SERMON 1: A Greater Work

Text: John 14:12-14

“I assure you: The one who believes in Me will also do the works that I do. And he will do even greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”

Introduction:
What makes something stick? Why are we “religious” about doing some things and let other things slip? Ask it another way: Is God in it?

1. Why would God use your church (corporately)?
2. Why would God use you (individually)?

Jesus promises a “greater work” in John 14:12 for those who believe in Him.

• Greater does not mean more power. Greater does not mean knowledge. You can’t have more power or knowledge than Jesus.
• Greater means extent: Jesus’ ministry was limited to three years in a specific geographic range within the Middle East.
• Today the church has the mandate to go to all people in all nations.

Sometimes the biggest line to cross isn’t a geopolitical boundary; sometimes it’s a property line.

• A great work may be in your backyard.
• What if everyone in the church reached one person this year? The church would double in size!

Point 1: A great work begins with believers on the move.

Acts 1:1-14

Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection get much attention (rightly so)

• We celebrate Jesus’ birth at Christmas
• We remember Jesus’ death on Good Friday
• We celebrate Jesus’ resurrection on Easter

But the ascension is not nearly as celebrated (even though there is an “Ascension Sunday”)

Illustration: Watching the space shuttle launch at night. There is a brilliant trail of light. So much engineering and planning goes into that one moment. But someone, somewhere has to hit a “giant red launch button.”
• The ascension of Jesus is the giant red button for the church, launching it.
• Acts 1:11: The angel right after the ascension: “What are you doing standing around! Get to work!”
• An inactive Christian does not understand the significance of the ascension.
• An inward church will never be a great church on the move.


The disciples move after being rebuked by the angel. They worship, have great joy, and eventually take the gospel to the world.

A totally inappropriate response to King Jesus: standing around and staring. Believers that honor God are on the move.

Point 2: Believers on the move often attend often and invite others to church.

Sometimes the hardest boundary to cross isn’t a geopolitical line on a map. Sometimes it’s a property line. Love your neighbor!

Hebrews 10:24-25

A few principles are found in this text:
• If you care about people, then you’ll be at church: “concerned, promote love, encouraging one another.” How? Through the church.
• Some “habitually” stay away from church, and it’s not healthy.
• “Day drawing near:” If we believe Christ is coming again, then it’s even more critical that we work through and in the body of Christ.

Church attendance is like exercise. Do it twice a year, and it hurts.
• You don’t remember any one workout, but you do see the cumulative effects of working out over time.
• Same with the spiritual disciplines: prayer, reading God’s Word, and being in fellowship with other believers in worship.

Conclusion:
Everyone should have at least one person they are reaching: someone lost, someone unchurched, or someone dechurched.

80% of people are receptive to an invitation to church…reach out to them:
• Invite them to church
• Bring them to a group setting
• Take them out for lunch after church

Who is your one? A “greater work” begins with just one. If everyone reached one, then a great work would multiply rapidly.
SERMON 2: No Greater Time than Right Now


“After this, the Lord appointed 70 others, and He sent them ahead of Him in pairs to every town and place where He Himself was about to go. He told them: “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest. Now go; I’m sending you out like lambs among wolves.”

Introduction:

Why is it that when we want something, urgency is justified? Yet when God commands something, we rationalize timing?

Illustration: “Let’s go get ice cream!” Nobody argues with that.

• Q: How is ice cream—right now—justified?
• A: You don’t need to justify ice cream because it’s ice cream.

“How save that drowning person!” Nobody will argue with that. Why? The person is about to drown.

• Ice cream becomes urgent because we love it.
• Rescue is urgent because someone will die otherwise.

How much do we love the gospel? How much do we want Jesus to rescue people drowning in sin?

Are we just as urgent about the gospel as we are ice cream? Saving a drowning person?

Point 1: If now is the time of salvation, then right now is the time to go.

2 Corinthians 6:2: “Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation.”

Are you in or out? Joshua 24:15 All of us are confronted with a choice: Worship the true God or a god we create.

Luke 10:3 makes it clear: Now go! The “when” is always “now” with the gospel. Inviting “your one:” What is your level of urgency? Will you invite your one next week?
Point 2: Your prayers today should compel you to act right now.
Prayer + Action = Abundant Harvest

Luke 10:2 – The harvest is “abundant.” Why would we expect God to do great things through us? Because the need is great!

Luke 10:1 – Jesus sends out approximately 70 volunteers. God’s work not restricted to professional clergy. We’re ALL ministers. The disciples are named in Bible. These 70 are not. Whether we get name recognition from ministry is NOT important. The BEST ministry is done by NAMELESS saints proclaiming 1 NAME: Jesus.

“Now go!” is often left off when quoting this passage. That is unfortunate.
- We’re not just offering another religious option to calm people’s nerves
- We bring a radical gospel that makes people new creatures.

This mission is not only urgent, it’s also dangerous. Lambs among wolves…
- Passion is the degree of difficulty one will endure to reach a goal.
- What will you endure to see the gospel go to the ends of the earth?
- What will you do to invite “your one” to church?

Point 3: You’re in a spiritual war right now.

Luke 12:54-56

Where’s our urgency? Where’s the right now attitude?

Everyone is concerned about the weather. We are consumed with the weather. We have phone apps that give us minute-by-minute weather updates.
- Jesus in Luke 12: You will prepare in earnest for the weather tomorrow, but not your souls for all of eternity.
- Jesus in Luke 12: You can predict the weather, but you can’t see the Messiah right here
- We watch our weather apps more than we do read our Bibles.
- Where is our urgency?

Not only are we at war for other people’s souls. There’s war for our own souls.

Conclusion:

What does GOD want to DO right now? He wants to forgive you. But forgiveness entirely depends upon you making sin known to God.

1 John 1:8-10 — Forgiveness follows confession immediately and without conditions.

2 Corinthians 6:2 — Now is the day of salvation.

You’re in a war right now. It’s urgent. But through Christ, it’s won.
SERMON 3: A Greater Church

Text: Romans 12:3-5

“For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one. Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.”

Introduction:

What does it mean to be involved in a local church?
- Worship leads to service (always!) What you worship is what you will serve.
- Romans 12:1-2 (worship) leads to Romans 12:3-8 (serving)

Romans 12:1 “Therefore…”

Paul: If you believe the Truth I just taught in chapters 1-11, then you’ll live it out! Accepting Christian truth should lead to living a Christian life.

“Living sacrifice” = intentionally a paradox
- How can you be a living sacrifice? Because sacrifice implies killing & death.
- To be a living sacrifice is to die to yourself over and over and over.
- You put to death the idea your life is your own, that you have the right to live as you choose.

Romans 12:1 Notice the nouns:
- Brothers (plural); Bodies (plural)
- Sacrifice (singular)

“The missing s” – It’s not sacrifices (plural), but rather sacrifice (singular). We aren’t all out their making individual sacrifices. The church is a partnership of multiple people making one sacrifice together.

Romans 12:4 – A greater church is a diverse church (“many parts in one body”)
Romans 12:5 – A greater church is a humble church (“individually members of one another”)

How do many become one? There are two key paths to becoming a great church: Humility and diversity.

Each person added (“your one”) should add a layer of diversity and humility.
**Point 1: Humility strips away selfishness.**

Selfless churches sacrifice for “one more.” True humility is a realization that God doesn’t owe you anything.

- God owes us nothing.
- We owe God everything.

Pride is the opposite of humility.

- Humility = dependence on God
- Humility = putting others first
- Pride = dependence on yourself
- Pride = putting yourself first

Romans 12:3 Don’t think of yourself more highly than you should.

- Humble people ≠ selfish
- Selfish people ≠ humble

Galatians 6:3: You can be theologically sound and biblically stupid. You can know it all in your head and never live it out.

Your spiritual gifts are only productive if they’re running on humility. No one is exempt from humility in the church: Romans 12:3 “everyone.”

How do we strip away selfishness?

1. Romans 12:3 Humility begins with grace (unmerited favor from an unobligated Giver).
2. Romans 12:3 Humility continues with true self-awareness.
3. Romans 12:4 Selfless individuals become unified.
4. Romans 12:5-6: This unity is in Christ (v5) and ends in grace (v6).

Selfless people are self-aware people. They don’t overestimate or underestimate themselves.

- Romans 12:3 – don’t think too highly of yourself.
- Romans 12:3 – Instead “think sensibly.” Don’t think too lowly of yourself either.

To you, you are always the most important person in the world. Only grace can break us out of this selfishness. The most useful churches have the most humble people. The most useful churches are also the most diverse.

The more “ones” a church adds, the more humble the church becomes and the more diverse the church becomes.
Point 2: The more diverse a church is, the more gifted a church is.

Romans 12:3-5: unity in diversity of many gifts within the body.
- One body = unity
- Different functions = diversity

If we want a spiritually gifted church, then we should seek a diverse church.
- Ethnic diversity, people from different socioeconomic backgrounds.
- People with varying degrees of spiritual maturity (long-term and new believers)
- Men and women, people of all generations.
- Those who grew up in the community. Those that are new.

Conclusion:

Christianity is more than just living a good life. There are plenty of good, moral people who are generous, charitable, and help others. We should do those things too, but…

Christianity is also WHY we live a good life.

Hebrews 10:10 – There is a sacrifice once and for all.
- Once = only Jesus.
- For all = all time and any person.

Since we believe this, let’s do it. Let’s reach anyone and everyone. Reach your one! Invite your one!
SERMON 4: The Great Responsibility

Text: Matthew 28:16-20

“The 11 disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. When they saw Him, they worshiped, but some doubted. Then Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Introduction:
For most believers, the Great Commission is a familiar text. The problem is most believers don’t live it.

You can get all of Matthew (and other gospels), but if you don’t do the last passage, then you’ve missed the point entirely.

Eleven disciples (minus Judas) at a mountain in Galilee where Jesus told them to meet him after his resurrection.

• Some scholars believe that this is where the twelve were chosen.
• Remember all that had taken place, the whirlwind of Jesus’ ministry, the highs and lows. Emotions raw. And here they were, their Savior appearing to them for one of the last times He is on this earth.
• What he has to say here must be of the utmost importance.

What does Jesus say?
1. He makes a great claim (v18) all authority
2. He makes a great command (v19) all nations
3. He makes a great promise (v20) always

The command is clear: all nations.

• Every tongue, tribe, nation.
• Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.

Point 1: The privileges of God’s love come with the responsibility for all nations.

Here’s a problem with Christianity: we want all the privileges of God’s love without the responsibility for the nations.

• Romans 1:14-15 – We have a debt to every lost person on earth.
• Paul in Romans 1: I am owned by Christ, so I owe Christ to the world.
Our responsibility is to see the Great Commission completed. Christ’s work is both finished and unfinished.

- **Finished**: John 17:4 – I have glorified You on the earth by completing the work You gave Me to do.
  - Jesus’ work—redemption—on earth is done.
  - Only He can save people. He’s the only way to the Father.
- **Unfinished**: Redemption is complete, but evangelism is not. It’s the church’s responsibility to share good news.

**Point 2: God will save people, and He wants to use you.**

The greatest ability is availability. Talent is nothing unless you’re available for God to use you.


1. **Go**: This verb implies crossing boundaries. Go across the street to meet a neighbor. God to dinner with an unsaved friend. Go and invite your one!
2. **Make**: This verb implies a “work in progress.” We never arrive as Christians. We are all a “family of learners in the faith.” From the newest Christian, to the most spiritually mature, we all learn from each other as part of the “making process.”
3. **Baptize**: Our whole identity changes when we are saved, from that of belonging to ourselves to belonging to God.
4. **Teach**: The verbiage here literally means keep on teaching them. The maturation of a believer is a lifelong process. You never stop growing. You never stop going. And you can’t grow as a believer unless you go.
5. **Remember**: God is with us through it all!

These five verbs apply to your one. These five verbs are the action items of the church. And God wants to use you to accomplish them.

**Conclusion: You do the Great Commission as an act of worship.**

You can’t serve God until you worship Him. But have you ever doubted what you can do? How God can use you? In Matthew 28:17 – “some doubted” What are they doubting? Themselves? Jesus?

- While they are worshiping, some doubted. Maybe you are right now.
- Greek word = more hesitation than unbelief. Doubt causes us to hesitate doing the Great Commission.

So, how do we deal with this doubt? We all have it. Jesus tells them. He has all authority. He assures them, and then tells them what to do. Go, make, baptize, teach, and remember… All of this is the action of worship. Then this group grows, from 120 followers of Christ in Acts 1 to thousands in Acts 2. Why not you, church? How can we believe it?

We can because Jesus is faithful. Matthew 28:20 says He is faithful always. Do the act of worship and go to the ends of the earth. Do the act of worship and invite your one to church.