciples, will carry the gospel and minister to all nations, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Do you realize this morning that the presence of this local church is in part a fulfillment of the Great Commission and therefore of Jesus' words in John 14:12? Jesus didn't travel to America to bring the gospel, but some of His followers did. Greater works fulfilling the Great Commission.

- I. A Look at the Great Commission
 - a. Notice the Great Commission rests on a great truth. V18.
 - i. Jesus is sovereign. Our commissioner is in control. That makes a difference in how you go and it guarantees the success of the mission. It is His will that His message of salvation for the sinner be taken to the ends of the earth. BTW – today's message is a great compliment to last Sunday's Missions Day.
 - ii. There are many nations today that remain hostile to the gospel. That means its very dangerous to be a Christian and live in those countries. And there are many more nations that are classified as restricted nations. That means it's illegal to become a Christian in those countries. India is classified as hostile. If you are a baptized follower of Christ in any of these nations, you become a walking target. There is a price to pay

for being a Christian. You may be ostracized by your family, you may lose any employment and your possessions, you may face imprisonment, you may even lose your life – and yet the gospel continues, and in some areas is exploding.

- iii. Why? Because men and nations and the powers of this world are not the final authority – Jesus is the final authority. He makes a way to save His people where there seems to be no way. He opens closed doors for His messengers to tell the good news. He heals unbelievers and opens their hearts to life and salvation. He still moves the immovable and breaks the unbreakable.
- iv. The great commission rests on a great truth – Jesus is in charge of this world. And He is able to take the darkest things and events against the gospel and turn them into open channels for the gospel.
- v. Ill. 9/11 was one of the most horrific days of evil in the history of the world, and yet God turned that dark day into an open channel for the gospel. More Muslims came to Christ because of 9/11 than any other single event in recent history!
- vi. The gospel is unstoppable because Jesus is in control!
- b. The great commission is a great commandment. V19.
 - i. Go. Since Jesus is in control, since He has all authority, go. We are free to go anywhere. That's a command. Go.
 - ii. Make disciples of all nations. In other words – go everywhere and take the gospel with you. How do we make disciples?
 1. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. That implies that we've shared the gospel, and some have responded with faith in Christ and repentance from sin, and are now willing to be identified with Christ through baptism. So now they have entered the community of faith. But disciple-making isn't finished at conversion, it's just started.
 2. Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. Now begins the lifelong process of learning and becoming like Jesus.
- c. The great commission is energized by a great promise. V20.

- i. Listen, God doesn't send us anywhere that He is not already at work preparing hearts to receive His Son. We don't go alone – Jesus goes with us.
- ii. III. India. South India. Village without the gospel.

II. The Great Commission as a Culmination of Matthew's Gospel

- a. I preached the first sermon from Matthew on April 29, 2018. Matthew took us by the hand on that date and walked us verse-by-verse through his gospel account for 4 ½ years. Today will be 130 sermons we've watched the Savior and listened to the Savior, sitting beside Matthew.
- b. We've heard Jesus preach 5 sermons. We watched Him call out His disciples. We've stood in amazement at 16 miracles of Jesus, not to mention the 4 times Matthew says He healed many – hundreds of miracles. We were perplexed by the growing opposition. We sat solemnly at the foot of the cross, and we rejoiced at the empty tomb.
- c. For 4 ½ years we walked with Jesus. Did it change you? What affect did it have in your life to carefully and closely sit near Him for over 4 years? Are you now like Peter who said, "Lord, where else can we go? You have the words of life!" Or were you like the chief priests, unmoved and unchanged no matter how much you've seen or heard?
- d. But what was the point? All the powerful miracles, all the precious words, the death and resurrection all culminate in the great commission. Take all that you've seen and all that you've heard – and go make disciples!
- e. Notice Matthew doesn't end with his commentary. He ends with Jesus' commission.
- f. And guess what those 11 disciples did? They went and made disciples to every nation they could go. In fact, Thomas went to India, where he was martyred for the faith.

III. Another Look at the Great Commission

- a. Just imagine when Matthew wrote his gospel account and you came across a copy. More than likely that would have been the only NT book you'd ever read. If you came to faith in Christ somewhere in the sermons, miracles, death, and resurrection, when you reached the

end of the book and Jesus said, “Go and make disciples” what would you do? There’s nothing else to do. Matthew introduced you to Jesus and now you go introduces others to Jesus.

- b. Now let’s bring it to our setting here at GP. We’ve walked through Matthew’s gospel and reached the end – the great commission. That’s where the gospel ends – with followers of Jesus going and making disciples of all nations. So whatever we do with the gospel, you can pencil it in as v21. Will we sit and do nothing having learned the greatest news in life? I hope not. Let v21 read, and GP took the gospel everywhere and made disciples.
- c. You see the great commission leaves us as a church with 2 great endeavors. (1) discipleship. We are to be teaching believers all that God has revealed to us in His Word. (btw – that’s why we went verse-by-verse thru Matthew) How are we as a church doing with discipleship? I can tell you that recently we’ve been working on discipleship. Sunday night discipleship. Small groups.
- d. (2) going – evangelism and missions. You see church we exist not just for who’s here but also for who’s not here. In order to have those in the church being disciplined, we have to go outside the church and win them and bring them in. It’s not just about us – it’s about them. Jesus didn’t say sit and wait for them to come. He said go and make disciples.
- e. Why doesn’t Jesus take us straight to heaven as soon as we are saved? What is this life of faith for if not to be the hands and feet and mouth of Jesus so that when we do go to heaven, we bring with us as many as we can!
- f. Church, that’s where the gospel of Matthew leaves us – with a great commission resting on a great truth and energized by a great promise.

Conclusion – (1) win them. Disciple them. Send them.

(2) We’ve seen and heard Jesus – have we been changed?