

Matthew 28:16-20—The Great Commission Revisited

I. Identity—you are a disciple of Jesus; but what does that mean?

- a. If Jesus' claims are true, you cannot truly understand who you are apart from Jesus;
Colossians 1:15-20
- b. ...in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—we have a distinct identity in the Tri-une God—one important aspect of the Trinity is that it shows God is inherently relational; and our being His image-bearers, we are too. Our identity is in Christ, but also shaped by our relationships with God's people (the church)
- c. ...*of all nations*— our identity is also connected to our *global* community of faith

II. Purpose—to participate in helping others find their true identity as Jesus' disciples

- a. A disciple is more than a convert or casual church-goer; it is a person who tries to learn from emulate their 'teacher'
- b. God meets us in our doubts and weaknesses and still invites us into a life of mission
- c. His authority—the work is about trusting in Jesus and pointing people to Jesus → we need to be willing to step in faith
- d. God invites us and challenges us to go beyond our comfort zones →
 - i. Go (not stay)
 - ii. All nations (c.f. *Acts 1:8*)—people different than us; A healthy balanced Christian/church cares about evangelistic mission
 - iii. Participle—can be translated *as you go...* not just a future plan but a continuous mission in the present.
- e. Teaching them to obey... we are called into a new life; but to

III. Belonging

- a. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- b. A new disciple is brought into the community of faith; baptism is the 'rite of passage' into the church.
- c. Obedience to Jesus' commands includes our treating each other as brothers/sisters—our interaction with one another should be distinct in the world; a person should be truly loved and cared for despite their appearance, background, or past reputation; we don't show favoritism
- d. You become part of something that is so much bigger than you; you are united to believers

IV. So what?

- a. Are you participating in the Great Commission?
- b. Do you see your identity, purpose, and community of belonging in light of the Great Commission?
- c. What would it take to make the first two questions a 'yes'?
- d. Identity isn't just to be discovered individually based on feelings/desires, but in community with a focus of purpose bigger than self (c.f. *Matt. 16:25*)