

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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GREAT LESSONS FROM THE GREAT COMMISSION

Larry R. Ping II

Matthew records, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt. 28:18-20). Would you consider these great lessons from this great commission?

1) CHRIST IS IN POSSESSION OF ALL AUTHORITY. Since He has all of it, we have none it. To do things in Christ’s name is to do something by his authority. For instance, Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). As well, “Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6). Paul commanded “And whatsoever

ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col. 3:17).

May we always bow to authority of Jesus, and learn not to do things on our own!

2) TO COMPLY WE MUST GO. This part of the great commission is generic in nature. We could walk, we could run, we could take a boat, we could fly or take a train. In order for the Gospel to be taught, we must go. Are you? Am I?

3) WE MUST BE WILLING TO TEACH ALL. We must not pick and choose who we teach. We must be as the parable of the sower and sow the seed on all soils (Matt. 13:1-8). We must not have respect of persons when it comes to imparting the Gospel, as James warns about (James 2:1-4). We must feel the same burden as did Paul when he wrote, “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me

is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also” (Rom. 1:14-15). Teach to all who will listen!

4) WE MUST BAPTIZE FOLKS. This, as observed earlier, is to be done by the authority of Christ. In Mark’s account the Lord said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mk. 16:16). Peter simply and clearly said, “baptism doth also now save us” (I Pet. 3:21). Saul was asked, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is necessary for salvation from sins. We must obey this command, and we must teach it to others.

5) NEW CHRISTIANS MUST BE TAUGHT HOW TO LIVE AS A CHILD OF GOD. The first two words of Matthew 28:20 are “teaching them.” Who are the them? These folks are new converts who need to be helped to provide a

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foundation upon which to stand. We cannot afford to only help people *become* Christians, but to also help them *behave* as Christians. The Bible makes it clear children of God must be always growing. Peter mentioned, *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”* (I Pet. 2:2). Later he said, *“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen”* (II Pet. 3:18). It was also Peter’s pen which instructed, *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (II Pet. 1:5-8). If we fail to help construct a solid foundation for new children of God, then the storms of life will cause great damage (Matt. 7:24-27).

6) WE MUST TEACH WHAT JESUS HAS COMMANDED. Nothing more and nothing less. Some feel they should only read and obey the red-letters in the Bible. Paul clears up this fallacy when writing, *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord”* (I Cor. 14:37). Others feel they can pick and choose which commands of the Lord they keep. Jesus cleared this up by saying, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments”* (Jn. 14:15). Yet others feel they can alter, add to, or take away from the words of the Lord. Again, Jesus uttered, *“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book”* (Rev. 22:18-19). We must

simply teach God’s Word. Are we doing this?

7) WE MUST REMEMBER JESUS WILL BE WITH US ALWAYS. That is, as long as we are with Him. The apostle beautifully penned, *“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen”* (II Tim. 4:16-18). May we count ourselves among the most fortunate on earth, as we have the Lord on our side! *“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us”* (Rom. 8:31).

May we continue to carry out this most wonderful of commissions!

FIRST CITY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm