

August 27, 2014

The Imperative of The Great Commission

Matthew 28:20 (NASB), ***“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”***

Today I realized that a week from now I will most likely be in the midst of packing for our trip to Romania. The excitement of our departure builds each day as we look forward to getting to Romania and sharing the gospel with those who will hear it. We are already praying that God will prepare the hearts of those who we will minister to.

As we enter the month of September it is a very busy time here at Calvary Baptist Church with the mission team leaving next week and with both Eagles Next Preschool and Calvary Baptist School beginning classes this week. All of this ties together because *all* of this is a Great Commission work. Whether it is Angie Roberts and the staff of Eagles Nest Preschool patiently instructing our little preschoolers or whether it's the staff of Calvary Baptist School instructing the students in math, science, reading, and writing. Or whether it be the twelve Romania Mission Team members sharing the gospel faithfully on the streets of Bucharest; all of this is a Great Commission work.

This is what we here at Calvary Baptist Church are commanded to be about. Everything we do should ultimately be with the Great Commission in mind. The central truth of Matthew 28:19 is that this commission that the Lord gives us through the original disciples is not optional. We don't get to pick and choose whether or not we are to ***“Go therefore...”***

Recent events make it seem as if the world is literally falling apart with riots in St. Louis Missouri, the beheading of an American journalist by Islamic terrorists in Syria, the breakout of the deadly Ebola virus in Africa, the continued war in Eastern Ukraine, and on and on it seems to go. The question then on so many people's minds is: What is going on? The answer to this question is tragically simple: we live in a fallen and sinful world and all of the world's problems are a direct result of sin and none of us is innocent. The only remedy for any of this is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. John 14:6 boldly proclaims: “For I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me.”

It is no coincidence then that the last words that Jesus leaves His disciples and us before He ascended into heaven were the words of the Great Commission. Since this is a commission from our Lord and Savior it means that if we consider ourselves to be Christians we are to obey Him and specifically obey His call to evangelize. Far too many Christians though treat this passage at the end of the Gospel of Matthew as if it were “the Great suggestion.”

If we are truly saved and truly redeemed by the blood of Christ then we are not only supposed to ***“go”*** but we are to ***“make disciples of all the nations...”*** In other words we cannot pick and choose who we want to share the gospel with; we are to share it with everyone both here in the Yampa Valley and to every corner of the globe. And it doesn't just stop with a quick sharing of the gospel but it continues as it says in verse 20

of this same chapter with, ***“teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...”*** In other words this is the disciple making process and salvation is not a onetime event in the life of a Christian. Salvation is (or rather should be) an everyday reality for the disciple of Jesus Christ.

The practical application then for Calvary Baptist Church is not just a mission trip to Romania, not just donating to the Lottie Moon offering at Christmas, it's not just donating to the Annie Armstrong offering at Easter. It's not just the spiritual and academic education of children through Eagles Nest Preschool and Calvary Baptist School. While all of these are important they mean absolutely nothing if the clear presentation of the gospel message is not attached to these endeavors. The practical application for us is that every single thing that we do as a church and as individual Christ followers is with the Great Commission in mind. “But pastor that seems a bit extreme! Every single thing?”

It is a bit “extreme” or “radical” or whatever you want to call it but the reality is that we have the message of salvation and there are many who are lost. Yesterday we received word that David Platt the author of the book [Radical: Taking Back Your Faith From The American Dream](#) was appointed as the new president of the International Mission Board. Read what Dr. Platt wrote about the urgency of evangelism: “The price is certainly high for people who don't know Christ and who live in a world where Christians shrink back from self-denying faith and settle into self-indulging faith. While Christians choose to spend their lives fulfilling the American dream instead of giving their lives to proclaiming the kingdom of God, literally billions in need of the Gospel remain in the dark” Let us covenant together here at Calvary Baptist Church to be a people who give our lives to the proclamation of “the kingdom of God.”

As we depart next Thursday for Romania we would like to invite everyone to come to the church at 7:00 a.m. on September 4 to pray with us before we leave for Denver to catch our flight to Europe. We also covet your prayers as we travel and share the radical message of salvation through Jesus Christ. We also covet your prayers for our teachers and staff at both Eagles Nest Preschool and Calvary Baptist School as we begin a new school year