

Our Mission is the Great Commission

Lesson for Sunday, November 3, 2024

TEXT: Matthew 28:16-20

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Start with our lesson from Baptist history found on page 3.
- ⇒ Today is Friend Day – our 55th Anniversary as a church! Thank you for being here!
- ⇒ We are in the middle of a series called, “Why Are We Baptists?” We are looking into the Bible to see why we believe what we believe.
- ⇒ Today, our topic is our mission, or why we even exist at all. Ask: What are the different reasons that churches exist? *Allow for some discussion...*
- ⇒ Churches do many different good things! But it’s important that we never forget our mission – the reason we exist. And because we are Baptists, we look to our final authority – God’s Word – to discover our mission.
 - That’s a key point of emphasis: We don’t create our mission; it is God-given and clearly outlined in God’s Word.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. His Power (vs. 18)
 - a. Jesus’s opening words let us know that He has total authority.
 - i. This means the right to exercise power.
 - ii. When Jesus became a man and walked upon the earth, He voluntarily restricted His power. He was fully God, yet He was fully human.
 - iii. Now, as He was preparing to return to Heaven, He reclaimed His full authority.
 - b. “All authority” means that Jesus can do anything. If we agree with His claim, it means when Jesus tells us something, that settles it.
 - i. This applies to the church. Jesus is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5) and we are under His authority.
 - ii. This also should apply in the life of every individual Christian, as well.
 - c. If Jesus’s claim to all authority is true, we would be wise to sit up straight, listen to what He says, and obey. If it is false, then it doesn’t really matter what He may say.
2. His Plan (vs. 19-20)
 - a. The Lord Jesus laid out His plan in four simple statements.
 - b. First, we are to go (19a).
 - i. This translates better into English: “as you are going.”
 - ii. This statement is not as much of a command as it is an assumption. Jesus expects us to carry out His command “as you are going” through life.
 - iii. In essence, Jesus really gave us two commands: *come to Him* and then *go for Him*.
 - iv. We ought to be so interested in obeying Jesus’s command that we begin to see every person as an opportunity to share the Good News with them.
 - v. We have to get going!
 - c. Second, we are to make disciples (19).
 - i. The KJV says, “teach all nations,” but the original is the verb *disciple*. We are to make disciples of all the nations.

- ii. We are to witness and win the responsive to Christ. Then we are to help them grow in their new relationship with the Lord. This is a major function of the church – especially Sunday School!
 - d. Third, we are to baptize the new believers (19).
 - i. Conversion is not the end – it is only the beginning!
 - ii. Part of their new walk in Christ is to follow the Lord into the waters of baptism.
 - iii. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward change. (Explain the symbolic nature of baptism briefly.)
 - e. Finally, we are to teach them to observe all things (20a).
 - i. We bring new converts into the fellowship of the local church.
 - ii. As they become faithful, they begin to learn how to grow and mature in their Christian life.
 - iii. Remember, there are no Lone Ranger Christians in the Bible.
- 3. His Presence (vs. 20)
 - a. Finally, Jesus gives us a beautiful promise that He will always be with us.
 - i. This is a reference to the personal presence of Jesus.
 - ii. If you accept His *go*, you can claim His *lo*!
 - iii. Christ can be real in our lives in many various ways, but never is He more real than when we are involved carrying out our commission.
 - b. Matthew closes his Gospel with “Amen.”
 - i. Amen is a word of affirmation. You are saying, “I agree with that.”
 - ii. It’s also a word of acceptance. Matthew is saying, “I accept this assignment.”
 - iii. That is the choice of every local church and every individual Christian. Will we accept our assignment?

APPLICATION:

- ⇒ How can we summarize the mission of our church? Allow for some input...
 - Here is how we can say it: Our mission is to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ and then to a growing, maturing, productive life as a Christian.
 - Or, our mission is the Great Commission.
- ⇒ Take time to briefly summarize the Gospel message for your class (hopefully you will have some friends in attendance).

CONCLUSION:

Sadly, for many churches, we could call this text the Great Omission. Too many churches get involved in trivialities and miss the most important things. We ignore the commission given to us by our Lord. At FBT, we work hard to keep the main thing the main thing.

This outline was taken from the Jerry Vines Study Bible.

BAPTIST HISTORY MINUTE...

When we consider the modern missionary movement among Baptists, it is necessary to remember that our forefathers were forced for years to worship secretly for fear of persecution. While necessary, the long-term effect was that many believers had forgotten the Great Commission. Certainly, they were faithful for personal witnessing, but it seemed impossible to carry the Gospel to the other nations of the world.

As God's people studied the Scriptures, God awakened their hearts to the great need. One group that determined to take the Great Commission seriously was the Northamptonshire Baptist Association in England. At their meeting in 1784, at Nottingham, they resolved to set apart an hour on the first Monday evening of every month for "extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and for the extending of Christ's kingdom in the world."

They met continually from 1787 to 1790. Throughout those years, William Carey presented the importance of missionary work. He found few who sympathized with his cause. However, Carey persisted.

First, he wrote an essay entitled, "An Inquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen." It was printed, circulated and made a profound impact on its readers.

Then, at the May meeting of their Association in 1792, Carey preached a message from Isaiah 54:2-3 that contained two now familiar points:

1. Expect great things from God;
2. Attempt great things for God.

The pastors in that meeting were greatly moved and determined to form a society for "propagating the Gospel among the heathen."

Today we honor William Carey and the pastors of the Northamptonshire Association for their vision of a lost world. Over 200 years later, our mission is the same. Our mission is the Great Commission.

Taken from "This Day in Baptist History."