

The Mission of the Kingdom

Matthew 28-16-20

We are in the middle of great changes. We are in the middle of financial reversals, political transition, cultural war and theological downgrade. In the midst of all this mess, we are also in the middle of something grand and great and glorious. We are in the middle of the stream of redemptive history – of the great mission that God is on to call a redeemed people out of every tongue, tribe, nation and people group to glorify Himself through magnifying Christ. That is what we are all about.

We are a Commissional Church. This is our identity from Christ. We are a people gathered as a community, in exile from our homeland yet living as ambassadors and witnesses in a hostile land among unholy people.

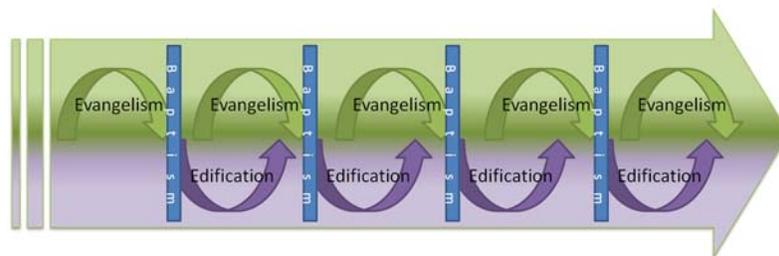
We are becoming a Commissional Church. This is our transformation in ministry. We are going to become who we are. We do this as believers individually - transformation is the living out the new person we have already become. So we do this as a church – we begin living out the commissional community God has told us we really are.

We are together here as a missional community fulfilling our commissional mandate. That is, we are making disciples of all nations by evangelizing the lost and edifying the saved.

This is not a circle.



It is an arrow.



This is who we are. Now we will become who God says we are.

By God's Grace and through His Word
we will cultivate in the hearts of God's people
a passion for the supremacy
of the Lord Jesus Christ
magnified in love for Him
manifested in love for one another
and *multiplied by love for the lost*.

Since the church exists for one purpose, that is to bring glorious worship to God, what is the church's task today?

Well, the last kingdom text in Matthew brings us to the forward trajectory of the God's great and glorious kingdom. How will it grow and expand? How will heaven's citizens living in exile in a foreign land advance the cause of the King?

The Preeminence of the King (v.18)

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Its Location

The setting is intended to show the preeminence of the king...

The Geographical Location

MAGNIFIES HIS KINGLY POSITION, being the last of the mountains in Matthew.

Satan takes Jesus into a mountain to show Him all the kingdoms of the world, offering them to Him in exchange for worship (Matthew 4:8).

Jesus ascends into the mountain to give, not receive, the principles or law of the New Covenant Kingdom (Matthew 5:1; 8:1).

Jesus is transfigured on the mountain so that He shone with His Divine glory. He is the glorious fulfillment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) whose ministries pointed to Christ (Matthew 17:1-13).

Jesus sits down again on the Mount of Olives and outlines the future unfolding of the Kingdom. This involves the coming judgment of the Jews and Jerusalem and the events around His second coming (Matthew 24).

Jesus and his disciples go out to the Mount of Olives where He is arrested in the final act of betrayal by Judas and rejection by the Jews (Matthew 26:30).

Jesus meets His disciples on the mountain to assign them their mission and to ascend to His Father (Matthew 28:16-20).

The Doubting Hesitancy

Molds His authoritative proclamation, meeting the needs of the members of the kingdom...

He gives then an assignment...

He gives them an assurance...

The Impending Ascension

Motivates His urgent persuasion, guaranteeing the expansion of the kingdom...

Its Description

Expression - All authority given...

Jesus is locating Himself under the King...

He rules over a kingdom that has been given to Him...

Jesus is locating Himself once again from the Old Testament...

Daniel 7:13-14 ¹³ "I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.

¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Daniel 12:1-3 ¹ "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. ² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

Jesus is locating us in the unfolding of the Kingdom...

This has been the central message of Matthew's writing of his book.

Scope - In heaven and earth

Its Implications

He is ruling and reigning over His people. We are now in the Kingdom of Christ.

Entrance into the kingdom involves submission to the King. It is not as much a matter of us accepting Him as His accepting us. When we are accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6 & Romans 15:7) then we receive Him (John 1:12-13) in the new birth.

He has, once and for all, received all the authority so that He is superimposed above all creation.



therefore: Since the King is preeminent, there are ...

- ❖ Orders to us - we must go
- ❖ Orders to nations - they must repent
- ❖ Glory to Christ - let all the nations be glad

The Program of the King

(v.19-20a)

¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

That kingdom in this age is a spiritual one whose expansion is the sweeping of the elect into the kingdom by the discipling of the nations.

How do you extend the kingdom? How we answer that question determines what our agenda for the church will be.

How the Kingdom is Expanded

Its Participation

go

The sense here is that all Christians are to be involved. We may have a people group who live right next door. We have to go out because they generally will not come in.

Notice that the N.T. church in the book of Acts had to be continually pushed out of its comfort zone by persecution and pressure.

Its Interaction

make disciples

This is not just “win souls”. It is not easy believism. The sense is that of bringing into a knowing relation that involves discipleship.

Not a self-contained command - involves what follows.

How the Kingdom is Established

Its Incorporation

baptizing

The concept of Union and Communion as expressed in an outward ordinance.

The N.T. church carries this out as observed by Acts.

The Trinitarian formula here places the Doctrine of the Trinity at the core of Christian belief and union.

Its Instruction

teaching

Involves a didactic process in communicating both *what* Jesus taught and *how* it is to be lived out.

So our aim is to bring all the nations (people groups) into the kingdom in such a way that they worship and obey the King.

So being commissional is about kingdom living – living in such a way that we are participating in the expansion and the establishment if the kingdom.

Now, we have to think for a moment in a counterpoint. Given our human and sometimes sinful tendency to get it wrong, how is the kingdom not established?

- Not through the personal sword...
- Not through moral legislation...
- Not through cultural infiltration...

But through gospel transformation that:

- Gathers people in the Kingdom...
- Grows people in the Kingdom...
- Glorifies God in the Kingdom...

The Promise of the King

(v.20b)

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Its Attention

It is important to the mission itself.

Its Explanation

He is present in the Kingdom till the end of this age.

He promises His continued presence with the members of the kingdom till the end of the age.

Reflect and Respond

- The mission of the church is related to Christ as King. Evangelism is a Kingdom issue. Therefore we must preach the gospel in such a way that men and women are brought to the Lord of the Universe who through His Son has provided the only way of reconciliation.
- Evangelism is not designed to solve people's psychological, health, social or financial problems.
- Evangelism is to point people to their sin problem and separation from God and His great salvation.
- Evangelism is not merely people *making a decision for Christ* but *making people disciples of Christ*. It is not merely an initial profession, but a profession which begins a process. Walking through the narrow gate does put us on a narrow road.
- The mission of the church is both a vertical and a horizontal Union and Communion.
- Faithfulness to the King's Commission will mean baptizing believers. It is a great joy when people will profess union with Christ and communion with His people by asking for and receiving baptism.
- Fruitfulness in the King's Commission will mean teaching believers. It will seek to grow believers who are all different places in their growth: milk to meat, new to old, immature to mature.

In conclusion, I want you to start connecting this text and our missional thinking to the reality of our church community. Our Elder's retreat was mostly centered on thinking about connecting the *principles* of being missional to our *practices*. We thought, talked, prayed and have begun the hard work of being missional in our services. The first point of change is to use the term "gatherings" as a way to refer to our services, worship and flocks.

So God's kingdom will be expanded and will be established. This is not a vain or vague hope. It is grounded in the power and promises of God.

Let His kingdom come...

