



Why We Do It
Matthew 28:18-20
May 17, 2020

While many people think it is wonderful that NorthWest is supporting people to proclaim Jesus in other parts of the world, others may not be comfortable with it. But the decision to support missionaries is not based on an opinion. There is a strong basis for it in Jesus' final words. Let's notice four aspects of Jesus' final instructions.

Jesus has all authority in the universe (Matthew 28:18). His resurrection declares his identity as the Son of God (Romans 1:4). He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16). His instructions cannot be ignored. None of us has more authority than him to decide what the church should be doing.

His basic commandment is to make disciples (Matthew 28:19). Baptism in his name and teaching people to obey his commandments are necessary aspects of making disciples. Though Jesus was speaking specifically to his apostles, it is still his will and desire that people become his disciples. Today, the church should work together to follow his instruction. By faithfully showing and telling Jesus' death, resurrection, and identity, others will recognize his authority, submit to him, be baptized in his name and put his teachings into practice.

The scope of our responsibility is "all nations" (Matthew 28:19). This is in contrast to his previous commission to go "to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matthew 10:6). The wording of Jesus' final commission varies in the different accounts, but there is a common emphasis on it being to the whole world (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47;

Acts 1:8). One reason for this is that Jesus is the only way to God (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Jesus promises to be with us on this mission (Matthew 28:20). His Spirit guides and empowers this work (Mark 16:17-20; Luke 24:49; John 20:21-22; Acts 1:4-5, 8). His mission is daunting and sometimes dangerous, but we have his presence and power to work with him in it.

We can act on Jesus' final, authoritative commission by:

1. Giving to support our missionaries. All money given to NW from now through May 19 will go to missions.
2. Pray for the workers, for more workers (Matthew 9:35-38), and for our missions team that oversees, equips, supports, and encourages those on the field.
3. Since San Antonio is increasingly cosmopolitan (i.e., "all nations" have now come to us), we can also act on Jesus' words right here by making sure we don't screen out people of other nations, races, ethnicities, or any other kind of difference for that matter. God's people have often made the mistake of thinking God blessed them because they were superior in some way instead of so that they would pass along the blessing to others (cf. Genesis 12:1-3). God's manifold wisdom is revealed through the diversity of the church (Ephesians 3:7-11).
4. Help others find God. The virus and quarantine present an especially good opportunity to show and tell the gospel through prayer, godly living, and healthy conversation (Colossians 4:2-6).

After wearing a crown of thorns, Jesus was raised from the dead and given many crowns (Revelation 19:12). If we sacrifice our lives for him and the gospel (Mark 8:35), we too will receive a crown of life (1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12).