

J.J.

PARTNERS IN CHRIST
Matthew 28:18-20

INTRODUCTION :

A pastor was preaching on going to heaven. He said, "How many of you would like to go to heaven today?" And everybody raised their hands except this little boy. So he tried again, "How many of you would like to go to heaven?" Again, everyone raised their hands except this little fellow. So the pastor said to the little boy, "Son, don't you want to go to heaven?" The little boy said, "Yeah, but someday, I thought you meant today."

Matthew 28: 18Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Pray

(Show illustration) Some Christians are living in silos. And they live their Christian life living separate from their other lives. Parent, student, friend and etc.

But the truth is when the Lord saved us, our being followers of Him should pervade every part of our life... you're not just a parent...you are a Christian parent. You are not just an employee...you are a Christian employee and etc.

I read this from Chuck Swindoll : paraphrased

It is my opinion that the best evangelistic center in Boston is not a church but a mechanic's shop in Arlington and operated by a man named Bob who caught the vision early in his life that his vocation (business, work) and his calling as a Christian are one. As time passed, his station became known as the place to go for new tires and other car services. Cars line up bumper to bumper just to be served by Bob. He has no banners, "Jesus Saves" or no "ichtuses" ..No sign in the window that says, "Bring your car to Bob and take your soul to Jesus" He simply did his job! He did it well and people knew he was in partnership with the Lord. He led dozens of people to faith in Jesus Christ.

We are called to be partners in Christ

Matthew 28: 18Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations

Some people call it the Great Commission, I call it The Great Partnership

I. THE POWER OF CHRIST'S COMMISSION

- We have been given full power and authority by Christ to do His work
all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore GO

Remember, this was the church in embryo during that time... The disciples were scared. They were timid and etc...but our Lord is saying... **don't worry... all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me...**

For example : You have a new boss... or there's a new leader... what is the first thing you are anticipating...**HIS FIRST INSTRUCTION.**

Remember, this is the resurrected Jesus Christ, OUR LORD! That's why we call Him Lord... and what is His first commandment...this is not an option...it's a commandment... **Therefore GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES.**

Now what is also our Lord saying... don't worry...do my great commission because you have all my authority and power to do it.

Now let me share you this...what is this power???

Matthew 11: 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

SHOW PHOTO : That yoke is an agricultural symbol of two ox pulling. It means Christ is pulling with you. That's the reason why He says, my yoke is easy because He's pulling the yoke with you but you get to enjoy the partnership with Him, the fellowship with Him and etc. The greatest pleasure you can ever have is when you know you are **WALKING AND WORKING WITH THE LORD.** **There's no such thing as working FOR the Lord..IT'S ALWAYS GOING TO BE WORKING WITH THE LORD.**

Now, this is what you should be doing.

Therefore, go....

In short, he's giving us the authority to go!

In short, NOTHING CAN STOP YOU....

Illustration: Wala yan sa lolo ko....

My lolo is so strong that a tricycle almost ran over him but he stopped it with his bare hands. "Wala yan sa lolo ko, My lolo is so strong that a jeepney almost ran over him that he stopped it with his bare hands... "Ah both of your lolos are weaklings" My lolo was in the North Expressway and there was this truck who was speeding at 150 km per hour and he was able to stop it...Huh really? How did he do that? It's because my lolo is a policeman.

Brothers and sisters, the policeman doesn't have any power by himself but when he wears the uniform, all the authority of the government is backing him up.

THAT'S OUR POWER AND AUTHORITY AS CHRISTIANS! OUR LORD IS BACKING US UP.

This is the reason why our Lord said to Peter.

Matthew 16: 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

In short, when we are fulfilling the Great Commission, you are going in the offensive and no one can stop you. You are the one charging against the gates of hell and saving people.

But look at this too...

19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In short, our Lord has given in our hands the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Do you want people to go to heaven? GOD HAS GIVEN YOU THE KEYS... YOU JUST NEED TO MAKE SURE YOU ARE USING THESE KEYS...YOU MIGHT NOT SEE...BUT YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER, WHEN YOU SHARE GOD'S WORD...LOOK AT WHAT HAPPENS.

What is the key? THE GOOD NEWS! GOD'S WORD!!!

Romans 10 : 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

14 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? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

AND THERE IS POWER IN GOD'S WORD.

Isaiah 55:11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

HOW DO WE UNLEASH GOD'S WORD.

- When we invite people to church, all the powers of heaven is backing us up.
- When we open up our homes to Bible study.
- When we give to missions, all the authority in heaven is there, God is the one who will provide for it.

Illustration: A painter was asked to paint a dying church. It was expected that he would paint a small and humble congregation in a dilapidated building. Instead, he painted a stately building with all the amenities and magnificent architecture and near the door, there was an offering box, marked “Missions”, with the contribution slot blocked by cobwebs.

- **When we actually share the Gospel and teach people.**

Illustration : We have a member in church, we call her Ate Nitz, when there is someone new, I can see her eyes light up...it's like saying...Hmm...new prospect for the Lord... and she invites that person for a meal in their home.

- **Or when we are directly discipling others** and teaching them how to disciple others.
- **Or when we are going to missions**, whether full-time or even summer

When we do all these things...WE ARE USING THE KEYS!!!

II. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMMISSION

Therefore go...go do what???? *and make disciples* (matheteuo)

As Christians, we are not called to make converts...we are called to make disciples...mathetheuo learner

Illustration : William Barclay told of this story about someone asking a great scholar regarding a young man. He said, “So and so tells me that he was one of your students.” The teacher answered devastatingly, “He may have attended my lectures but he was not one of my students.”

Quote: It is one of the supreme handicaps of the Church that in the Church there are so many distant followers of Jesus and so few real disciples – William Barclay

What is a disciple?

Luke 14: 25 *Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

Do you see this? *great multitudes went with Him*

In our modern society, that's great, because the measure of success nowadays in church is how many people attend the church.

But look at the Lord. He was looking more than the numbers of people following Him. **He was looking at who is really following Him. Are they really a disciple?**

So who is a disciple? One who prioritized the Lord above anything or anyone else.

26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Great Illustration : I am reading this book called "Back to Jerusalem" and how God is now using the Christians in China to reach out to Hindus, Buddhists and even Muslims. In one of the stories there, the writer saw that when offering time came, and the offering basket was passed around, some of the men did not have any money but what they do is they stand on the offering basket symbolizing, "I don't have money to give but I give my entire life to Jesus Christ."

Show photo : Now, am I saying that you should give up your careers to go full time missionaries...if that is your calling yes...but someone who is a disciple, has Jesus at the centre of his/her life. Our life before : Self at the Center... Our life now : Jesus at the center.

So when the Lord said to make disciples...we are to make followers of Christ... People who put Jesus at the center of their lives.

1. **The scope :** *of all nations* (ethnos)

Etymology : ethnos "people group" people with the same culture, traditions and etc.

Illustration : I was new here in Canada and still trying to imbibe the culture and realized that there are so many people from other countries in this land. So one time, I have an officemate who is white but his last name is Mladjenovic. It doesn't sound like the usual English name, so I asked the question, "Where are you from?" He said, "I'm here from Canada." And then I said, "What country are you from?" And he said, "Canada." But since he is a nice person he said, "You meant to ask, what's my ethnicity?" And then he told me that his parents are Ukrainian.

What our Lord is saying, reach out to people of all kinds of culture and traditions.

For example in the Philippines, we might be one country but we've got different kinds of people. Ilocano, Kapampangan, Ilonggo... or in the States, they are Americans, but you've got New Yorkers, Texans, Californians and etc.

1 Timothy 2: 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3: 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

III. THE PLAN OF CHRIST'S COMMISSION

*19b-20a baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*

1. By identification with God

"baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Explain : Baptism “outward manifestation of an inward reality” It’s declaring to the world, I am now identifying myself with Christ. It’s a personal decision.

Illustration : The Noranian When I started pastoring a church, somebody introduced me to this lady and her name is Baby. But immediately she said, she is a “Noranian”. To be honest, I readily believe her because her ways and how she cuts her hair is like Nora Aunor. And then she immediately talked about Nora, how she loves Nora and how she has a collection of all Nora paraphernalia. And when she talks about Nora, you could really feel her love for Nora.

In short, we are to make sure they are identified with the one and only triune God – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Acts 11:26 So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Etymology : Christians “Christianos” followers of Christ

***Nowadays There is such a thing as a cultural or religious Christians and authentic Christians. What's the difference?**

Cultural Christians are the ones who follow Christianity simply because they are following the traditions of their families or their society or the people around them. **Authentic Christians are simply the ones who truly follow Christ.... Again someone who prioritizes Christ (Which are you?)**

The challenge is to produce authentic Christians. How?

2. By obedience through God's Word

"and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Illustration : When Manny Pacquiao became a Christian, one of the first things I’ve heard him say is that the Bible is life’s manual. It means if we want to know how to follow Christ, then we need to read, learn, memorize and obey God’s Word.

Quote : Discipleship is anything that causes what is believed in the heart to have demonstrable consequences in our daily life. – Eugene Peterson

You know that He is truly a follower of Christ because you can see the change in his life.

IV. THE PROMISE BEHIND CHRIST'S COMMISSION

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

People are trying to find peace and happiness through different means... money, yoga, meditation, pleasures, travel and etc... that's why a lot of people are discontented, envious, miserable... when God has a simple answer... you can find all of this in me..
IN MY PRESENCE..

Psalm 16: 11 You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

How DO you know you are in God's presence? WHEN YOU ARE DOING THE PURPOSE HE GAVE YOU... THE GREAT COMMANDMENT AND THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Remember again, what we discussed earlier?

Matthew 11: 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Illustration : Life of Dr. David Livingstone (doctor, who gave his life to share the Gospel in Africa, It is said that when he was found dead, he was kneeling down with an open Bible in Matthew 28, pointing to the word, "Surely, I am with you to the very end of the age" and there he wrote, "Truly the words of a gentleman"

CONCLUSION :

Now you have to remember, this commission was given to the disciples.

Matthew 28: 16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

Now in order for you to make disciples, you must be a disciple yourself.

Now I want to share something special with you.

This was given to me by Ptr.Sieg Pudel, some of you might know him. He is an urban missionary who loves the Lord and gave his life for Christ. We usually meet for coffee or dinner. One time, I invited him for coffee and then when he came, there was something wrong with his eye...it was an artificial eye. He had cancer there and they had to take this out. That was the last time I met him because the next news I heard about him is he already went home to the Lord.

But in our last meeting, he shared me this which he found somewhere and I really loved it and somehow touched a spiritual nerve in me and I asked him to send a copy to me.

This copy is in my corkboard in my home office to remind me... if you want a copy after this, please tell Joi or Roland and I'll send a pdf.

It's called Out-of-Control Disciple. (If the people from our powerpoint can follow while I read this)

"I once was a control junkie, but now am an Out-of-Control Disciple. I've given up my control to God. I trust and obey the Spirit. I've jumped off the fence. I've stepped over the line. I've pulled out all the stops. There's no turning back, looking around, slowing down, backing away, letting up, or shutting up. I am not here to please the dominant culture. I live to please my Lord and Savior. My spiritual taste buds have graduated from fizz to froth to Fire and Ice. Don't give me that old-time religion. Don't give me that new-time religion. Give me that all-time religion that's as hard as rock and as soft as snow.

I've stopped trying to make life work, and started trying to make life sing... I no longer live by and for anything but everything God-breathed, Christ-centered, and Spirit-driven...

My fundamental identity is as a disciple of Jesus -but even more, as a disciple of Jesus who lives in Christ, who doesn't walk through history simply 'in his steps,' but seeks to travel more deeply IN HIS SPIRIT. Until he comes again or calls me home, you can find me filling not killing time, so that one day he will pick me out in the lineup of the ages as one of his own. And then it will be worth it all to hear these words, the most precious words I can ever hear: 'Well done, thou good and faithful, Out-of-Control Disciple.'"

Again, Ptr.Sieg went home to the Lord after this and I'm sure those are the words he heard from our Lord when he met Him face to face. I pray that's the same with me and with you.

"Go and make disciples, Out-of-Control Disciple"

S.G.D.