



THEOLOGY OF MISSION

"The church exists by mission as fire exists by burning."

– Emil Brunner

I believe that a Christian is by very nature someone who is sent. When Jesus communicates the Great Commission, he sends us into the world with the most relevant message ever entrusted to humans.

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, 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

This passage serves as a summary of our purpose as believers. *"All authority in heaven and on earth..."* is a reminder that it is all about Jesus. It is through Jesus that we find salvation from the eternal consequences of sin. Authority has not been placed anywhere else. Authority does not reside in our job or our career. Authority does not reside in governments or charismatic leaders. Authority does not reside in science or technology. All authority rests in Him. It is the center of the message and every message. This is good news and must be shared!

"Therefore..." since this news is so great and so important *"go make disciples."* The Church makes disciples. It does not say converts, fans, or friends. It does say, disciples. Making a disciple is a slower, more in-depth process that results in a growing follower of Christ. A convert can be made in an instant, but a disciple takes time.

"Go make disciples of ALL NATIONS," implies God's intention to save the entire world and chooses to use us in that process. *"All Nations"* means our next-door neighbor as well as our neighbors across the globe. It means God's salvation is a universal message that transcends boundaries, culture, language, custom, race, and nationality. It means that the family of God is a cornucopia of wonder. It means we have a lot of work to do!



THEOLOGY OF MISSION CONTINUED...

“Baptizing them in the name of Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit” serves as a reminder of the seal that God has placed upon our lives before we even have the opportunity or choice to respond.

“Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Jesus taught a way of life that reflects a connection to God. We are to imitate Him and teach His timeless truths to all. During His short ministry, He taught the twelve and now leaves in their hands the responsibility to pass it on. Not merely because He commands it, but because it is a relevant message and a relevant lifestyle with eternal ramifications. It also lends to a better life here and now.

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Though we are called to participate in the dissemination of this good news of salvation from sin, Jesus promises that He will be with us always. We do not minister alone or in our own power. We rely on the power of Christ through the Holy Spirit. The second part, “to the very end of the age” serves not only as a qualifier of the length Jesus would be with His apostles but extends beyond the first century to the 21st Century and beyond.

This Gospel serves as the purpose of my ministry as well as my understanding of the church and her missions. This great commission forms the mission of our missions. I do not think it is a coincidence that the majority of the New Testament is made up of letters. Letters by their very nature are meant for sending. They may be carried halfway around the world or merely to the mailbox next door. Through our mission work, we embody this message in both word and deed. We help others, not because it is a good thing or the right thing, but because through our way of life, we share the saving presence of Christ with a broken world and hurting people. In our changing world, letters have given way to email and tweets. The mode of communication may change and evolve, but the message stays the same. Jesus saves!