

The Ambassadors | Declaring the Good News in Challenging Times

Aug 6 | The World - The Command, Conflict, and the Call

1) The Command--Why should we as a church care about taking the Gospel to other nations or people groups?

Isn't it enough that we focus on our neighborhoods, our workplaces, and our families? Why should we go, when there are other Christians possibly closer and better able to reach the unreached people groups?

The Gospel is not just for the people in our city. We serve the God of the nations, who is worthy of worship in every single nation. But those nations are currently devoting their lives and families in pursuit of false religion that in the end will destroy their souls. We serve a global God, and if we have hearts that go hard after God of the nations, we will have hearts that go hard after the nations, especially those that are untouched. So what is the command that we must deal with?

Matthew 28:16-20 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw Him they worshiped Him, but some doubted. 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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

A few things to notice from this passage:

1. *The simplicity of the command.* Go and make disciples of all nations. What do you want us to do, Jesus? Go. Ok, go and do what? Make disciples. Ok, where do we go? All the nations.
2. *The doubters of the command.* Note that some doubted the whole thing. Jesus was there before them, and they had touched him and eaten with him, but some still doubted. Have you ever thought about the fact that Jesus is commissioning doubters as the first Christian missionaries ever? That should encourage us. You are not disqualified from taking the gospel to an unreached people group because you experience some doubt. You should not ask whether you are good enough. You are not. Ask whether God is calling you.
3. *The basis for the command.* Every bit of authority to give this command rests in the person of Jesus. There is no other authority being appealed to. Jesus doesn't give any qualifications.
4. *The comfort in the command.* "I am with you always, to the end of the age." Notice that He doesn't attempt to comfort us with anything other than His presence

As one missionary put it: When you read this command, you shouldn't be asking whether it is your duty to go to the unreached, but whether you dare stay here.

Have you been thinking of the Great Commission as an option to be considered vs. a command to be obeyed? Why?

Have you felt disqualified? Fearful? Which # above encourages you?

2) The Conflict—Don't we need to focus on local mission vs. international mission? Isn't one the enemy of the other?

Global Mission is not the enemy of local mission. There should be a seamless tapestry between from our neighborhoods to the nations. Global mission ignites local mission and vice-versa.

Local mission work supports international missions

- A thriving, God-centered, Bible-saturated local church that is on-mission at home will serve as a model for churches started in untouched areas.
- Local churches serve as a base for raising resources and people to send the gospel to untouched areas. Missionaries are not made in a vacuum. They grow in maturity in the context of Christian community in a local church, which is where they develop their ideas on how a Biblical church should operate.
- A church solely focused on local missions is selling God short. It misses the fact that there are entire nations who should be giving glory to Jesus, but instead are walking in darkness. God is being robbed of His glory, and we are doing nothing.

International mission work supports local missions

- Hearing of gospel advances in the hard places serves to excite and encourage the local church and authenticate the power of the gospel.
- Learning about the work of Christ in unreached people groups allows the local church to see outside of itself and experience a bit of what it will be like in the age to come.

How do we live in the tension of local vs. global? Be shaped by the Word. The Bible balances itself. When we are Bible saturated, our heart begins to beat in unison with God.

**What are your conflicts or obstacles to making disciples of all nations?
What story about international missions has inspired you toward local mission?
or the other way around?**

3) The Call—How can we practically be involved in reaching the untouched peoples of the world right here and right now?

1. Search out ways to befriend internationals here in Richmond.
2. Begin learning about Central Asia: the current events, the people groups, the geography, the needs, the languages.
3. Increase giving to global missions. What if we began looking at our money as a tool to defeat the advances of Satan and bring gospel penetration in the hardest to reach places? 2 Cor. 8.
4. Pray for specific people groups (see <http://unreachedoftheday.org/>). Pray for Central Asia, quite possibly the darkest region on the planet.
5. Encourage your community to adopt a specific people group to focus on and pray for.
6. Ask God whether He is leading you to go.
7. Raise your family to obey the Great Commission, teaching your kids about those who have given their lives to take the gospel to the unreached.

**Which of these practical considerations is calling you to consider?
Who will you tell for accountability?**