

INTRODUCTION:

As we conclude our 2020 Vision Series today, let's look back at what we have learned so far. First, we discussed that disciples of Christ (Christians) do three things which are ABIDE, CONNECT, and SHARE. In order to ABIDE, we must have our God Time which is our personal time devoted to study and prayer. Remember, you cannot abide without God Time, and God deserves not your leftover scraps of time, but instead your FIRST AND BEST. If you do not have a reading and prayer plan, see me and I will help you find one. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Make God Time a part of EVERY DAY!

Disciples of Christ also CONNECT with the Body of Christ, or the church each week. We do this in two ways, through our Gather Time and our Group Time. Gather Time is what we are doing right now. It is a time when we worship together, pray together, encounter Christ together, and observe ordinances together such as we will do later with the Lord's Supper. This is our time of worship together as the Body of Christ.

Group Time is where we connect more closely with God and each other by meeting, as the name implies, in a small group. These groups feature more intimacy and accountability than our corporate gatherings and are important. These are where relationships are developed, and needs are made known.

Last week we talked about Give Time, which is when we use the time, talent, and resources that God has given us to benefit His Kingdom. This is time, money, and effort spent serving others. We learned that it is essential to give ourselves with love, give ourselves to prayer, give sacrificially, and be good stewards of the gifts and grace that God has given us and use them to benefit others. We must understand that if we are to *live* for Christ, we must *give* for Christ.

Today, we will conclude with Go Time. Of all the components of the life of a disciple of Christ, this one has gone

the most wrong in the past couple of centuries. We have managed in the church to professionalize the ministry. We became convinced that the only ones that the “Go” applies to is professional missionaries whom we gladly support while sitting in our padded pews. After all, missionaries go to places like the Congo, right? The church has come to believe that making disciples is “the preacher’s job.” After all, they went to college for this, right? I’m going to let you all in on a not-so-well kept secret: It’s the job of the preacher to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. And that is what we are doing here today!

MAIN TEXT (Matthew 28:16-20)

BACKGROUND

Matthew, as you all probably know, was a tax collector who decided to follow Christ. He was a Jew and was largely writing to a Jewish audience to convince people that Jesus is the Messiah who had been foretold in hundreds of years of prophecy. When we arrive at our passage for today, Christ has already been crucified, buried, risen from the dead, and showed himself alive to 500 disciples over 40 days. After all this, just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He spoke the words that we know as the Great Commission. Today we will see from this passage that **GO TIME IS NOT AN OPTION, WE ARE COMMANDED TO GO IN HIS POWER, and WE ARE TO GO WITH HIS PRESENCE.**

PASSAGE OUTLINE:

1. **GO TIME IS NOT AN OPTION (28:19-20) 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 everything I have commanded you.** Robbie Symons has identified four reasons why we don’t go.
 - a. **Ignorance:** We don’t know that Go Time is our time. We think it’s for the professionals who receive some supernatural call. If you look at verse

16, you see that in fact, Jesus was talking to the 11. These were fishermen, a tax collector, a Zealot, and we don't know the rest. Working joes.

- b. **Insecurity**: This is because our fear of man outweighs our fear of God. We're scared that someone will think we're weird and reject us. It's not us they reject, it's Christ!
- c. **Indifference**: Lack of love for God and fellow man. Remember that Give Time required love of God and others. So does telling someone that you don't want them to go to hell!
- d. **Inconvenience**: Too busy with self. We are too focused on our own pursuits to take the time for others.
- e. There are no exception clauses in the Great Commission. We don't get to opt out because of being too busy, tired, or uninterested.
- f. (2 Cor. 5:18-20) Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and **has given us** the ministry of reconciliation. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed the message of reconciliation **to us**. Therefore, **we** are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal **through us**. **We** plead on Christ's behalf: "Be reconciled to God."
 - i. We must desire to see others reconciled to God.
- g. The ultimate fuel of Go Time is love of God and love of others.
- h. (Spurgeon) "If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our

exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for.”

- i. We’ve said that Go Time is not optional, but we must note that we are commanded to Go in His power.
2. **GO IN HIS POWER (28:18) Then Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”** This is what precedes the “Go, therefore.”
- a. Again, “all authority” reinforces the command to “go”.
 - b. This is the authority that allowed Him to forgive sins (Mark 2:7-12)
 - c. He taught with authority (Mark 1:22)
 - d. He rebuked the devil (Matt. 4:10)
 - e. Authority over unclean spirits (Mark 1:27)
 - f. Authority over nature, diseases, storms.
 - g. Authority over life and death, raising people from the dead.
 - h. He had the authority to lay down His life and take it up again (John 10:17-18)
 - i. When the One with this authority commands that we do something, we must do it!
 - j. With His authority comes His power! The power that rose Jesus from the grave! The power that allowed the church to expand during terrible persecution and still does!
 - i. There are millions of Christians in China, where their pastors are being jailed.
 - ii. There are estimated over 800,000 Christians in Iran.
 - iii. The government of Virginia is working hard to take away our religious liberties right now.
 - k. The darker the world gets, the brighter Christ shines!

- l. We can sulk in the darkness, or we can choose to be sent into the darkness to bring the light!
 - m. Not only are we to Go in Christ's power, but we are to go with His presence. Power and presence are the bookends of the command to Go.

- 3. GO WITH HIS PRESENCE (28:20) And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.
 - a. We cannot do Christ's mission without Christ's presence!
 - b. Remember that we grow that presence in our God Time.
 - c. We should be looking to give Jesus the reward for His suffering. He suffered and died for many souls to come to Him. We should gladly bring them to Him.
 - d. Jesus did not die for our comfort!
 - e. (Acts 1:1-2) I wrote the first narrative, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day He was taken up, after He had given orders through the Holy Spirit to the apostles.
 - i. He began the work. We continue the work.
 - f. The question is not *are* you called to go. You are. The question is *where* are you called to go.

CONCLUSION: Some questions to ponder!

- 1. Am I truly following Jesus?
- 2. Do I know that I'm saved?
- 3. Is there fruit in my life?
- 4. Today, we will observe the Lord's Supper and consider the Body and the Blood that was sacrificed not only for us, but for others. Are we making sure that they know it!