

Make Disciples of All the Nations

Sermon - January 15, 2023

Scripture readings: John 1:29-42 and Matthew 28:16-20

Golden verse: 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. Matthew 28:19

In the last three years, I planned to teach you and equip you with how to invite others to follow Jesus. Significant creative prayer, time and energy of mine went into this message.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, right before He ascended into heaven, gave this last commandment to his disciples and to the church: “Make disciples of all the nations”. We call this the Great Commission, and this gives all of us a great responsibility while we live on this earth.

Around this commandment, I hear many complaints and excuses. People are saying that, today, in our society, when the younger generation is so far from God, parents and grandparents have a hard time to talk to them about God and to invite them to the church.

In our multicultural society, it is difficult to confess believing in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only living, loving and reigning God in heaven and earth.

I have to let you know that it never was easy for Christians to confess that they loved, trusted and followed Jesus Christ. In Christ’s time, the Roman Empire was a strict regime worshipping the Emperor as god. They did not like that people were saying that Jesus was the only son of God, causing any problems. Jesus commissioned his disciples to talk about the new life, to conquer sinful nature, and to be fruitful. And, for this, in Rome, early Christians were crucified, assassinated and dropped amongst hungry lions. Their commission was challenging.

It is never a good time to talk about Jesus Christ, but we have to find and designate the time to share the good news about our Lord with our children, grandchildren, relatives, friends, neighbours, and strangers. If we will not invite them to Jesus, maybe they will not have other opportunities to get the invitation. How would you feel in heaven if those, whom you love, would not be there with you?

God will ask me, you, and all of us at the judgment throne if we fulfilled this commandment. How would you feel if God would say to you that your children won’t be in heaven because you missed inviting them to trust the Lord? How would you feel, if your children and grandchildren would blame you from the other side that, although you were a Christian, you did not share with them your faith, and this is why they did not make it to heaven? When I am thinking about this, I am getting goosebumps.

What should we tell them when we would like to invite them to Jesus?

To “make disciples” means to teach and train people to know our Lord Jesus Christ, who He is, what He did and does for us and obey Christ completely. The mission is to make people radical followers of Jesus. Therefore, making disciples is the central mission of the church, and has to be the central responsibility of you and me.

You may ask, why is it so important to make disciples? ‘Making disciples’ is important? Making disciples is important because this is how we can save those whom we love, those who do not know Him yet, and it is our responsibility not only to feed our children and care for their food, clothes and housing but to also save their spirit in order to have them with us in heaven. We have to inform them about the true-life about Eternity in heaven, and about the risk of neglecting Jesus.

How are we to make disciples? “Going”, “baptizing”, and “teaching”. By baptizing them and teaching them all that Jesus commanded.

As Christians, we share our lives with others. People around us are watching us how we make decisions, how we interact with different people, and they observe our prayer and actions. With those whom we care, we should pray for them, we should study the Bible together with them, we can invite them for a coffee or tea, and we can invite them to our homes or to the church to play games together, to watch a movie together, or to go on an excursion together.

Disciple-making is investing in the life of another with the intent of both getting to know Christ better and follow Him carefully.

These days, many Christians are attached to their smartphones and feel insecure about sharing parts of their lives with others. However, making disciples is about sharing our whole lives with others.

If people share their problems with us, we can help in teaching what Jesus said in a similar situation.

It is not enough to inform them about Jesus, but we have to have an impact on their personal lives. This is what making disciples is about. It is much more than just to come to the church once a week. Our goal has to be to transform their lives.

Often, we don’t know how to start, what to say or what to do, but remember that the Great Commission is enabled by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We have to make our part, and God will make His part. We have to act as ambassadors for Christ. When Jesus said, “Go into all nations”, He meant that disciple-making efforts should not become limited. If somebody has another religion, we still have to have the courage to tell them how good our Jesus Christ

is, what He did for me. From there, it is their decision on how they take that message.

“Go”; it means GO, and share the message, spread the love of God.

I know that, for this mission, we need God’s help. Jesus knows that. Jesus promised that He will be with us always. This is not just a future hope but a present reality. During every risky step of sharing the Gospel, in every uncomfortable moment, Jesus is with us. His promise can overcome our weakness. In this mission work, you are never alone!

Jesus is not asking us to do the impossible. To make disciples is something that you can do with His promise and with the power of the Holy Spirit. Make disciples where you are, with those whom you meet, with those whom you work. Be creative, wise and passionate as you witness for Jesus through your life and words. Jesus will bless you and your efforts. Amen