

2009-2010 WORLD MISSIONS SERMON OUTLINE

A NEW BREED OF GREAT COMMISSION CHRISTIANS

Doug Clay

TEXT

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 28:19-20).

INTRODUCTION

- A. I love missions conventions and I love faith promise Sundays because of what it does for the church, both personally and collectively.

Some Christians, and sadly some churches, view missions as “optional” — kind of like heated seats in the newer, more expensive autos. I’ve heard some Christians say, “Well, I can be involved in missions if I choose to or when I choose to.” That’s a myth!

If you are a follower of Christ, then you are obligated to share the good news of Jesus to your generation.

I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile (Romans 1:14-16).

- B. I am praying and believing that God will raise up a new breed of Great Commission Christians.

- C. What is the Great Commission?

Shortly after Jesus’ resurrection, He made arrangements to meet His disciples on top of the Galilean mountain. It was to be the last address and teaching time that Jesus would have with His team. Here’s what He said:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “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).

Those words were the capstone of His three and a half years of ministry. He makes this powerful claim, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (verse 18).*

But then He makes a transitional/connective shift — I’m giving it to you.

It’s as if Christ is saying, “Okay, you go, you present your generation everything I have taught, lived and died for. You do it.”

And they did. Those words ignited a passion within the hearts of the disciples that would cause them to suffer persecution and martyrdom. But it also caused them to turn the world upside down. Within 30 years of the Ascension, the gospel spread from Jerusalem to the Indian subcontinent on the east and to Spain on the west. Within four centuries, the term “Roman Empire” would be replaced by “Christendom.”

You see, this commission wasn’t just an afterthought ... it was the culmination of God’s plan for man. It was a look into God’s eternal playbook for humanity ... it was the game plan for God to fulfill His desire ... *“That whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).*

So, when someone, especially a Christian, says — “Being involved in missions is not for me,” I sincerely question his or her relationship with God.

D. So, how do we fulfill the Great Commission? How can we get involved?

The Bible give four methods to fulfill the Great Commission.

1. Praying

“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:38).

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 18:19).

Many times missionaries say they can feel the prayers of people and churches.

2. Going

How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them (Romans 10:14)?

If you have never had the opportunity to go on a short-term missions trip, I would encourage you to do so.

3. Living

“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

4. Giving

And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news” (Romans 10:15)!

“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

E. Giving is part of fulfilling the Great Commission. Today, I want to focus specifically on faith promise giving.

F. But before we look at the value of participating in faith promise ... I want to call to your remembrance the biblical ways of giving.

1. Tithes

A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord (Leviticus 27:30).

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made (1 Corinthians 16:2).

“Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, ‘How do we rob you?’ In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it” (Malachi 3:8-10).

2. Offerings

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).

We should respond to the needs around us or to meeting needs involving the work of the Kingdom.

3. Faith promise

And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news" (Romans 10:15)!

The faith promise is the primary channel through which we fund missionaries who are fulfilling the Great Commission to places where we are not able to go.

What is a faith promise?

A faith promise is a sacred agreement between you and God, to be a conduit through which God can channel resources to fulfill the Great Commission.

Faith = Your willingness to be the conduit

Promise = Recognizing that God will honor your faith, that you will release what He provides

It's not calculated giving ... it's faith giving. It's not what you think you can do ... it's what you believe God wants to do through you.

Now, I'm going to assume that you believe in missions, know the need, and feel the urgency. Therefore, I want to focus in on the faith promise principle. Why do we use this principle and why do we feel every believer should be involved?

- I. Faith promise participation produces a blessing for you and your family.
 - A. God's blessing is upon faith promise participation ... because there's nothing in it for ourselves.

"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).

- B. Christ did not say there is no joy in receiving ... but He did say that there is more happiness, more benefit and more blessing in giving.

A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed (Proverbs 11:25).

- C. Refreshed. I am thoroughly convinced that there is a strong correlation between God's blessing on our lives and our living in obedience to Scripture.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless (Psalm 84:11).

The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him (Proverbs 20:7).

- II. Faith promise participation provides the appropriate means for missionaries.
 - A. The sole support and livelihood of our missionaries comes from people like you.
 - B. It is not unspiritual to admit that money is essential to the missionary's ministry.

Here's what goes into a missionary budget ...

- 1. Personal allowance
- 2. Housing allowance
- 3. Other related allowances
 - (a) Foreign taxes
 - (b) Medical expenses
 - (c) Special insurances
- 4. Unique overseas costs
 - (a) Anticipation of cost of living for four years
 - (b) Children's schooling
 - (c) Transportation

And this is just to get there. On top of this, they have to raise a work/ministry budget ... that's why all aspects of missions giving is so important.

- III. Faith promise participation is a proven way in which the whole world can hear about Jesus.

Fact: There is enough money in the hands of evangelical Christians at any given time to evangelize the whole world.

Fact: Not every AG church and Christian participates in missions. In fact, nearly 50 percent of churches in our Fellowship did not give anything to missions last year.

How then will the whole world hear about Jesus? The answer is for every believer to be involved in faith promise giving. Not only should believers give out of the funds they control, but they should also pray that the resources of this world beyond their control would be loosed for the cause of Christ.

You can make this happen by letting God stretch your faith through the sacred act of a faith promise.

You may never go, but you can give.

CONCLUSION

As we approach faith promise participation

A. Money talks ... so let's use it to proclaim the message of Christ.

I've seen money do bad things to people. It holds them hostage, it breaks up marriages, it has financed enterprises and entertainment venues that are destroying family values. I say it's time for the Church to take the god of this world (money) and begin to lift up Christ and allow His Kingdom to be expanded like never before.

You see, money is only a resource, but God is the source. I'm serious! When you understand this principle, it will revolutionize your life.

The god of this world (money) may have you living in fear, living in bondage, trapped and overwhelmed. But I'm here to remind you today that our security is not the Federal Reserve System, Social Security or the housing market.

It's not in your pension plan or in your 401 (k) ... but it is in a living God who sits on the throne of this world and my life and promises that He will meet my needs according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19).

Did you see the sun come up this morning? If so, then you know that God is still in the throne.

I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread (Psalm 37:25).

B. Faith works ... so let's exercise it.

1. Sad but true, many Christians do not exercise their faith. Their faith is a theory. Look, the Bible says that faith without works is dead.

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do (James 2:17-18).

2. James says, in effect, "Prove your faith by what you do."

God will always give more *through* you than He will give *to* you.

C. Time doesn't wait ... so let's respond as best as we can.

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