

The Church

Part 3 – “The Mission”

Matthew 28:16-20:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Mark 16:15

“Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

Mission is the specific task a person or group seeks to accomplish. If purpose answers the question “What is the church for?” then mission answers the question, “What is the church to do?” Mission as a noun does not exist in the Bible. However it becomes clear as the biblical narrative advances that God does have a mission for his people.

God is a missionary God. That is, God is actively engaged in a specific mission. He not only defines the mission, He sets the parameters of success and sovereignly ensures the mission’s success.

- *Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3)*

- *he says:*

*“It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to bring back the preserved of Israel;
I will make you as a light for the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (Isaiah 49:6)*

“Mission exists because worship doesn’t.”

- John Piper from Let the Nations Be Glad

The church is sent into the world to proclaim the gospel and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

1. The mission of the church is grounded in the authority of Jesus.

“*All authority* in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

- It is only after Jesus pronounces his authority that he gives the disciples their mission. Notice the connection Jesus makes – “...go *therefore* and make disciples...” “Therefore” connects the commission with the previous statement. Jesus draws a direct connection between his authority and the church’s mission to make disciples.

Jesus' authority forms the rationale for mission.

Jesus' lordship, his authority forms the basic rationale for the mission; that the world might recognize and give glory to the One who alone is Lord over all.

2. The mission of the church involves God distributing his people around the world.

“Go therefore...”

- Our being sent into the world begins in the very place where God has planted us. Let us avoid the error of believing that to be fruitful in the community in which the Lord has planted us is somehow “inward focused.”

3. The mission of the church is God's chosen means to gather in the elect from all nations.

“...make disciples *of all nations*.”

- Making disciples is not a separate task from evangelism. To make disciples is not the enemy of evangelism.

4. The mission of the church is accomplished through ordinary means of grace.

“...*baptizing* them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *teaching* them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

- The church does not need the spectacular in order to fulfill the mission. The Lord has given to his church ordinary means for the making of disciples. Chief among these ordinary means are:
 - a) Baptizing

 - b) Teaching

5. The mission of the church is carried out in the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And behold, *I am with you always*, to the end of the age.”

- How is Jesus *with* us?

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you” (**John 16:7**).

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you” (**John 14:15-17**).