

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 4 July 2021

Sermon Title : Living Out the Great Commission

Speaker : Rev John Foo

Text : Matthew 28:18-20

INTRODUCTION

July is our Missions Month and today is Missions Sunday, the day to recognize and pray for missions workers and their mission fields, as well as the various mission fields we are involved in. We are grateful and thankful to God for these missions workers who respond to God's call to serve God in full time capacity, consistently and faithfully even though their journey is never easy. But how should we live our life in such a way as to be open and in the right frame of mind and sensitivity to allow God to use us too in whatever capacity?

Matthew 28:18-20, commonly known as the 'Great Commission' passage, is Christ's departing words to His disciples to, "Go and make disciples". His words are not only for the first disciples but for all of us Christians of all generations.

The Great Commission of our Lord is the greatest plan ever given to men, by the greatest person who ever lived, concerning the greatest power ever revealed and with the greatest promise ever recorded.

- Cru, formally Campus Crusade for Christ

Until now, we are still being called to fulfil this Great Commission in our generation, and this says very clearly the immensity of the task and the challenges it presents.

3 aspects of a life lived in relation to the Great Commission:

- (i) A life that embraces His commission wholeheartedly
- (ii) A life that follows His mandate faithfully
- (iii) A life that believes His promise confidently

1. A life that embraces His commission wholeheartedly

- Christ's word in this Great Commission is not a request but a command. We should listen to His commands because the commands of Jesus flow from the absolute authority and sovereign power Jesus has over everything in heaven and over creation. (v18) It is from this authority that Jesus gives this mandate to the Church to fulfil.
- This also means the responsibility of this Great Commission is placed on every believer who acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord, not only the missions

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

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workers. Only when we embrace the Great Commission personally and wholeheartedly will we begin to be seriously and actively involved in reaching out to the world for Christ. We will be willing to direct our time, talent, effort and resources to carry out the Great Commission. When we all come together to do it as a church, we can be mobilized and organized to spare no effort in ushering people into the Kingdom of God.

- To understand and agree with the Great Commission is one thing but believers must embrace it wholeheartedly so we will re-prioritize our effort and resources. But this can only happen if we truly believe that:
 - salvation is only through Christ, the only name we can call upon to be saved
 - people are lost without Christ

If we truly believe, then this is the clarion call for us to put our belief into action so we can live a life that follows His mandate faithfully.

2. A life that follows His mandate faithfully

(i) go and make disciples... (Matt 28:19a)

- This is a call for action on our part; not about motion from one place to another. The action to take is that for every person that is ushered into the Kingdom of God, we are to intentionally make a disciple out of that person. This is what we are saved for; to make disciples.
- The mandate goes beyond salvation. It is not only for the person to be saved but also to make the person into a disciple after being saved. A disciple is a learner and follower of Christ who obeys His commands and submits to the Lordship of Christ.

Most churches are not very good in making disciples. Somehow, we gravitate towards making 'church goers' rather than making disciples. Ensuring they attend church regularly is easier than making them into disciples who are living out Christ's teachings and commands by denying themselves and taking up their cross daily. This making of disciple should first start with ourselves - are we becoming disciples ourselves?

(ii) baptising them... (Matt 28:19b)

- Baptism is the initiation into the Body of Christ, the church. Making disciples requires us to initiate or assimilate them into the life and fellowship of the church. Disciples must understand the corporate nature of their faith so as to confidently live out their faith in the world. The disciples being incorporated into the church know they are not alone in the faith journey as they can learn from and support each other.

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- The fulfilling of the Great Commission in any locality is provided by this initiation because the church of God is to be a visible representation and witness to Christ. Baptism is an open proclamation of our faith to the world; proclaiming who we belong to and who we are submitting to.
- (iii) **teaching them to obey everything... (Matt 28:20a)**
Not only teaching them the knowledge but teaching them to obey and live out all that they know; what Jesus commands. It is teaching for life change – to live out Christ's commands and truth in their lives instead of just knowing it; to walk the talk.
3. **A life that believes His promise confidently** - Jesus promises to be with us always. (Matt 28:20b)

The tasks of the Great Commission are going to overwhelm us completely if we were to do it on our own, but it is not God's intention we do it alone. It is:

a supernatural undertaking requiring a supernatural empowerment with the supernatural presence of Christ

- When we are faced with challenges and difficult conditions, we are reminded that we have been placed in a tremendous supernatural position of limitless confidence in Christ's presence with us. That is the greatest assurance we can have because this complete confidence is not just in what Christ says but in who Christ truly is – eternal God and Lord of the entire creation!
- The implication of the promise of Christ being with us always means that, in fulfilling the Great Commission, we can have Christ's power, wisdom, strength and courage to do what He asked us to do, no matter how long it takes to get it done.

Perhaps the real challenge we face in fulfilling the Great Commission is not that it will be difficult to bring people to salvation, convince backsliders to return to the Lord or convince people who are totally indifferent to spiritual things. The real challenge is whether each of us is willing to accept the responsibility of the Great Commission mandate and live our life fully committed to the Great Commission ourselves.

CONCLUSION

The Great Commission is Christ's command to all who believe in Him and accept Him as Lord and Saviour. The Great Commission is what every believer is saved for, so, let us live a life that embraces His commission wholeheartedly, follows His mandate faithfully and believes His promise confidently so that by Christ's supernatural power in us, we may go and make disciples of all nations.

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As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting.

A. Review Sermon Content

Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.

Appoint someone to read Matthew 28:18-20 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, ‘This is the Word of the Lord.’

All to respond, “Thanks be to God.” Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now.”

- a. As God's word was read, how have these 3 verses spoken to you?

- (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon “Living Out the Great Commission”?
 - (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

- 2a Why must everyone be responsible for the “Great Commission”?
 - 2b. Which of the 3 aspects of a life lived in relation to the Great Commission do you find challenging?
 - 2c. How has knowing that the Great Commission is not to be done on your own, but it is a supernatural undertaking requiring a supernatural empowerment with the supernatural presence of Christ, impacted you?
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- 3a. (i) What does making disciple mean to you?
 - (i) How have you been intentionally making a disciple out of yourself and others?
 - 3b. What is one challenge you face in making a disciple of yourself or others?
 - 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you overcome 3b above, for the following week(s) till your next meeting?

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C) Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.

- 4) Share your testimony on how you have experienced Christ's supernatural empowerment and presence in carrying out the Great Commission.

OR

Give thanks to God for who He is - the eternal God and Lord of the entire creation, that you can have great confidence in His great promise to you.

5. With a prayer partner, take time to pray for the concerns in 3b and 3c above, bringing before God your concerns and challenges and committing to take responsibility to live out a life related to the Great Commission.

As a group, pray also for the supernatural empowerment of Christ to be upon our church so that we can fulfil His Great Commission locally by bringing more people to openly proclaim our faith to the world; proclaiming who we belong to and who we are submitting to in baptism and initiation into our church family.

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