



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

The King's Commission!

Matthew 28:18-20

Message #80 of 80 – S1121

Sermon given on September 29, 2024



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The King's Commission!

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Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 28**
- Today, we conclude the series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The King's Commission!**
- Matthew's goal with this gospel was to depict Jesus as King.
- He has finished by describing the resurrection of Christ.
- All that is left is for Jesus to give His disciples their marching orders.
- And until we receive new orders from the King, these are our orders also.
- This gospel ends with a promise that ought to be an encouragement as we walk through this dark world.
- Before we get to that let us look at what we call the Great Commission.
- First, Jesus cites His authority to give us commands.
- **Matthew 28:18**
- 'All authority...' is a declaration of the ultimate victory of Christ.
- God the Father has given His Son Christ Jesus the authority to carry out God's perfect will in the world.
- When a police officer is sworn in, he or she is given the authority of the government to uphold the laws of the land.
- There are people who will claim the police do not have authority over them.
- It usually doesn't go well for them, in fact, it usually makes things much worse.
- Similarly, Jesus has all authority over everyone.
- You can claim He has no authority, or ignore His authority, but that does not negate His authority.
- And it will not go well for those who do that – eternally!

- **Matthew 28:19**

- ‘Go...’ in the authority which Christ was given by God the Father.
- Jesus had accomplished something so remarkable that the whole world needs to know about it.
- Up until Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, mankind was lost in their sin with no hope of being right with God (**Ephesians 2:11-13**).

Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹²that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

- If you are a Christ-follower here today, or watching online, this was you.
 - You were far from God but because people have been responding to Christ’s command to go for the last two thousand years, you heard the gospel and were brought near by the blood of Christ.
 - We were created to be loved by God and to glorify Him through that love.
 - Because of sin we were separated from God.
 - The gospel message is not about building a religion – it is about helping people meet their loving Creator God.
 - Jesus died to save the world, and the Great Commission is Him telling us to tell the world about it and to tell them why He did it.
 - ‘...make disciples...’ – A disciple is a follower or learner.
 - Once someone has answered the call to faith in the finished work of Christ, they begin a journey that ultimately leads to answering the call to ‘go and make disciples.’
 - Ultimately, this is a call to take the gospel out to the those who need to hear it.
 - That is most clear in Mark’s rendering of this verse (**Mark 16:15**).
Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.
 - Once saved, we are to prepare to be Christ’s ambassadors (**2 Corinthians 5:20**).
- Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.**
- The word ‘pleading’ is interesting.

- God does not command that we are saved – He pleads.
- That is an expression of God’s love.
- He knows the only way for you to live a life of meaning and fulfilment is as one of His children.
- Jesus is saying to them, ‘What I have done for you – you go, do for others, and keep doing it until everyone on earth is saved.’
- Making disciples entails more than just getting them saved – that is just the beginning of discipleship.
- Verse 20 gives us the primary tool required for discipleship – teaching.
- Does that mean everyone should be involved in teaching and preaching?
- No, James even tells us that not many should be teachers.
- Not everyone is called to be teachers.
- In Ephesians 4:11, Paul says ‘some’ are called to the specific ministry of teaching.
- But then just a little later he says that all are called to do the work of the ministry.
- That means that there are other aspects of sharing and preaching the gospel that do not include teaching.
- In fact everything someone does in service in and to the church is part of the ministry of sharing the gospel.
- There are people watching online right now.
- Even though they are not here in person, they can serve the ministry by praying, or giving financially, or by sharing the video of this service.
- Anything you can do for the Lord, or by extension, for the church is a part of sharing the gospel.
- Even the little things around the church you might do to help us make this space more comfortable or helping with setup – that helps.
- If you are doing it for the Lord, it is a part of sharing the gospel message.
- The word ‘Christian’ ought to describe who we are in Christ.
- Sadly, that term has been co-opted by some who are not like Christ.

- I prefer the term ‘Christ-follower’ now.
- My highest goal in life is to follow Christ and to do my human best to do what He did, including making disciples.
- ‘nations’ – Greek word is ‘ethnos’, from which we get the words ethnic and ethnicity.

Ethnicity: the quality or fact of belonging to a population group or subgroup made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent.

- For us that means that the whole world is our mission field.
- No one is responsible for reaching the whole world for Christ.
- But every person is responsible to go where Christ tells them to go.
- I would challenge you to regularly pray Isaiah’s response to God’s call to send someone to speak for Him (**Isaiah 6:8**).

I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here *am* I! Send me.”

- Don’t worry about where He will send you.
- He will only send you where His grace, mercy, love, and power will keep and guard you.
- ‘...baptizing...’ Baptism follows conversion or salvation.
- Baptism by itself does not result in salvation.
- Baptism is an act of faith for believers.
- But it is a very symbolic act.
- When someone is lowered into the water it symbolizes the death of Christ and the believer dying to their sins and old life.
- When they are raised up out of the water it is a picture of being reborn or born again to the new life in Christ.
- We usually quote Paul (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

- And just as Jesus mentions the Trinity in this verse, we usually use the phrase, “We baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (**Myron Augsburger**)

“Matthew says we are to baptize ‘in the name of...,’ bringing persons into direct relation with God as we know Him: Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.”

- In the last verse we have the ‘how’ of the Great Commission.
- **Matthew 28:20**
- ‘teaching’ – One of the definitions of disciple is learner.

- That means that learning is required for being a disciple.
 - Learning also requires a teacher.
 - While the Holy Spirit does teach us, God made us to receive teaching primarily in community with Spirit-led people.
 - We do that one-on-one, in small-group Bible Studies, here on Sunday morning and many other ways.
 - The more engaged in these kinds of things, the more your faith will grow.
 - ‘...to observe...’ – Has the meaning of conforming one’s actions or practice.
 - A reasonable illustration of this is pressing playdoh into a mold.
 - You have two things; a mold that has a shape that you want to replicate, and the playdoh that is in the shape of a ball or lump.
 - To replicate the shape, the playdoh must be pressed into the mold.
 - The purpose of teaching is to press you into the mold that will conform you to the image of Christ.
 - You start out as shapeless lump of dough.
 - And if you are faithful to allow the Holy Spirit to work, before long you will look like something one of my grandkids made.
 - Little by little, day by day, you will be conformed until more and more of the beauty and majesty and power of who you are in Christ will be revealed.
 - It is a slow, lifelong process of allowing God the Holy Spirit to conform to Christ’s image through the teaching of the Word of God.
 - Through the process of sanctification, we learn to walk, not in our own righteousness, but in the righteousness of Christ (**Philippians 3:9**).
- ...and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith...
- That is the part that the world sees.
 - Nothing proclaims the power of the gospel like a life changed by Christ.

- ‘I am with you always...’ – The disciples were about to embark on the greatest mission in history – they were to take the brand-new gospel message out to a hostile world.
- What an encouragement this promise would be.
- As they faced hypocritical religious leaders, carnal Jews, and pagan kings – Jesus was standing there with them in Spirit.
- As they faced persecution of the most vile and horrific kinds, Jesus was with them.
- As they dealt with loneliness, rejection, fear, abuse, and mocking, Jesus was with them.
- It is unlikely that any of us will have to face even a fraction of what the early apostles and church did, but we will have to stand in the face of uncomfortable things – sometimes impossible things.
- Just as Jesus was with the early disciples, He is with disciples in 2024.
- Jesus is our King, and if our King stands with us, we have nothing to fear.
- If our King stands with us there is nothing we cannot do.
- If our King stands with us there is no weapon formed against us that can prosper.
- And since Jesus said He would – we know He is with us!
- Before we end, let’s take a moment and think about those who were a part of bringing the gospel to you.
- Thank God for them and thank Him for those who played a role in helping you to be a disciple of Christ.
- Let us also take a moment and offer ourselves to God.
- At the same time, we should ask God to reveal to us anything that might be standing in the way of us praying that prayer more boldly.
- And last, let’s pray and ask God to remind us of His promises, especially this one – Jesus is with us!
- Let’s pray!
- **Pray! Last Song!**