

Living God's Abundance Bible Study– Growing Ministries

Devotions based on Matthew 28:19–20

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1. 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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

–Matthew 28:19–20

The directive to go is not uncommon in the bible narrative. We hear the instruction of God given to Noah to go in and to go out of the ark. We hear the instructions to Abram to go to the land that I will show you and in the story of the great Exodus of Israel going from the house of slavery to the Promised Land. Now we as disciples making disciples are also given the directive to *Go!*

Go and make disciples...

Go! Go, proceed; travel, journey; leave; live, conduct one's life; die); to lead over, carry over; transfer;

Scriptures References

Genesis 7:1;

7 Then the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation.

Genesis 8:16

¹⁶ “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you.

GENESIS 12:1

12 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.

Matthew 10:7 As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

Go: Make disciples!!!

To Make: Meaning: 1) to be a disciple of one 1a) to follow his precepts and instructions; an act of agreement/obedience

2) to make a disciple 2a) to teach, instruct

God's actions and directives are never superfluous! The directive to go subsequently leads the one going into the mission and purposes of God's plans in becoming one of us in Christ Jesus. We therefore must not only *be* disciples but we must *make* disciples. Disciples making disciples is not an idea or a concept but a way of life that illumines the *God-kind-of life* out which and by whom and for whom disciples are made.

Disciples are made!

In the course of human history there always seems to be a cultural, social or economic bar that makes a person in the same manner that the euphemism "*clothes makes the person*" functions.

It is good news knowing that our ordination as disciples making disciples is inaugurated and validated in the foolishness of the cross and not in the wisdom, powers and authorities of human devising. Thanks be to God!

Scripture ReferenceJohn 1:11

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

God Is!

One of the benefits in *going* is getting to know the one who is giving the command to go! It is in our going that we receive our sight; it is in going that we are transformed out of the way of darkness and set on a course that introduces us to a grace-giving God, who is light and void of any darkness. We encounter God, who out of the fullness of God's self, has become one of us in Christ, bringing into the world the reign and rule of God for everyone who believes. It is in the going that we develop relationship with God and one another as we learn to trust who God is and

what God says about God's self.

Scripture References

Jonah 4:1-2

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing.

Titus 3:4-8

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is sure.

Romans 11:33-36 O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to him, to receive a gift in return?" For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Questions

What is the good news in Jonah's proclamation about God?

Is Jonah's character sketch of God contextual or constant? Or both/and?

In what ways have you experienced new birth and fresh beginnings?

How can we know God and believe what God says about God's self?

Disciple making is inclusive!

Nations: 1. (a specific) **people:** a **nation:** a) make (an individual) (into) a nation Genesis 12:2, all the nations of the earth.

Genesis 18:17-18: The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?"

Mark 11:17: He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers."

Mark 13:10: And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations.

What do we learn about God in these verses?

What do we learn about how disciples are made?

...Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

BAPTISM

Baptism: Immerse—1. Of Jewish ritual washings; wash one's hands 2. Baptize, of ritual immersion by John the Baptist and Christians—3. Figuratively: of martyrdom.

Baptism invites believing ones into a grace-filled life that is set free from self-reliance and human devised wisdom and conditional love. Baptism plunges us into the extravagant and abundant life giving water of the word, mixed with faith that is our Salvation—freed from sin death and the devil now and into eternity. Baptism is the acknowledgement of the foolishness of the cross now and into eternity: a new baptismal life made visible in the foolishness of the cross.

Martin Luther: *Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead, it is water used according to God's word. It brings about the forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare.*

Clearly the water does not do it but the word of God, which is with and alongside the water, and faith, which trust this word of God in the water. For without the word of god the water is plain water and not a baptism, but with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a grace-filled water of life and a bath of the new birth in the Holy Spirit. Luther's Small Catechism with Evangelical Lutheran Worship Texts (Pocket Edition) p.28 and 29.

NAME is used for everything the name covers; everything the thought or feeling which is aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering the name: rank, authority, interests, pleasure, excellences, deeds; persons reckoned up by the name.

Baptism is God's love.

Scripture References

John 3:16

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am **the way**, and **the truth**, and **the life**. No one comes to **the** Father except through me.

Baptism is New and Abundant Life;

Scripture References

Isaiah 55:1–3

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight
yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have **life**, and have it **abundantly**.–

Questions

What is your personal view about God and abundance? Should we expect to see evidence of God's abundance? Is it possible? Yes/No and Why?

Can God's abundance change the individual; can God's abundance address local, national and global economics? Meet the needs of the marginalized and powerless?

Baptism is Forgiveness of Sin

Forgiveness: Release from bondage or imprisonment, forgiveness or pardon of sins: letting them go as if they had never been committed, remission of the penalty

Scripture References

Psalm 32:1

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose **sin** is covered.

Acts 10:43

All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives **forgiveness of sins** through his name.

Colossians 1: 13–14

For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Questions

In what ways is God expressing the immeasurable, unfathomable and unsearchable depths of God's Agape love? And if God's love is all that, then how can we know it?

Where and how can we experience the promises in these texts?

How do we daily live our baptismal identity?

Baptism is liberation from the sting of death and the Devil.

Scripture References

Hebrews 2:14

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy (render idle; annul, abolish) the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil (prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely)

1 Corinthians 15:54–56 (NRSV)

When this perishable body puts on imperishability and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?

Question

Given the definitions of *destroy* () and the *devil* () how can we in human terms experience the victory of death’s demise?

Baptism is Wisdom!

... Teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you

Disciples making Disciples proclaim the good news; we have heard the joy-filled proclamation: *Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. 3 He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word* (Hebrews 1:1–3)

Disciples making disciples must go and tell, bear witness and testify of the unending, incomprehensible manifold grace of God to a world that God so deeply loves. The eternal nature of our relationship with God includes the now faith world that we daily go in and out of.

Scripture References

Psalms 119:125 I am your servant; give me understanding, so that I may know your decrees.

Psalm 143:8 Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning, for in you I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

Matthew 13:54 He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power?"

Matthew 22:34–40 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵ and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷ He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Questions

What is the basis of our teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you? How can we teach about the Salvation given to us by God? What are our resources? Where is our audience? What does it cost us as disciples making disciples? When we speak of the commandments of God what are talking about? How does the Great Commandment inform our response to the Great Commission?

Closing

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, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

–Matthew 28:19–20

Salvation is the eternal work of God complete in the suffering death and resurrection of Christ which is Good News to everyone who believes. Accompanied by and empowered by the Holy Spirit, grace-filled communities are created and sustained, so that they might continue the greater works ministry bequeathed to us by Christ, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

