

Go and Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19-20 New American Standard Bible

¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Introduction

How did you become a Christian? Did someone invite you to church? Or, did Jesus appear in your dream? (Wonderful!) Or, you just one day, decided yourself to walk into the church and the rest is history? Whatever ways God has called you to be His child, whatever ways you have become Christ's disciple, this morning, we are going to talk about the importance of sharing the gospel with others so that they too may become Christ's disciples.

Content

Every January, I designate the new year to be the year of a certain theme. For instance, 2020 was the year of “Walking with Jesus.” We indeed walked with Him last year and hope that we will continue walking with Jesus every day. This year, our motto is to “Go and Make Disciples.” Of course, it comes from the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20.

Some of you may wonder what the Great Commission is all about. It is a Christ's command for us to keep. So important that we call it the Great Commission. Let me explain to you. After Jesus was risen from the dead, He stayed with His disciples for the next forty days performing many miracles. Then, one day, in front of His disciples, He was ascended into Heaven. As He was carried up into Heaven, He gave them this last commandment: *¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* In a nutshell, Christ commands us to Go, make disciples, baptize, and teach them to keep Jesus' commands. This commandment we call the Great Commission.

Since then, for the next two millennia, Christ's disciples took the gospel message to all the nations in the world, beginning in Jerusalem first, Judah and Samaria next, then, to the Roman Empire, Europe, America, Africa, and Asia.

The Church of Christ went out to the world and made countless people Christ's disciples, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey Jesus' commands. Today, out of 7.5 billion people in the world, over 4 billion people are believers in Christ. Praise God! However,

we still have a long way to go. Many more people and nations need to hear the name of Jesus and His salvation. E.g. One missionary went to a village in India. He met a native man there, asking if he knew Jesus. The man answered, “No, sir, there is no one in my village with that name.”

That’s where we come in. In the 21st century, Jesus still calls us to go out to the world with the gospel, not to stay in the church. One of the church’s weaknesses today is that we forget that the Great Commission is for us too. Let’s be honest. We don’t go out. We stay in and invite people into the church building, rather than going out to them. We have become so bad in ‘going out to the world’ that whenever we hear the word ‘evangelism’ or ‘outreach,’ either we exclude ourselves from ‘going out’ (that is, *it’s not for me*) or understand ‘outreach’ as some type of charity works, not disciple making.

Listen again. This Great Commission is never meant to be just charity work. It is about making disciples who in turn keep Christ’s commands. The Great Commission is not just for a few chosen ones, either. Neither is it for the missionaries or pastors only. It is for every believer in Christ: old and young, male and female. It is for you, it is for me, and, yes, for our congregation, too.

Therefore, I urge everyone who listens to my sermon today, to take up this Great Commission as your goal for this new year so as to reach out to the world, to the family, and to friends.

With that in your mind, I am presenting to you the following three action points.

First, **adopt a nation**. It is unlikely for us to physically go abroad with the gospel. However, we can still go there in our spirit. We can still work together with God through our prayers. So, this is how we will do. Adopt one nation whose initial shares your last name’s initial. For instance, for me “Choi,” I can choose one of the countries such as “Chile,” “China,” or “Croatia.” Someone whose last name begins with “D” can choose “Denmark” and so forth. You get the idea.

Once you picked your nation, start praying for that nation daily. What do you pray for? Very simple. Ask the Lord to open the doors for the gospel. Ask the Lord to raise the workers of gospel and send them into that nation. Pray that the Lord would open the hearts of the people in the country so that, when they listen to the gospel, they would receive Christ into their hearts. Pray for the missionaries and the native believers alike so that they may continue sharing the message with courage and wisdom. Believe me, your prayers are the most needed and effective means to reach out to the people with the gospel. E.g. In God’s eyes, your daily intercession arrives in Heaven like bright spots on the earth.

Next, **adopt one family member** for the sake of the gospel. We all have one or two individuals in the family who need Jesus in their lives. Adopt them and start crying out to

the Lord on their behalf. Now, think of the way you have become a believer in Christ. How did you become a Christian? At some point of your life, somebody reached out to you and introduced you to Christ, right? E.g. In my case, it was my brother who invited me to church one Sunday. That was it. That was the watershed moment in my life. I am forever grateful to my brother for his invitation. Likewise, we all are indebted to someone for our salvation: either our parents, siblings, or friends. To them, we are grateful, because they shared the gospel with us.

Likewise, don't you think someone in your family is waiting for you to come and share the great news of salvation? So, this is how we do. First, we go to God in prayer with their names. Let's say, "Tom" is my adopted member in the family. I would lift him up in my daily prayer. I would ask God to open up Tom's heart so that he would be attentive to the gospel message which I share. I would also ask the Lord to grant me the right words to share the gospel with him in the ways that Tom would be receptive. Then, I would go to Tom in the name of the Lord and share the gospel in love and in conviction. Please remember that you may be the only one in the world who cares about eternal destiny of your non-believing family members. E.g. The rich man pleaded with Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers so that they would not end up in the place of torment (Luke 16:28).

Finally, **adopt one friend**. Same idea as your family member. Pray to the Lord that He would help you with the right words of invitation for your friend. Ask God to open up your friend's heart so that they would be receptive to your message.

Question for you. Do you have a best friend? If you do, does he or she know Christ? If they do, praise God for that, and find a friend who doesn't know Christ. Choose that friend, pray for that friend, go and share the gospel. E.g. In my high school days, my best friend was a Christian and president of his youth group. I was not a believer. At school, we were best buddies. We talked about many other things but the gospel. He never invited me to his church or youth group. Nor did he ever share the gospel with me. Not a single word about Jesus. Not even once. After I became a Christian, do you know what bothered me the most? This best friend of mine never said a word about Christianity in all those days. I said to myself, "How can you claim to be my best friend when you don't share with me the best gift ever?"

You see, folks, we need to shake off the misconception that religion or faith is a taboo subject to talk about with our loved ones, family or friends. Think this way, instead. Some folks out there, if they don't hear this great news of salvation from you, will never hear the gospel message. Or, by the grace of God, when they become a believer, they may have the same question and disappointment with you like I had with my best friend in high school.

Conclusion

Imagine this: it will be a great honor and glory for someone to believe in Jesus through our message. Indeed, it will be a glorious day when we all stand together before God with our loved ones who came to know Christ because of our prayers and invitations.

For the sake of eternal life together in Christ, let us go and make disciples! Throughout this year! Amen.