



river west church

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:16-20

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4.11.2010

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)

Over the next several weeks we are going to spend time looking at the last paragraph of Matthew’s gospel. Christians for centuries have referred to it as the Great Commission, and the phrase is appropriate, for Jesus does commission His disciples to do something great. The charge of Jesus to His church is to disciple the nations; to take the life-transforming message of the Gospel to every nation, every people and every neighborhood.

This morning we are going to start at the very beginning and ask the question, “What is a disciple?” It’s an important question for two reasons. The first and most obvious is that the commission is given to disciples. In other words, it is disciples who are called to make disciples. In Jesus’ plan for the world, “It takes one to make one”. You are never going to contribute significantly to a mission that is not deeply at work in your own heart and life. Second, a “disciple” is the end goal, the product if you will, of Jesus’ commission. He articulates the mission to His followers not in terms of the means, “preach the gospel”, but of the end, to “make disciples”. That being said, the people of Jesus should always have with them a very clear understanding of what a disciple of Jesus is, and what a disciple of Jesus does.

Below, we have left some space for you to take notes this morning and to reflect throughout this week. Included are some questions to get you thinking and a list of passages for further exploration.

What is a disciple of Jesus?

In what ways do I need to be growing as a disciple?

Passages for further exploration: Matthew 10:24-25; Luke 24:36-49; Luke 14:25-35; Luke 9:57-62; John 8:31; Acts 6:1-7