

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

John 20:19-23

Lesson #70

The Great Commission

04/23/2017

John Wesley

"You have one business on earth –
to save souls."

John Piper

"Missions is not the ultimate goal
of the church. Worship is.
Missions exists because worship
doesn't."

What is the Mission of the Great Commission?

1

Matthew 28

"18 . . . All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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 observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Mark 16

"15 And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.' 16 He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

Luke 24

"46 and He said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.'

John 20:21

"Jesus therefore said to them again, 'Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'"

2

The Apostles never repeat Jesus' Great Commission as it appears in the Gospels.

While living it out, they teach an expanded expression of it as in Eph.4 and Rom.12.

Ephesians 4

"8 Therefore it says, 'When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men.' . . . 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

3

**One of God's principle tools in
bringing people to faith in Christ
is a church that is bringing people
to maturity in Christ.**

John 17:21

"that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent me."

4

Romans 12

Paul's Great Commission

vs 14-21

"light
& salt"

vs 9-13

vs 1a

1.
Grace of
God deeply
sensed

vs 1b-2

2.
Cross of
Christ willingly
carried

vs 3-5

3.
Body of
Christ rightly
discerned

vs 6-8

4.
Gifts of the
Spirit properly
used



6.
Response to the
world graciously
given

5.
Love for the
brethren
openly shown

5

Another of God's principle tools in bringing people to faith in Christ is in how people respond to the circumstances of life.

Matthew 5:16

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

6



Tim Keller

"When the world sees us doing evangelism, they just see us recruiting. When they see us doing justice, they see God's glory."

7

The Great Commission (Five neglected facts)

1. **World evangelism is not sited in any of the Epistles as the purpose of the church.**
2. **"Go" (literally "as you are going")**
3. **The goal is to build a community of mature disciples.**
4. **The Baptism in the Holy Spirit with gifts for ministry is necessary to do it.**
5. **Apostolic authority to set the boundaries of saving faith is found in the Epistles.**

8

The context of John 20:19-23

John 20

¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, 'I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'"

Interpretive Paraphrase

"Jesus tells Mary - "Don't place your hope in me as you have known me in the flesh. I soon will ascend to the Father and He will send my Spirit to be in you, giving you a new hope that is more secure and intimate. Go tell my people that I am going to the Father as I had promised.""

9

John 20

²¹ Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²² And when He had said this, He breathed {on them}, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

Observations

1. **The disciples are "sent".** Note that they did not go until after Pentecost.
2. **They are sent in the same way that Jesus was sent.** Note that Jesus' life style is the model for mission and ministry.
3. **They are to experience and express a ministry of peace.** Not anxiety, fear, or compulsion.

10

John 20

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Two different understandings

1. **The permanent indwelling and sealing that marks all believers as Christians.**
2. **A prophetic proclamation of what would take place at Pentecost.**

The official anointing (filling) of the Apostles for their role of binding and loosing.

11

John 20

"21 Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed {on them}, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

Observations

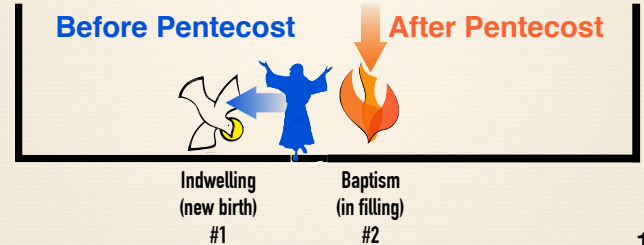
1. The Apostles of the N.T. are given the authority to define the boundaries of the Gospel's blessings.
2. The Epistles of the N.T. define for us the perimeters of the Gospel's blessing as well as the object and nature of saving faith.

12

John 20

"21 Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed {on them}, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

Does this text indicate two comings of the Spirit?



13

Why do many believe that the Spirit came to indwell before Pentecost?

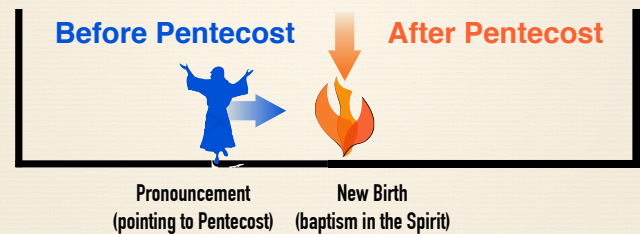
- ✓ The blending of O.T. and N.T. dispensations. All believers (including O.T. saints) were "born again" by the indwelling of the Spirit upon justifying faith.
- ✓ Some Christians have a dramatic infilling experience of the Spirit subsequent to "new birth". This two stage experience with the Spirit is associated with the "Pentecostal / Charismatic movement".
 - ➔ This dramatic "filling" of the Spirit (subsequent to regenerating faith) has come to be equated with the "baptism" of the Spirit. This teaching can be traced back to early American revivalism.
 - ➔ John 20:22 speaks of the "indwelling" while Acts 2 speaks of the "baptism / filling" of the Spirit.

14

John 20

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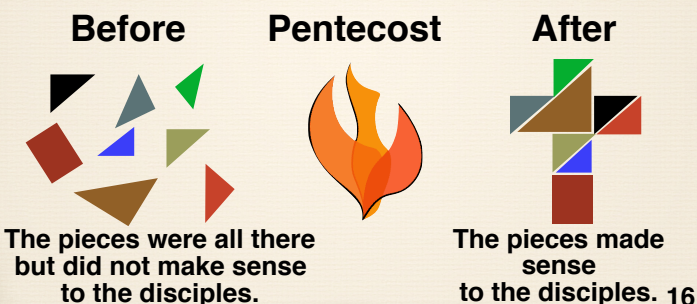
Does this text refer to Pentecost



15

John 14:26

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."



Before Pentecost

The disciples were commanded to bring the Gospel to the world.
They were told to "receive the Spirit".
They were told to "forgive and retain" sin.



After Pentecost

They started to do it.
They received this promise.
They exercised this authority.

17

Luke 24

“47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

Observations

1. **Proclaiming the Gospel and Authority to define the perimeters of the Gospel go together.**
2. **They both come (with the Spirit) at Pentecost.**

18

A clarifying text

Acts 11

“15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them (Acts 11:44-46), just as He did upon us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ 17 If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” “And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”

19

Romans 8:9

“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him.”

1 Corinthians 12:13

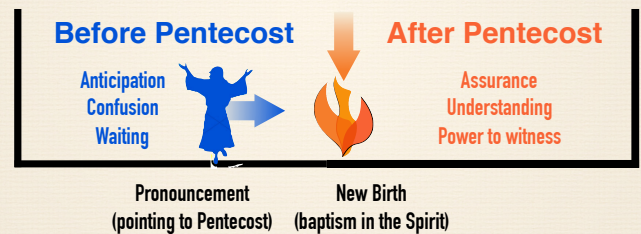
“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

20

John 16:7

“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”

Does this text refer to Pentecost



21

John 14

“17. . . the Spirit of truth . . . He abides with you and will be in you.”
19 After a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me because I live, you will live also.”

John 7:39

“But this he spoke of the Spirit, whom these who believed in him were to receive; for the spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

22

Acts 1

“4 And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Acts 2:33

“Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured forth this which you both see and hear.”

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Why do many believe that the Spirit did not come until Pentecost?

- ✓ Jesus had to go to the Father first. Jn.7:39, 14:26, 16:7, Acts 1:4, 2:33
- ✓ The disciples were to wait for the Spirit before they went to the world with the Gospel. Acts 1:4, 2:33
- ✓ The disciples did not seem to understand the significance of the Cross and Resurrection until after Pentecost. Acts 1:4, 2:33
- ✓ John 20:21-23 is best understood as a prophetic word.
- ✓ The N.T. writers do not speak of two comings of the Spirit.
- ✓ The N.T. Epistles assume all believers have the Spirit. There is no teaching of two comings. 1 Cor.12:13

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What about the charismatic experience?

1 Corinthians 12

"4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

The Apostles teach us that Christians have differing gifts, ministries, effects, and maturity levels.

Pentecost included a "filling" with the Spirit - a gift that always resulted in prophetic utterance. This was distinct from the Baptism with the Spirit and not experienced by everyone.

The Apostles do not teach or suggest that there are two classes of Christians - non charismatic and charismatic.

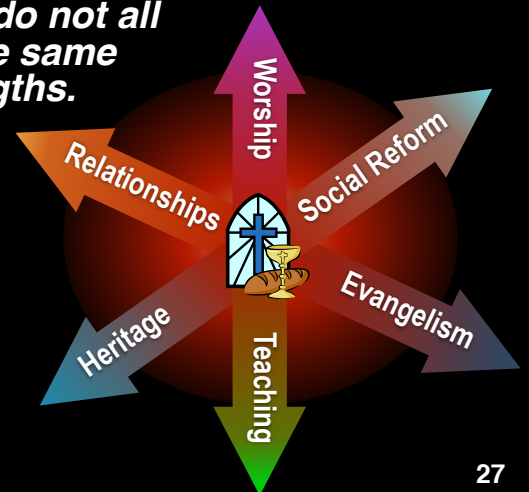
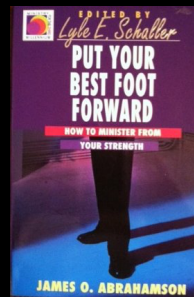
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Lessons

1. The Great Commission has a role for every "born again" believer. **Answer the call.**
2. We are to have a world church mindset **as we work, travel, relate, bear witness.**
3. The mission is to bring people to maturity in Christ. **Evangelism is but one part.**
4. We are each fully equipped for an unique role. **Put your best foot forward without losing your balance or kicking your neighbor.**
5. The full meaning of the Gospel is revealed in the Apostles teaching (the Epistles of the N.T.).

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Like Christians, churches do not all have the same strengths.



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