



river west church

Ordinarily Missional

Matthew 28:16-20

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Some of the most of the important events that happened in the Bible took place on mountaintops. Moses met with God on a mountain, Elijah called fire down on Mount Carmel, Elisha saw God's army of flaming chariots on a Samaritan mountain and Abraham hiked a mountain in Moriah to sacrifice his son Isaac and was met with a ram in a thorn bush. Time and time again, throughout scripture, we see God doing and saying extraordinary things on mountaintops. In the New Testament, we see this theme continued as Jesus called and appointed His disciples on top of a mountain (Mark 3:13). Jesus hiked mountains to get alone with His father and pray—He was transfigured on a mountain—Jesus saved His most important sermons and teachings for mountaintops—And now, in Matthew 28:16-20, we once again see Jesus telling His disciples to hike a mountain in Galilee.

To be honest, most people I meet with as a pastor feel unqualified and unfit to hike up this mountain in Matthew 28. For many of us, the Great Commission feels like the Mount Everest of the New Testament. In fact, I'd venture to say that most sermons we hear on the Great Commission do not leave us feeling great about our everyday lives. Instead they leave us feeling like we fall miserably short of Christ's mission to our world. After all, how do ordinary folks who aren't in positions of vocational ministry, embrace Christ's mission to, "*make disciples of all the nations...*" (Matt 28:9)? Today, we'll open God's Word to discover how disciples of Jesus Christ can be **ordinarily missional** in all they do.

Problem: Mountaintop Christianity

One of the greatest enemies of God's mission in our world is what I like to call "Mountaintop Christianity". In "Mountaintop Christianity", **sacred things**—like my belief in the Gospel and the God of scripture—are kept separate from **secular things**—like making breakfast, going to work, raising kids, shopping and paying taxes. Folks wrapped up in this worldview go to church on Sunday to have a "mountaintop experience" with Jesus, write checks to "God's missionaries", and then go about business as usual in the "real world". The problem with this type of thinking is that it compartmentalizes Christian faith. Nothing is more tragic in our world today than when followers of Christ compartmentalize their faith. When belief in the Gospel is divorced from our everyday lives, two inevitable things happen: *First*, Christians expect men and women in "full-time ministry" to fulfill the Great Commission. *Second*, non-Christians witness people who behave like the Gospel is irrelevant to their ordinary lives.

Solution: Ordinarily Missional Disciples

As someone who loves nothing more than encouraging and equipping God's people for Christ's mission, the phrase "Go therefore" in the Great Commission is precious to me. I've preached entire sermons on these two words. However, just recently I noticed something in this passage that I've overlooked in years past. The main verb in the Great Commission is not "Go"—It's "*make disciples*". In fact "Go", "baptizing" and "teaching" are words that modify Jesus' command to "make disciples." A better way to translate this verse would be "*As you go*" or "*In your going*" make disciples. The point that Jesus was making here was that we are to "*make disciples*" as we go about our everyday lives.

How Do We Do This?

By becoming ordinarily missional disciples.

Ordinarily missional disciples integrate the truth of the Gospel into every aspect of their lives—their thinking, worshipping, eating, speaking, working, parenting, praying, finances, friendships and marriages. In other words, ordinarily missional disciples want the Gospel to rule every area of their lives **SO THAT** the Gospel can win in the lives of others. Paul appeals for this kind of lifestyle when he wrote, *“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col 3:17)*. What would happen if you began to re-imagine *“whatever you do”* through the lens of the Gospel? What would happen if you began to see your workplace as a place where our triune God is at work? What would happen if you began to think of parenting as a full-time ministry position? What would change in your life if you began to evaluate the way you spend your time and money in light of Christ’s mission? As we integrate the Gospel into our ordinary lives, God will do extraordinary things in our world!