

## **Intro**

What should motivate our evangelism? Thinking back on my experience I'm disturbed.

I'm a bad Christian if I don't = discouragement. I'm a good Christian if I do = pride. I'm not a coward like all these other believers! So I'd have something to say to my accountability partner meaning I evangelize so this person won't look down on me. Because I read a Christian biography where the spiritual hero had a conviction that he had to share the gospel with at least one person every day. My takeaway? If I don't share the gospel with at least one person every day I'm a sorry Christian. Quickly cornering someone in Tobey's and get it over with so I won't think I'm a failure Christian? Maybe you can identify with me?

Is this why we evangelize?

If not out of guilt or shame, out of what should we evangelize? I think Jesus has some answers today!

**BIG IDEA: Mission is grounded in Jesus' authority and presence.**

**READ PASSAGE**

**PRAY**

## **Body**

### **Passage Focus**

Jesus' instructions after the resurrection.

Our focus will center on the grounds for mission: Jesus' authority and presence.

**Point 1: Go and make disciples because Jesus possesses all authority.**

### **28:16-17**

After the resurrection, Jesus told the two Marys to tell the brothers to go to Galilee, where they would see Jesus (Matt 28:7,10). The apostles (11 disciples) obeyed.

Jesus was met with hesitation. How could my dead, crucified Lord be standing here in front of me? How is this possible? Same word used in Matthew 14:31 when Peter saw the wind, doubted, and fell in the water. Doubt caused by circumstances, not absence of faith.

### **28:18-20**

Let's make some general connections before jumping to application:

- 1) Jesus proclaims his authority (28:18).
- 2) "therefore" (28:19) = in light of the fact that I have all authority, go and make disciples.
- 3) Going and making disciples is a consequence of Jesus' authority.
- 4) The second half of verse 19 and the first half of verse 20 explains what to do with these disciples once they have been made.

- 5) “all the nations” indicates where we make disciples.
- 6) The second half of verse 20 further grounds the commands to go and make disciples.
- 7) This is what I’m getting at:
  - a) We go and make disciples because Jesus possesses all authority.
  - b) We go and make disciples because Jesus is present with us.
  - c) These two truths encourage us to go and make disciples.

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*

- 1) The authority is total (all).
- 2) The authority extends to heaven and earth = everywhere.
- 3) The authority was given to Jesus = from the Father.

### **What is the nature of this authority?**

If Jesus’ authority is an encouragement to go and make disciples, shouldn’t we have some understanding of what this authority actually is?

- 1) Jesus’ authority entails position, function, and ability.

- Authority belongs to Jesus.
- Jesus issues commands.
- Jesus acts with supernatural power.

- 2) Jesus exercised authority during his earthly mission.

- authority to heal (Matt 4:23-24; 9:35)
- authority over demons (Matt 8:29-32; 12:22; 17:18)
- authority to forgive sins

*But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"- he then said to the paralytic-"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." – Matt 9:6*

- authority to give his disciples ability to cast out demons and heal the sick

*And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. – Matt 10:1*

Uniquely given authority to a group of 12. Nothing says he doesn’t do this today. Nothing says he gives this to every disciple. Nothing says there’s a formula to follow to get this power ( if we do x, y, and z).

- authority to judge (Matt 13:41; 25:31-46 – the sheep and the goats)

- 3) As the Son of Man, we see Jesus’ authority in Daniel 7:13-14.

*I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup> And to him was given dominion and glory and **a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him**; his dominion is an **everlasting dominion**, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. – Dan 7:13-14*

- 4) Jesus delegated authority to his apostles.

*And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." – Matt 16:18-19*

Authority given to go and make disciples includes authority to declare the kingdom gospel and authority to receive people into the church's membership. That's authority to judge whether or not a person's profession of faith is genuine or not. When we're faithful in these matters, Jesus is exercising his authority through us.

After laying out the process of church discipline Jesus says this:

*Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." – Matt 18:18*

Jesus gave the church authority to practice church discipline. When we faithfully practice church discipline, Jesus is exercising his authority through us.

5) We speak with Jesus' authority.

When we tell people what Jesus has commanded, Jesus is exercising his authority through us.

## **Point 2: Go and makes disciples because Jesus is with us.**

*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

"always" = every moment of our existence.

"to the end of the age" = until he returns for the final judgment, meaning he is with us today.

Maybe you're thinking, isn't this directed to the apostles? Why is pastor applying this to us? Because the mission extends to the end of the age. Jesus envisions a mission that continues long after the apostles.

Jesus is with us in two ways.

**First**, Jesus indwells us.

The Bible says we're indwelt by the Holy Spirit and by Jesus.

*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. – Gal 2:20*

Indwelling speaks to internal enablement to do mission. An internal work in our hearts.

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." – Acts 1:8*

That's divine enablement to do what we're commanded to do. Given courage to speak, love for lost people, wisdom to speak the right words, eyes to see the open door before us.

Evangelism isn't something we muster up in our own strength. Evangelism isn't something we grit and bear against our will. Evangelism isn't something we do to check off our list to prove we're a good Christian. Evangelism is a fruit of Christ's presence in our heart!

## **Illustration of divine enablement**

The enablement Jesus provides in evangelism would be like God giving a baseball player eyes that can follow a 77 mph curveball, reflexes to hit 95 mph pitches, hands that can catch, depth perception to see where the ball is going, speed to move, and arm strength to throw.

We depend on God when we evangelize.

**Second**, Jesus is present to convert sinners and bring mission results.

Jesus isn't present just to strengthen our speech. Jesus is present to bring mission results. Sinners saved through our gospel conversations.

*And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.* – John 10:16

The other sheep are Gentiles. As we go, Jesus has sheep that haven't yet believed. When we speak the gospel to them, they will listen to us. They will listen to Jesus' voice = they will receive the gospel message we speak. We are Jesus' voice, speaking his commands with his authority. When we find Jesus' sheep, Jesus will ensure they receive our message ("*I must bring them also*").

We don't know who these sheep are. But we know they're out there. So we freely proclaim the gospel to those people God has chosen to cross our paths.

Jesus' presence guarantees mission success. Disciples will be made when we go because Jesus is present with us. He enables us to speak. He brings conversion through the proclamation he enables. When a sinner repents and believes, all glory goes to Jesus, not us.

According to this text, we go and make disciples for two reasons:

- 1) Jesus has delegated his authority to us.

We speak the gospel and instruct disciples from authority entrusted to us.

- 2) Jesus is present with us when we engage in gospel conversations.

So the mission can't fail.

What gives the missionary confidence? Jesus' authority and presence. What gives us confidence? Jesus' authority and presence.

## **Go**

The mission doesn't end with Israel. Under the Old Covenant, the kingdom was confined to Israel. A come and see religion.

Under the New Covenant, the kingdom expands to the nations. A go and tell religion.

Under the Old Covenant, the salvation of the nations was a future reality (Isa 42:6; 49:6). With the apostles sent, mission to the Gentiles began (Acts 14:16; Eph 2:11-13). A major turning point in salvation history. God's saving reign (kingdom) no longer confined to one nation.

## **Application**

- 1) If they stay where they are mission won't happen.

If we stay confined within the church, mission won't happen. If we don't associate with non-Christians. If we don't develop relationships with non-Christians, mission won't happen. Be where non-Christians are. When we make disciples in Palermo, we are fulfilling Jesus' instruction.

- 2) The mission will be completed by others (that's us!).
- 3) We should strive to one day be a local church that sends missionaries to the nations.

### **Point 3: Making disciples involves teaching obedience.**

*baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you* highlight critical aspects of making disciples.

#### **Baptism**

- 1) Only disciples are baptized.

Baptism takes place after becoming a disciple, not in infancy.

- 2) Baptism was the way one entered the church.

We could say people became members through baptism. Through baptism, the church makes a public declaration, "this person is a disciple of Jesus."

There's no such thing as an unbaptized Christian in the New Testament.

- 3) Baptism is an act of obedience.

That's one reason we require baptism as a converted believer for membership. Are you a believer who hasn't been baptized after believing? Talk with me.

More can be said on baptism. Refer to my sermon on baptism in December of last year.

#### **Make disciples**

When Jesus says "*make disciples*" he's saying bring people to saving faith. Disciple stands for a converted person. A person who's repented and believed. Who's been born again. Who's experienced forgiveness of sins. Who's chosen to follow Jesus.

We're commanded to bring about results we can't ensure. We can't force a person to respond positively to the gospel. What's going on here?

As we proclaim the gospel, disciples will be made through our gospel proclamation because Jesus is present with us to convert sinners. We're responsible to speak the gospel, not to force gospel response. We make disciples in that Jesus brings his sheep to himself through our gospel proclamation.

#### **Teaching them**

What do we do with people after they repent and believe? We teach them to observe all that Jesus has commanded. In other words, after a person believes we instruct them so that they'll be a fruitful, obedient disciple. Jesus doesn't save people just to rescue them from hell. Jesus saves people to make them a new creation. Obedience to Jesus' commands is part of being a new creation. This obviously assumes new disciples

come under the care of a local church where they can be taught over time. Everything = all of it. Not just the basics. That's why I preach verse by verse. So we don't pick and choose. So we get all of it.

### **Illustration of spiritual malpractice**

Let's go to Portland and do street witnessing. We lead a few people to pray the sinner's prayer. We leave them to themselves. We come back and report a mighty move of God.

Wrong! (buzzer sound) After a person becomes a disciple they instructed by the local church, not abandoned by it. Better to do street outreach five minutes from our church among people we can care for!

Not saying you meet a stranger while on vacation out of state and you share the gospel you're doing wrong. I'm talking about intentional gospel efforts where "follow-up" is neglected. If someone believes through an unplanned encounter, find a good gospel-believing church in their area on the spot by phone internet search. Give them the church's information. Get their information and give it to the pastor of that church and explain what happened. If my relatives 2.5 hours away believe, I already have the church picked out.

### **Non-Christians**

We become disciples by responding to the gospel message. The message is assumed not stated.

Message is we're fallen creatures as a result of Adam's sin. So we rebel against God. Rebellion brings judgment because God isn't indifferent to rebellion. Despite our rebellion, there's hope. God is merciful! God sent Jesus to die on the cross as a substitute in the place of sinners such that whoever repents and believes will be forgiven of their sins.

How do we respond to God? We turn from rebellion to trust.

What do we do after we believe? We join a local church where people who've been disciples for some time can help us learn how to follow Jesus' commands.

### **Conclusion**

We don't go and make disciples from guilt or grin and bear it duty. We go and make disciples from Jesus' authority and presence. **Mission is grounded in Jesus' authority and presence.** I've highlighted the biblical motivations and encouragements. Let these ground your gospel conversations.