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## WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?

If God truly came to live among us for a brief period of time and left instructions for our lives, don't you suppose that His final words would be important? That His last words would sort of summarize all that He had said and done during His time on earth? And that we should, therefore, intensely study His final words in order to determine God's purpose for our lives?

What were Jesus' final words to His followers? His words in Matthew 28:18-20 are called "**The Great Commission**." But Mark, Luke, John and Acts also contain their own reports of Jesus' final words, and I think they should all be given equal weight. So I want to share a very brief review of Jesus' "Great Commission" as presented by each of the four evangelists and encourage you to dig more deeply:

(1) **Matthew 28:18-20** - *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

Jesus commanded us to "Go and make disciples." He is our leader, our King, and we are His subjects. You don't vote for a king, you bow your knee and acknowledge him. Where are we to go, specifically? Wherever He tells us to go. How do we know where that is? By listening to Him and getting His instructions. He said earlier, "*My sheep know my voice.*" He also said, "*I no longer call you servants, I call you friends,*" and He said that He tells His friends what He is doing.

He told us to go into all the world. He may tell you to go into the world of academia, or the world of business, or the medical world, or the world of your neighborhood. He may tell you to go to Africa, or Brazil, or the inner city of Chicago or Denver. He is God, and since He bought us by His death on the cross, you and I don't get a vote. But, remember that He loves us and is going to use us in a God-adventure that will be fulfilling and important.

What are we to do in the world? We are to "*make disciples,*" not just converts. That is a very important distinction. What is a disciple? He defines it in His next words: *Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.* Whoa! That is different than being a church member, isn't it? What did He command His followers to do? You have to read His words in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John to discover that, but the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, would be a good start.

(2) **Mark 16:15-18** - *And He said to them, Go into all the*

*world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.*

In this admonition, Jesus again commands you and me, His disciples, to ***Go into all the world***. We are to do three primary things: **a. Preach the gospel b. Heal the sick c. Cast out demons**. These are the same three things Jesus did during His earthly ministry. See Matt. 4:23-24, 9:35, Mark 1:32-34, Luke 4:40-44, John chapters 5,6,9. These are also the same things Jesus authorized the twelve and the seventy to do: Matt. 10:1-8, Mark 3:13-15,6:12-13, Luke 9:1-2, 10:1-20. These are the things that Jesus authorizes the church to do: Mark 16:15-18, John 14:12. These are also the things that the early church started to do: Acts 5:16, 42.

(3) **Luke 24:46-49** - *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem...But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

(4) **Acts 1:8** - St. Luke, who also wrote the Book of Acts, picks up the narrative where Jesus says to His disciples: ***But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*** In **Acts 2**, the day of Pentecost came, the Holy Spirit fell on the 120, and they spoke in tongues, etc.

(5) In the book of **John**, Jesus' final admonition is directed to the disciples gathered in the Upper Room, **John 13:31 through John 17:26**. Jesus says many important things in this passage, including the following: **a. As You (the Father) have sent Me, I am sending them. b. You (disciples) will not only do the works I have been doing, but you will do greater works. c. I give you a new commandment, love one another as I have loved you. d. If you love me, obey My commandments (Jesus repeats this commandment again and again).**

God's expectations of us are very clear. He expects us to do the same things that Jesus did when He walked the earth. And Jesus assures us that we can do what He did because He is going to empower us and He will be with us. Glory to God!

## "DON'T EVER DO THAT AGAIN!"

Bayless Conley shared the following testimony that he heard in a church he visited: This church was having a picnic the previous summer when one of their men, past middle-age and carrying too many pounds, over-exerted himself and fell on the ground dead. The men picked him up and laid him on one of the tables. The people started praying, and someone ran to get the man's wife. In a few minutes she showed up, but her husband had no pulse, was not breathing, was turning blue, and was obviously dead. The woman jumped up beside him on the table, grabbed him by the shoulders, and shouted in his face: "Bill, come back!" In a moment the man started coughing, sat up, looked at his wife, and shouted, "Don't ever do that again!"

In a little while he told what had happened to him: He had been carrying some of the chairs and folding tables to the picnic spot when he felt a pain in his chest and fell to the ground. Instantly he found himself in a landscape that was indescribably beautiful. This man had been a long-distance runner for many years as a young man, and in Paradise he was young and strong again and suddenly felt like running. He started running down a lovely path bordered by a white picket fence. He was running faster than he had ever run on earth, but he decided to run even faster. He began running so fast that the fence posts were passing like a blur. He was ecstatic. Then he heard a voice way, way behind him: "Bill, come back!"

## A VERY STRANGE EXPERIENCE

When I turned 18-years old, in February of 1945, the U.S. was caught up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Germany had been defeated, and the Allied forces were closing the pincers on Japan, island by island. When young men became 18, they were subject to the wartime draft. I enlisted in the Navy and went through boot-camp training in San Diego and advanced training to be a signalman at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center located between Chicago and Milwaukee. While I was going through training, the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which brought the war to an end. It is estimated that bringing an end to the war in that fashion saved an estimated one and a half to four million American servicemen's lives, possibly including mine (God bless Harry Truman!). It is also estimated that maybe five to ten million Japanese lives were also saved by the early ending of that horrible war. I was not immediately mustered out, but at the conclusion of my training at the naval center I was sent home to Fort Worth, Texas, for a two-week leave prior to being sent by boat to Yokosuka, Japan, and Shanghai, China. That may not be of any interest to you, but it is really interesting to me, and this is my newsletter.

All of this as background for an experience that happened to me during that period of time. As I was returning home by bus from Great Lakes, I had a brief layover in a bus station in Norman, Oklahoma. I can remember what happened as clearly as if it were yesterday. I was walking through the bus station next to a row of people, when suddenly a feeling, a flash of fear, came into my mind with the thought, "I am going to commit suicide!" I was not a Christian at that time, and I

had no idea what was going on. That thought came to my mind again and again over the years and tormented me.

What was going on in that bus station? After many years had passed and God gave me clearer understanding about what the Bible describes as "spiritual warfare," I started to comprehend that demonic spirits were hanging out in that place, that bus station, and a demon of suicide latched onto me and started insinuating that thought into my mind. I didn't know what it was, I didn't know how to resist it, and I had no power to resist it because I wasn't a Christian, so I became victimized by that tormenting thought. Thank God I didn't actually yield to the temptation to commit suicide!

The general public in our nation regards the idea of a devil and demons as a joke and considers anyone who takes them literally as a pathetic fanatic. That is understandable. But what is sad is that surveys disclose that a majority of Christians in our country also don't believe in a literal devil or that people can "have demons." They believe that psychology and science have explained away those concepts. But Jesus taught more about the devil and demons than anyone else in the Bible, and He was constantly involved in casting demons out of people. If Jesus was really God could He have been confused about the facts?

Christians sometime believe that demons may be a problem in pagan lands like Africa or Haiti, but they certainly can't be common in Oklahoma or my city. But what does the Bible say? Consider this passage in Ephesians, from the Amplified Bible: *You were following the course and fashion of this world (were under the sway of the tendency of this present age), following the prince of the power of the air. (You were obedient to and under the control of) the demon spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience (the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go against the purposes of God). Among these we as well as you once lived and conducted ourselves in the passions of our flesh (our behavior governed by our corrupt and sensual nature), obeying the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of our mind (our cravings dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings). We were then by nature children of (God's) wrath and heirs of (His) indignation, like the rest of mankind.* (Eph. 2:2-3)

This passage shows that everyone who is disobedient to God, careless, rebellious, and unbelieving (that is to say, all of us before we became submissive to Christ) were under the control of demon spirits, which are still constantly working in everyone who is not aligned with the purposes of God. Everyone who is governed by their sensuality, by their senses, and by their dark imagination is being led by demons and are children of God's wrath. (God's wrath is another subject that most Christians prefer not to think about.)

Over the years, many people have shared with me how they are at times overwhelmed by a sudden feeling or impulse of: fear, panic, suicide, insanity, rage, murder, adultery, rape, homosexuality, insanity, perversion, torture, death, jealousy, desire for alcohol or drugs, etc. These thoughts, feelings, impulses, desires, are caused by **DEMONS!** Wake up and know your enemy!

What are we to do when these crazy impulses come? The

Bible says, *Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* (James 4:7-10)

"Resist the devil!" with your mouth, your words. Say, "I resist you, devil! I resist these thoughts of panic, etc. I draw near to you, Heavenly Father. I repent of being double-minded, of thinking about, reading about, watching TV shows about immorality, or revenge. Lord, I humble myself before you and ask you to help me."

The devil must flee if you repent of your sins and call on the name of the Lord.

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WHEN YOU FALL DOWN?**

During the Middle Ages a peasant met a monk in the road and asked him: "What do you holy men do up there in the monastery so close to God?" The monk answered: "What do we holy men do up in the monastery? I'll tell you: We fall down, and we get up. We fall down, and we get up. We fall down, and we get up."

If we fall down but we don't have God in our life, we won't get up, we will give up. If we fall down but we don't have each other, we won't get up, we will feel futility and isolation. If we fall down (and since we are human we will inevitably fall down) and have the Lord and each other (a loving fellowship), we will get up, and we will recognize that every time we get up we are growing in Christ.

So if you have fallen down, I have a word for you: **Get up! Get up! Get up!**

### **BIG TEST**

In the December Newsletter I challenged all of you Bible scholars with a big test: There are three places in the Bible where it says that "God is something." Everyone will remember that God is love. What are the other two? Where are they found in the Bible?

Answer: (1) **God is light.** (I John 1:5) - - *God is light and in Him in no darkness at all.*

(2) **God is love.** (I John 4:8) - - *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

(3) **God is a consuming fire.** (Hebrews 12:29) *Serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire.*

### **MINISTRY**

On February 20 I will be heading out to the Dream Center in Hollywood for a week's ministry with Clayton Gollieher, director of Hope for Homeless Youth. Three men from our church who have never been to the Dream Center are going with me, and they are excited to be going. I will be teaching and ministering to the guys and gals that have been rescued by Clayton's ministry. The guys that go with me will be participating, getting acquainted with all the ministries at the Dream Center, and going out with the staff in the afternoons and evenings to ministry points in Hollywood, Los Angeles, Venice Beach, etc. I am so thrilled to be a part of this team. Please remember to pray for us.

God Bless,  
**Glenn**

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I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry. If any of you want to receive tax credit for your financial contributions, you may send them to:  
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