

Topic 30: Mission

Embracing God's Heart for the World

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8



1. When someone brings up the topic of missions what thoughts and ideas come to mind?

Looking at the text

Perhaps you've heard of the Great Commission of Christ. This biblical passage is what gets Christians and churches thinking about the global task of making disciples.



¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

2. When Christ commands us to "make disciples of all nations" what do you think he is saying to you?

All Christians should practice disciple-making. Sadly, many leave it to just the hired professionals. Most of us don't make disciples because we don't discipline ourselves to do it. It is a discipline that brings every disciple closer to the mindset of Christ. Mission and Disciple-making is a spiritual discipline because it does not happen by accident.

In this session, we hope to demonstrate, first, that making disciples of all nations isn't a side venture of the church, it's our reason for being! Second, we want to explore some very practical ways ordinary followers of Jesus can have a worldwide impact, often without leaving their own zip code!

To make disciples, as the Bible commands, we must actively seek out opportunities to share the gospel (**Mark 16:15**), baptize new believers, and teach them how to obey everything that Jesus commanded (**Matt. 28:19-20**).

If our goal is to become more like Christ, then we ought to participate in his mission. Jesus said that he came "to seek and to save the lost" (**Luke 19:10**). When Jesus recruited the disciples, he said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (**Matt. 4:19**). And after his death and resurrection, he commissioned us to "make disciples of all nations" (**Matt. 28:19**).

Disciple-making is a cornerstone of the church. In **Acts 5:42**, we read, "Every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus." Sharing **the gospel** and teaching others how to follow Jesus was a daily discipline.

The New Testament Greek word commonly translated "nation" is *ethnos* (Matthew 28:19). This is the word from which we get our English word "ethnic." That's the idea – a distinct ethnic group, people, or race.

We tend to think of nations as political entities or geographical areas marked by lines on a map. But God, in his Word, always focuses on groups that share a common affinity and self-identity – cultural background and language.

After God created the world (Genesis 1-2) and humankind sinned (Genesis 3-9), we see the rise of nations. These distinct peoples – with divine help – begin to spread out across the earth (Genesis 10-11).



Then, in Genesis 12, we see God choose one man and give him great promises:

"The lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you'" (Genesis 12:1-3).

3. What reason does God give for blessing Abram (later called Abraham)?
