

Unit 1:

Theological Foundations

Introduction

If you want to grow something to last a season--
plant flowers.

If you want to grow something to last a lifetime--
plant trees.

If you want to plant something to last forever--
plant churches.

Genesis 12:1-3: The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

1. On the context of Genesis 1-11, Kaiser states: should we doubt that the word to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 was international and universal in its offer, scope and intention, then let us quickly remind ourselves that it was painted against the backdrop of the table of the seventy nations of all the world in Genesis 10. The same "families of the earth" appears there and in Genesis 12:3" (Kaiser, "Israel's Missionary Call", p. 25). For broader discussion on the call and blessings in the life of Abraham, see Dyrness, *Let the Earth Rejoice!*, pp. 48-53.
2. There are two sets of "blessing" promises given by God, both given with a purpose in mind:

Blessings:	Purpose of the blessings:
I will make you a great nation; I will bless you; I will make your name great	<i>So that you may be a blessing</i>
I will bless those blessing you; those cursing you I will curse	<i>So that in you all the families of the earth may be blessed</i>

3. "In Abraham, then, God manifests his reign. Through him the kingdom revealed in creation and rejected by Adam and Eve is restored and begins its advance. Thus, Abraham is blessed not only for his sake but also for our sake as well. We see God's missionary heart as he rolls back the kingdom of darkness and seeks his lost creation. No wonder Paul asserts that the Abrahamic covenant stands throughout all the vicissitudes of Israel's history as the proper foundation for God's ultimate salvation blessing in his Son (Gal. 3:14)." (Williams, *Signs and Wonders*, p. 76; see also pp. 70-5).

Exodus 19:4-6: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

1. God notes that because He is the One who brought Israel out of Egypt, they will be His *special possession*, His *kingdom of priests*, His *holy nation*.
 - a. As His "special possession" God shows that He places a high value on people.
 - b. As His "kingly priests", "The whole nation was to function on behalf of the kingdom of God in a mediatorial role in relation to the nations" (Kaiser, "Israel's Missionary Call", p. 29). This became the basis for the NT doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:9; Revelation 1:6, 5:10)

- c. As a "holy nation", they were wholly God's, set apart for His service, not for their own ends.

Psalm 67:1-7: God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, < Selah> 2 that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. 3 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. 4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth. < Selah> 5 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. 6 Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us. 7 God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him.

1. The basic thrust is "May God fully bless us so that the nations may look at us and say that we have been truly blessed. Further, may, through the same blessing, the rest of the nations come to know God as well" (adapted from Kaiser, "Israel's Missionary Call", p. 31).
2. There are three reasons why the psalmist calls us to prove God's purposes in blessing us (adapted from Kaiser, "Israel's Missionary Mandate", p. 32).
 - a. We have experienced God's grace knowing that God offers it to all mankind--if only the rest would come to know that same grace for themselves (vv. 1-3);
 - b. God rules in righteousness and guides all the earth--it is time for the rest of the earth to acknowledge His just leading (vv. 4-5);
 - c. God has been so good to us--let the nations see that and know His goodness as well (vv. 6-7).

Matthew 9:35-38: Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

1. Culver's observation is worth noting: "It cannot be doubted that all the mission fields of all times to follow, down to the last tribe, were in the scope of His vision. Therefore, it would not be stretching too much the *intent* of Christ's words to say that He also desires His people today to feel for the needs of mankind" (Culver, *A Greater Commission*, p. 3).
2. Again, we see the intimate linking of the preaching the good news of the kingdom of God and the healing of "every disease and sickness" (compare Matt. 4:23). It seems that the task of the laborers is the same as Jesus: preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing people, thus delivering the "harassed and helpless" (vv. 32-34 indicate that demonic harassment may be in mind).
3. In the context of preaching and healing, Jesus notes the need for us to petition God to send out laborers into the harvest, for the laborers (here, the disciples) are few. This sets the stage for Jesus' sending out of the disciples (10:1-23).
4. The harvest may refer to the consummation of the age (though see Carson, "Matthew", p. 235), giving the passage a sense of urgency (further seen in the word for "send", which means to thrust violently; see Osborne, "Matthew", pp. 41-2).

Matthew 10:1-23: He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. 2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. 5. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely

give. 9 Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; 10 take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep. 11 "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. 15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. 16. I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

1. Is this mission only for the disciples, or does it extend beyond them?
 - a. On the general mission:
 - i. Carson notes: . . . it is surely not unnatural for Jesus to treat this commission of the Twelve as both an explicit short-term itinerary and a paradigm of the longer mission stretching into the years ahead. For the latter, the Twelve need further instruction beyond those needed for the immediate tour, which they must see as in part an exercise anticipating something more. In this sense the Twelve become a paradigm for other disciples in their post-Pentecost witness, a point Matthew understands (cf. 28:18-20); and in this sense he intends that Matthew 10 should also speak to his readers." (Carson, "Matthew", p. 242)
 - ii. Culver writes: Though the twelve are in focus here, Jesus' instructions [of v. 5a] are no more restricted to them alone than a general's field orders can be said to apply only to the ones receiving the orders or only to men directly under his command. They are for all who are or shall be under his command in one way or another unless and until the orders are rescinded. Jesus' orders are, in principle, for all Christians. (Culver, *A Greater Commission*, pp. 10-11)
 - b. Concerning the conferral of authority over diseases and spirits:
 - i. Culver thinks that the twelve disciples "alone had the permanent conferral of the supernatural powers described in verse 1" (Culver, *A Greater Commission*, p. 5).
 - ii. Carson writes: "The authority granted the Twelve is in sharp contrast to the charismatic "gifts [pl.] of healing" at Corinth (1 Cor. 12:9, 28), which apparently were individually more restricted in what diseases each could cure" (Carson, "Matthew", p. 236).
 - iii. A select committee at Fuller Theological Seminary, chosen to address the issue of the place of signs and wonders in the seminary curriculum, concluded:

We in no way mean to discourage the ministers of the church from praying believingly for sick people to be healed, whether miraculously or through the normal processes God provides for healing. We believe in the healing efficacy of prayer. We rejoice with those who have been given the grace of healing, be it ever so temporary. However, many of us would say that the church at large was not commissioned to heal the sick and raise the dead, and that when Jesus sent his disciples on a special mission to heal the sick and raise the dead (Matt. 10, Luke 10), he did not commission the church to do the same. (Smedes, *Ministry and the Miraculous*, p. 30)

Matthew 16:16-19: Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

1. The central thrust is that, in the case of Peter, "by proclaiming 'the good news of the kingdom' (4:23), which, by revelation he is increasingly understanding, he will open the kingdom to many and shut it against many" (Carson, "Matthew", p. 373); see for example, Acts 2:14-39; 3:11-26; 4:11-12; and 8:20-23.
2. We further note with Carson: "But now the keys of the kingdom are confided to men. They must proclaim the Good News, forbid entrance, urge conversion. They constitute a small minority in a big world; their mission will be to function as the eschatological *ekklesia*, the people of God Jesus is building within this world. Inevitably the assignment involved them in using the keys to bind and lose [*sic*]. These verses are therefore the result of the partially realized and one day to be consummated-eschatology implicit in the NT.
 . . . In one sense Peter stands with the other disciples as fishers of men, as recipients of the Great Commission (notice in v. 20 that Jesus warns *all* his disciples, not just Peter, to tell no one). In that sense the disciples stand as paradigms for all believers during this period of redemptive history. But this does not exclude a special role for Peter or the apostles Peter was the foundation, the first stone laid: he enjoys this 'salvation historical primacy,' and on him others are laid. This results in certain special roles in the earliest years of the Christian church. But notions of hierarchy or sacerdotalism are simply irrelevant to the text." (Carson, "Matthew", pp. 373-4).
3. "By a new *ekklesia* Jesus was not referring to any form of organization or institution: He was designating His followers as the nucleus of the true Israel. As the people of the kingdom, they will be victorious over the powers of death. They will be the instrument of the kingdom in the world. They will be entrusted with the 'keys of the kingdom' (Mt. 16:19), for by their preaching of the kingdom of God, He will use them as His actual agents in determining who will enter the eschatological kingdom and who will be excluded," (Ladd, "Kingdom of God", *ISBE Revised*).

Matthew 24:9-14 (see also Mark 13:10): "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. 10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

1. Again we see that the proclamation of the kingdom is to go beyond the Jews. Indeed, in our day of religious pluralism, and with many calling for a cessation of Christian mission under the rubric of all roads lead to heaven, this passage stands as a reminder that we must preach the good news of Jesus to ALL nations, not just to those that already have a Christian influence.
2. Ladd states, "This Gospel of the Kingdom, this Good News of Christ's victory over God's enemies, must be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations. **This is our mission.**" (Ladd, *Gospel of the Kingdom*, p. 130; emphasis mine). Further on, he states: "**The ultimate meaning of history between the Ascension of our Lord and His return in glory is found in the extension and working of the Gospel in the world. . . . The divine purpose in the nineteen hundred years since our Lord lived on earth is found in the history of the Gospel of the Kingdom. The thread of meaning is woven into the missionary program of the Church.**" (Ibid., p. 133; emphasis mine).
3. David Hill notes, "the idea concerns the plan of God that all nations shall have an opportunity of hearing the Gospel before the end. . . . This passage emphasizes the continuing task and responsibility of the Church in view of an ultimate consummation which is neither especially near nor especially remote" (Hill, *Matthew*, pp. 320-1).

Matthew 28:16-20: Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

1. Preliminary note: this was not used by the church as a motivation for mission until 1792, when William Carey published *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. Until that time, it was (by and large) considered as limited to the Twelve Apostles (see Bosch, "The Structure", p. 218; Culver, *A Greater Commission*, pp. ix-xvi).
2. The fact: **all authority has been given to Jesus**.
 - a. "All" is a key word in this passage--used four times: [1] (I have) all authority; [2] (go to) all the nations; [3] (obey) all things; [4] (I am with you) all the days (see Carson, "Matthew", pp. 594-5, and Bosch, "The Structure", p. 229 for discussion).
 - b. Here we see that Jesus has ALL authority (see also Bosch, "The Structure", p. 228):
 - i. He has authority in **heaven** over angels; demons; Satan; all rulers and authorities in heavenly places
 - ii. He has authority on **earth** over kings and rulers; other leaders; and all people
3. **Therefore:** because Jesus has this authority, He can give us our "marching orders", as Carson notes: "the dawning of the new age of messianic authority changes the circumstances and impels his disciples forward to a universal ministry he himself never engaged in during the days of his flesh" (Carson, "Matthew", p. 595; see also O'Brien, "The Great Commission", p. 72).
4. The central command is **make disciples of all the nations**.
 - a. Make disciples:
 - i. What is a disciple? In Matthew "the *disciples* are men who have heard and understood what Jesus taught during His lifetime--they are *earwitnesses*", men "who hear and understand the commands and teaching of Jesus so it can be said that they do the will of God (cf. 12:46ff)" (O'Brien, "The Great Commission", p. 75).
 - ii. Church growth theology has long distinguished between "discipling" (what you and I would call evangelism) and "perfecting" (what you and I would call discipleship). They see this command primarily applying to evangelism, not discipleship as defined by most of the Christian world. For discussion on this issue, see Wagner, *Whole Gospel*, pp. 134-6; for discussion on not separating "discipling" from "baptizing and teaching to obey", see Carson, "Matthew", p. 597 and Bosch, "The Structure", pp. 230-3).
 - iii. At the same time, we must not simply equate "baptizing and teaching to obey" only as the means of "making disciples", for the grammar will not sustain this. Though they are not *means*, they none-the-less do *characterize* discipleship: "The force of this command is to make Jesus' disciples responsible for making disciples of others, a task characterized by baptism and instruction" (Carson, "Matthew", p. 597).
 - b. All the nations: Church growth theology has proposed that **B" < J" J" , 2<0** be understood as "all the people groups" (see, for example, McGavran, *Understanding*, p. 56). However, this is reading sociology and/or strategy back into the text. The essence of this is that the whole of humanity needs to our target--it is not laying out a "people group" approach strategy

(see Moreau, "The Concept of 'Nations'"; Verkuyl, *Contemporary Missiology*, pp. 106; Carson, "Matthew", p. 596; and Bosch, "The Structure", pp. 235-40).

5. There are three auxiliary verbs attached to this command:

a. **Going:** this is sometimes seen as an imperative, with some justification (see discussion in Carson, "Matthew", p. 595; Bosch, "The Structure", pp. 229-30; O'Brien, "The Great Commission", pp. 72-3; and Culver, *A Greater Commission*, pp. 150-2). In any event, we are not to sit and wait for people to come to us--we are to go out to them. This is a shift from the OT, where the nations were expected to come to Israel and learn of God. Now the focus is for Christians to take the initiative and "GO" to all the nations. There is no limit on this.

b. **Baptizing them in the name of the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit**

The basic thrust is on baptism as initiation into the Christian faith. For discussion on the Trinitarian formula here, and its lack of application in Acts, see Carson, "Matthew", p. 598.

c. **Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**

i. Williams comments: "And what is it that Jesus commands? In sum, in the context of Matthew, it is to preach the gospel of the kingdom, cast out demons, and heal the sick. To be a disciple of Jesus is to bear his message and continue his ministry nothing less will do." (Williams, *Signs, Wonders*, p. 131)

ii. There are four things that can be pointed out about the teaching (adapted from Carson, "Matthew", pp. 598-99):

(1) The source of our commands is Jesus, not the OT law.

(2) These commands are in effect until *the end of the age*; they were relevant to the disciples, they remain relevant today; and they will be relevant until Christ returns.

(3) We are not only to teach, but to teach **to obey**. Memorizing Scripture and being a great theologian is not enough. We must obey what we know, and teach others to do the same.

(4) This sets in motion a generational effect--every generation passing on obedience to the teaching that it has received from the previous generation.

iii. In light of this, if we fail to obey the command of Jesus here to make disciples, then we are failing as disciples in our obligations to our "Commander in Chief".

iv. Bosch notes that the core of what Jesus taught is summarized in the command to love God and people (Matthew 19:16-26). He then adds, "But Jesus radicalizes these commandments in a specific direction: To love one's neighbors means to have compassion on them . . . and to see that justice is done." (Bosch, "The Structure", p. 234). He proposes: "To become a disciple is to be incorporated into God's new community through baptism and to side with the poor and the oppressed. To put it differently, it is to love God and our neighbor." (Ibid., p. 235).

6. Finally, there is a promise attached: **I will be with you always, to the end of the age.**

The original literally says: "I will be with you the whole of every day" (see Moule, *Idiom*, p. 34). He is with us to protect us, encourage us, and watch us. This fulfills Jesus' name-promise given at the beginning of Matthew's gospel (1:23 [Immanuel = God with us]; Bosch, "The Structure", p. 240).

Mark 16:15: He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

1. First, we must note that the textual evidence is overwhelming that this longer ending of Mark is not the original ending (Lane, for example, does not even discuss the exegesis of the passage; see *Mark*, pp. 601-5). Even so, this ending does add early church testimony to Jesus' command to the disciples.
2. The thrust is quite simple: we are to preach to all men; no one is to be excluded (see Cranfield, *Mark*, p. 473).

Luke 4:17-21: The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." 20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, 21 and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

1. This passage has become the rallying point for political theologians in demanding a societal structural focus for the purpose of the church (see, for example, Mugambi, *The Biblical Basis*, pp. 56). It is a quote from Isaiah 61:1-2.
2. There are five aspects of Jesus' mission that are seen in this passage (the first four are adapted from Williams, *Signs, Wonders*, pp. 113-4):

- a. Jesus has experienced the anointing of God's Spirit for His mission.
- b. Jesus came to preach good news to the poor, "the people who are most in need of divine help and who wait upon God to hear his word" (Marshall, *Luke*, p. 183). Marshall (in the context of Luke 6:20) notes:

It is in no sense a limitation of the promise of salvation to a specific circle of people. . . . At the same time, however, the saying is addressed to those who are literally poor, or who share the outlook of the poor. Paul knew that God had chosen the contemptible people of this world to be his people (1 Cor. 1:26ff), and James (2:5) clearly cites this beatitude [in Luke 6:20] with reference to the literally poor; it was, therefore, Christian experience that in a real sense the gospel was addressed to the poor. Yet, as the sequel makes clear, it is not poverty as such which qualifies a person for salvation: the beatitudes are addressed to disciples, to those who are ready to be persecuted for the sake of the Son of man. (Marshall, *Luke*, p. 249)

- c. Jesus came to preach "release to the captives."
 - i. Is this:
 - (1) Socio-political in nature? or
 - (2) Spiritual in nature (the demonized, or those in captivity to sin)? or
 - (3) Some sense of both?
 - ii. Gooding comments: "Let us notice then that the word for 'captive' in Greek (*aichmalotos*) means, at the literal level, a war-captive. It is not the word one would use for someone imprisoned for a crime or for a political offence (which in New Testament language would be *desmios*). It follows therefore that our Lord could not have been using the word in its literal sense in the synagogue at Nazareth. He claimed that the promise of Isaiah was being fulfilled that very day in the ears of the congregation: captives were having release offered to them. Obviously he was not talking of literal captives of war. In the metaphorical sense, on the other hand, there are plenty of examples in the Gospel of Christ's giving freedom to people who were captives to guilt (see 7:41-50), to the crushing and bruising power of Satan (see 8:26-39), to the love

of money (e.g. 19:1-10) and so forth. One must conclude, therefore, that this was the sense in which he spoke of captives." (Gooding, *Luke*, p. 82).

- iii. Dyrness points out, "Politically is it true that Christ did not directly challenge the Roman Empire, but as Karl Barth insists, because of Christ's authoritative claims (Matt. 28:18) it is not possible for us to conceive of any 'political realm that would not be included in the Kingdom of Christ'. As in the case of the OT institutions, the gospel does not attack the political structures directly but introduces a new reality that must eventually transform these structures. In the Gospels Jesus sets the limits in which the kingdoms of this world will function (Luke 20:24), thus challenging the universal claim of the Roman (or any other government). He does not hesitate to point out the moral failings of its rulers and consistently sides with the victims of its oppression." (Dyrness, *Let the Earth Rejoice!*, p. 135).
 - iv. In seeking any conclusions on the socio-political mission of Jesus, we should not neglect Jesus' own account of His ministry in response to John's question (Luke 7:20-22), in which socio-political liberation is not even mentioned (though "preaching the good news to the poor" is).
 - d. Jesus offers recovery of sight to the blind. This should be taken literally, but (just as "poor" was not limited to the literal sense) should not be limited to physical blindness (compare Paul's statement of his mission to Agrippa in Acts 26:18; see Gooding, *Luke*, pp. 82-3).
 - e. This release has come *today*--it is not limited to the eschaton, though the final outworking of the "year of the jubilee" will come then.
3. Williams adds, "The lengthy accounts of Jesus' miracles, his signs and wonders, provide the exegesis for this synagogue text. Thus, they do not prove his deity, they prove that the kingdom is here" (Williams, *Signs, Wonders*, p. 114). In Dyrness' words, "His miracles then ought not to be seen as illustrations of his teaching but as part of the proclamation itself" (Dyrness, *Let the Earth Proclaim!*, p. 133).
 4. On the basis of this passage, Wagner feels that there are two categories of signs of the kingdom (Wagner, *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, p. 16):
 - a. *Social signs or signs applied to a general class of people* (part of the "cultural mandate"), which include:
 - i. Preaching good news to the poor;
 - ii. Proclaiming release to the captives;
 - iii. Liberating the oppressed;
 - iv. Instituting the Year of Jubilee.
 - b. *Personal signs or signs applied to specific individuals* (essentially miracles, signs, wonders), which include:
 - i. Restoring sight to blind people;
 - ii. Casting out demons and evil spirits;
 - iii. Healing sick people;
 - iv. Making lame people walk;
 - v. Cleansing lepers;
 - vi. Restoring hearing to deaf people;
 - vii. Raising the dead.
 5. Finally, we must note that Jesus omitted the last part of Isaiah 61:1-2 in his reading ("And [to proclaim] the day of vengeance of our God"). The omission is startling, for the Jews expected not only their own release, but the destruction of their enemies. By omitting the reference to God's vengeance, Jesus is noting that His mission at this time involves only reconciliation, and

that this reconciliation is extended even to God's enemies (i.e., the Gentiles; see Liefeld, "Luke", p. 867). Jesus' omission may be the cause of the crowd's hostility, but Luke does not specifically mention this (Ibid.).

Luke 10:1-20: After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2 He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. 3 Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. 4 Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road. 5 "When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. 7 Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house. 8 "When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' 10 But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' 12 I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town. 13 "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. 16 "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." 17. The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." 18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. 20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

1. Ladd maintains that "we should also recognize that seventy had a symbolic meaning. Since it was a common Jewish tradition that there were seventy nations in the world and that the Torah was first given in seventy languages to all men, the sending of the seventy emissaries is an implicit claim that Jesus' message must be heard not only by Israel but by all men" (Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 114; see also Liefeld, "Luke", p. 940).
2. As with the mission of the twelve, healing and proclaiming the kingdom are linked together. We note that Luke has reversed Matthew's (10:7-8) ordering of the tasks, putting healing before proclaiming. Marshall notes that this indicates that "healings are to be regarded as a sign of the presence of the kingdom" (Marshall, *Luke*, p. 421).
3. The fact that 70 (or 72) are now sent out indicates that the mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God is not limited to the Twelve apostles (see Marshall, *Luke*, p. 412).

John 17:18: As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

John 20:21-23: Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

1. Each verse has been the centre of a debate. We will consider them one at a time, trying to confine our discussion to the theme of the purpose of God's people.
2. Verse 21:
 - a. As the Father has sent ("B@FJ, 88T, apostello) Me, so send (B, : BT, pempo) I you.
 - i. Is there any significance to John's vocabulary shift (see discussion in Westcott, *John*, p. 298; Barrett, *John*, p. 569; Morris, *John*, p. 230, n. 78; *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, p. 302; and Rengstorf, "'B@FJ, 88T", TDNT 1:403-6)? Probably not, as the same idea is given in John 17:18, and "B@FJ, 88T" is used both times.

- ii. In any event, this is certainly Jesus' commissioning of His disciples. However, instead of focusing on the Jews, they are now sent out to the whole world.
- iii. John Stott uses this version of the GC to build his theology of mission. He notes (all quotes from Stott, "Biblical Basis", pp. 66-8):
- (1) Mission arises out of the nature of God, who is a *sending* God--"So the mission of the church arise from the mission of God and is to be modeled on it. 'As the Father has sent me,' Jesus said, 'even so I send you' (John 20:21; cf. 17:18). If then, we are to understand the nature of the church's mission, we have to understand the nature of the Son's!"
 - (a) "First, he sends us *into the world*" "to identify with others as he identified with us, to become vulnerable as he did."
 - (b) "Secondly, Christ sends us into the world to *serve*. For he came to serve. Not just to seek and to save, nor just to preach, but more generally to serve. . . . In his public ministry he proclaimed the Kingdom of God and taught its implications, he fed hungry mouths and washed dirty feet, he healed the sick, comforted the sad, and raised the dead. he gave himself in selfless service for others."
 - (2) "Now he tells us that as the Father sent him into the world, so he sends us. Our mission, like his, is to be one of service. He emptied himself of status and took the form of a servant (Phil. 2:7). So must we. He supplies us with the perfect model of service and sends his church into the world to be a servant church."
 - (3) "How then, someone may ask, are we to reconcile this concept of mission as service with the Great Commission of the risen Lord?
 - (a) "Often, perhaps because it is the last instruction Jesus gave before returning to the Father, I venture to say that we give it too prominent a place in our Christian thinking. I beg you not to misunderstand me. I believe the whole Church is under obligation to obey its Lord's commission to take the Gospel to all nations.
 - (b) "But I am also concerned that we should not regard it as the only instruction Jesus left us. He also quoted Lev. 19:18, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' called it 'the second and great commandment' (second in importance only to the supreme command to love God with all our being), . . .
 - (4) "Here then are two instructions, 'love your neighbor' and 'go and make disciples'. What is the relationship between the two? . . . The Great Commission neither explains, nor exhausts, nor supersedes the Great Commandment. What it does is to add to the command of neighbor-love and neighbor-service a new and urgent Christian dimension.
 - (5) "'Mission,' then, is not a word for everything the church does (including, for example, worship). . . . Nor does 'mission' cover everything God does in the world. . . . 'Mission' rather describes everything the church is sent into the world to do. 'Mission' embraces the church's double vocation to be 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world.' For Christ *sends* the church into the earth to be its salt, and *sends* the church into the world to be its light.
- iv. Arthur Johnston responds (Johnston, *Battle*, pp. 406-7, n. 27):

Stott's exegesis of John 20:21 requires a serious study by Evangelicals into the

Johannine vocabulary and style, for his entire synthesis of the WCC and evangelical positions seems to be based primarily upon an interpretation of this passage. Historical and contemporary exegesis has taught, first, the *historical* acts of both the Father sending the Son, and the Son sending the apostles. Second, with this sending, *authority* was understood as conferred upon the Son only by the Father and upon the disciples by the resurrected Lord. While explicit passages of the New Testament deal with the duties and responsibilities of the Church (cf. the Pauline epistles), *this* passage does not seem to teach--directly or explicitly--either that it is the Church that is invested with authority, or that the life of Christ is a *model* for the mission of the apostle. This latter interpretation is not upheld either by the vocabulary or the sentence structure. The words "as . . . so" do not seem to teach a "model" relationship or servanthood. Emphasis is upon the verbs of "sending" and upon Jesus as the authoritative sender of the apostles.

To speak of Jesus as a "model" would seem to require the ministry of the atonement as well as their incarnation, and miracles of healing as well as proclamation. One wonders if the "model" view takes into consideration:

- (1) the purely evangelistic mandate of the other Great Commission passages,
- (2) the elements in the New Testament that are consistently normative for us today,
- (3) the context of "belief" in John 17:18 (17:20, 29) and in John 20:21 (20:22, 23, 29-31),
- (4) the servanthood of Jesus as fulfilled principally in Christ's death as a ransom in Mark 10:45,
- (5) the apostolic understanding of John 20:21 as obediently experienced in the Acts of the Apostles, and
- (6) the fervency of the Apostle Paul in asserting the priority of his call to preach (evangelize as even above baptizing and, no doubt, much more above social action).

3. Verse 22:

a. There are three main classes of explanations:

- i. This is John's description of the full giving of the Holy Spirit. The biggest problem with this is that it does not fit John's reporting of Jesus' words that the Spirit would not be given until He was glorified (see Turner, "Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel", p. 28-9; Barrett, *John*, p. 478; Brown, *John*, p. 1038; Bernard, *John*, p. 677; Lindars, *John*, p. 612).
- ii. This a symbolic promise of the Spirit by Jesus, a "parable" which would be fulfilled at Pentecost (see Hendriksen, *John*, p. 461; for refutation see Turner, "Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel", pp. 29-32).
- iii. This is a phase between the OT framework and the final realization of the NT framework, which comes at Pentecost. There are several ways in which this may be explained:
 - (1) There were two impartations of the Spirit, and this is the first of them (Hunter, "Spirit Baptism", p. 148; Westcott, *John*, p. 295; see Turner, "Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel", p. 33).
 - (2) This is an earnest (or deposit) on the later gift of the Spirit, which was the full expression (see Turner, "Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel", p. 32)
 - (3) This is the imparting of the Spirit as the empowerer for **ministry** (possibly

specifically related to declaring sins forgiven?; Fredricks, "Rethinking", pp. 16-7) as opposed to the already experienced grace gift of sanctification and the future grace gift of *charismata* (Lange, *John*, p. 317; Meyer, *John*, p. 532).

- (4) This is one in a series of stages in the new birth of the disciples as described by John. It is *climacteric* in which the Spirit is fully manifested in the lives of the disciples not as "Paraclete" (which would come at Pentecost, after Jesus was glorified) but in bringing them to authentic faith. The words 'receive the Spirit' would then stand 'in parallel' to (and be interpretive of) the appearance, the greeting, and the commission . . . rather than being 'in series' (or additional) to them", and act as a fulfillment of 17:17-19 ['Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.']" (Turner, "Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel", p. 34).
 - b. Whatever the correct interpretation, we agree with Ladd, "it means at the least the Jesus was bestowing on his disciples the same Spirit that had descended on him at his baptism and had filled him during his ministry. He endows them with the Spirit because he is sending his disciples into the world to continue the mission for which he was sent (20:21)" (Ladd, *A Theology*, p. 289).
4. Verse 23: Concerning the forgiveness of sins (is there a theological link of this to Matt. 16:16-19?), the central question is whether Jesus:
 - a. Gives the Apostles authority to actually forgive sins (Bernard, *John*, p. 679; Lenski, *John*, p. 1378; Whitelaw, *John*, p. 435), or
 - b. He gives them authority to proclaim (or confirm) God's previous decision (Osborne, "John", p. 117; Lightfoot, *John's Gospel*, p. 336; Morris, *John*, p. 849; Westcott, *John*, p. 295).

Acts 1:4-8: And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which", He said, "You heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

1. Luke reminds his readers of Jesus' own inauguration into ministry through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism is referred to only seven times in the NT. It is seen once in each of the Gospels (John the Baptist's statement at Jesus' water baptism), twice in Acts (both times referring to the same event as in the Gospels), and once in 1 Corinthians. Ewart notes in regard to the first six occurrences: "From the fourfold promise of the baptism with the Spirit in the Gospels, and from the two passages in Acts, it is obvious that Spirit baptism refers to an initiatory experience. The founding of the church at Pentecost and the incorporation of new believers following Pentecost are both described as a baptism with the Holy Spirit" (Ewart, *The Holy Spirit in the New Testament*, pp. 42-3).
2. Bruner has several things to point out:
 - a. The only condition given here is waiting in Jerusalem--it does not involve a "spiritual" qualification at all.
 - i. There are no other conditions applied; Jesus does not say, "You **may** or **can** receive the HS"--He says "You **will**".
 - ii. Further, there is no indication the some, most, or many will receive the Spirit--**all**

- will. "Jesus promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit *is* inclusive, passive, indicative, and simple future" (Bruner, *A Theology*, p. 159)
- iii. While it is true that the disciples were praying when the Spirit descended, they were not doing so because Jesus' commanded them to pray. Luke is recording a fact of the circumstances, not a condition for the Spirit's descent. (Ibid., p. 162).
 - iv. His conclusion concerning this: ". . . the Spirit does not arise from within the emotional or spiritual life of the recipient, he is not dependent upon or subject to one's inner states. The Spirit comes from above and upon, i.e., from God" (Ibid., p. 160)
- b. "The baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts is called not 'the opportunity,' 'responsibility,' or even 'privilege' of the believer, but 'the **promise** of the Father' (v. 4). The baptism of the Holy Spirit thus comes in the name of promise not law, hence as gift not challenge. . . . It is instructive to note in preface that in each of the major Spirit baptism passages in Acts . . . the Holy Spirit finds either the name 'promise' or 'gift.' The Spirit in Acts is never achieved or 'obtained' . . . , he is always a present, i.e., he is the Spirit of *God*." (Ibid., pp. 156-7)
 - c. "Grammatically, the voice of the promised baptism is important: it is passive The passive means that the baptism of the Spirit shall not be the result of the recipients' activity; the subject of the spiritual baptism is not to the recipient and his effort but the promiser and his will." (Ibid., p. 157)
3. When the disciples receive the HS, they will:
 - a. Receive heavenly **power** (as opposed with earthly, political power; Bruce, *Acts*, p. 36)
 - b. They will receive this power for the **purpose** of "witnessing" (used some 39 times in Acts; Longenecker, "Acts", 9:256) to Christ;
 - c. The power and the purpose fit into God's evangelistic **program** (to be Christ's witnesses to the ends of the world). Russell points out that in this we see that the prophetic office of Christ has been given over to the church (Russell, "Anointing", p. 56), which is to speak forth God's Word to men. Bruner notes that the focus is not on what they will **do**, but on what they will **become**: "The power of the Holy Spirit is his ability to join men to the risen Christ so that they are able to represent him. There is no higher blessing." (Bruner, *A Theology*, pp. 160-1).
 - d. That program is linked to the whole earth.
 4. The disciples link the outpouring of the HS with the restoration of Israel as a kingdom. While in one sense this may be true, the timing that they think of is not correct. "Jesus has inaugurated the era of restoration, but its consummation for Israel awaits Messiah's return" (Russell, "Anointing", p. 55).

Romans 10:6-17: But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: 9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 12. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile-- the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good

news!" 16 But not all Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17 Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

1. The thrust appears to be (adapted from Cranfield, *Romans: A Shorter Commentary*, p. 262).
 - a. People (in context, the Jews) can only call on Christ if they have already believed on Him;
 - b. They can only believe in Him if they have heard Him;
 - c. They can only hear Him if someone proclaims the message; and
 - d. The message can only be proclaimed if God commissions someone to proclaim it.
2. Culver notes: "There is no plainer statement of the mandate in all of literature, biblical or otherwise. Some must go with the gospel to the people who have not yet heard it and others must send them!" (Culver, *A Greater Commission*, p. 121).

Romans 15:14-21: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. 14. I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. 15 I have written you quite boldly on some points, as if to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17. Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. 18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done-- 19 by the power of signs and miracles, through the power of the Spirit. So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. 20 It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. 21 Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

1. Paul's main arguments for his appeal to the Romans to participate in his mission to Spain in vv. 8-31 are noted by Culver (*A Greater Commission*, pp. 123-31):
 - a. Verse 8: *Historically*, Christ went to the Jews, but this was to fulfill His unique task and is not a paradigm for all ministry
 - b. Verses 9-13: *Biblically*, God's saving actions are for the whole world
 - c. Verses 14-21: *Apostolically*, Paul was commissioned to a task--he was to preach Christ where He was not yet known ("Paul did not entertain a moment's doubt that the gospel must be preached in the whole world"; Hahn *Mission in the New Testament*, p. 97)
 - d. Verses 22-33: *Practically*, there was a need to reach the world for Christ, Paul had already assembled a team to participate in this venture, and they needed the help of the Romans.
2. Concerning v. 19:
 - a. Paul's ministry was characterized "as both powerfully confirmed and attested by accompanying miracles and also accomplished as a whole in the power of the Holy Spirit" (Cranfield, *Romans*, p. 759).
 - b. His 'fully preaching' the gospel' is related to the completion of evangelism in every province between Jerusalem and Illyricum (in fulfilling his apostolic commission), not to a "full" gospel (Bruce, *Romans*, p. 261).

2 Corinthians 5:18-21: All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's

behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

1. Of v. 18, Hughes points out, "In Christ, God's holy and loving work of reconciliation has been accomplished once and for all. It is because the way of reconciliation now stands wide open that the ministry of reconciliation has been committed by God to His servants. There is no service to mankind more crucial and urgent than the exercise of this ministry. As God does not cease to be the sovereign Creator and man does not cease to be His creature in desperate need of redemption, and as all things are of God who, even while we were yet enemies, graciously acted on our behalf (Rom. 5:10), this ministry with its message of reconciliation is, in the ultimate issue, the *one thing needful* for our world in all circumstances and in every generation." (Hughes, *Second Corinthians*, p. 206)
2. Inv. 19, SH@J4 "introduces the terms of the ministry of reconciliation, involving the announcement to the world of a message of good news, the declaration of what God in His royal grace has done for the rescue of His fallen creatures. Christ's ministers are, in fact, His *messengers*: declarers of reconciliation, not agents of it." (Hughes, *Second Corinthians*, pp. 206-7)
3. Two things may be noted in v. 20:
 - a. We are ambassadors of Christ, and God actually entreats the world through us.
 - b. We have a message: Be reconciled to God. Paul "is referring, not to the requirements of believers, but to the evangelistic duty of Christ's ambassadors to go into all the world and announce the good news of reconciliation to every creature, pleading with men to receive as their own what God has freely provided in His Son." (Hughes, *Second Corinthians*, p. 211)

1 Peter 2:9: But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

1. Michael Lawson notes, "While God's people await the coming of their King, they are not passive. They are a people with a purpose. Corporately, they are to 'declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light'. In short, God's people are to be a *sign of the kingdom*" (Lawson, *Unfolding Kingdom*, p. 135).
2. In Christ, we have been given a new position (all collective singular nouns; all taken from the OT where they were used of Israel):
 - a. A chosen race (or "elect generation"; from Isa. 43:20);
 - b. A royal priesthood (Exod. 19:6 LXX)--we share in the kingly ruling with Christ (Stibbs, *Peter*, p. 104);
 - c. A holy nation (Exod. 19:6; the Greek term is one commonly used of the Gentiles);
 - d. A people for God's own possession (based on Hos. 1:6-10 and 2:23; a "peculiar people"; the term can be used of a boy who collects curios, etc., which become his special possessions; Selwyn, *Peter*, p. 167).
3. The purpose for our position: that we proclaim the excellencies (or virtues or eminent qualities) of God. He has called you out of darkness into light, for we have received mercy (v. 10). "The Church, then, as God's select people, has the function of proclaiming His saving acts. This it does, we may presume, both by rehearsing them in its daily life with exultant thankfulness and, as Israel of old was expected to do . . . by bearing witness to them before mankind." (Kelly *Peter*, p. 100)

The Church of God

1. Etymology of the words:

a. Hebrew:

- i. קהל (*qahal*, noun form of verb "to assemble"): an assembly of any sort (115 times in the OT). The "assembly of the LORD" (14 times) is the closest OT equivalent of "church":

Numbers 16:3: They came as a group to oppose Moses and Aaron and said to them, "You have gone too far! The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is with them. Why then do you set yourselves above the LORD's assembly?"

Numbers 20:4: Why did you bring the LORD's community into this desert, that we and our livestock should die here?

Deuteronomy 23:1: No one who has been emasculated by crushing or cutting may enter the assembly of the LORD. 2 No one born of a forbidden marriage nor any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even down to the tenth generation. 3 No Ammonite or Moabite or any of his descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, even down to the tenth generation.

Deuteronomy 23:8: The third generation of children born to them may enter the assembly of the LORD.

1 Chronicles 28:8: "So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever.

Psalms 149:1: Praise the LORD. Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints.

Micah 2:5: Therefore you will have no one in the assembly of the LORD to divide the land by lot.

- ii. עדת (*`edah*, 145x in OT), from יעד (*ya`ad*, "to appoint"), translated generally as 'congregation': to meet or come together at an appointed place (found primarily in the earlier books of the OT). There are a number of times the phrase "congregation of the LORD" may be found.

Numbers 27:17: to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the LORD's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

Numbers 31:16: "They were the ones who followed Balaam's advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the LORD in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the LORD's people.

Joshua 22:16: "The whole assembly of the LORD says: 'How could you break faith with the God of Israel like this? How could you turn away from the LORD and build yourselves an altar in rebellion against him now? 17 Was not the sin of Peor enough for us? Up to this very day we have not cleansed ourselves from that sin, even though a plague fell on the community of the LORD!'

b. Greek:

- i. ἐκκλησία, 668, F4" (*ekklesia*; , 6 + 6"8, T): to call out, people who are called out. In secular Greek it denotes a popular assembly (compare Acts 19:32, 39). Of particular interest is the phrase "church of God":

Acts 20:28: Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

1 Corinthians 1:2: To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-- their Lord and ours:

1 Corinthians 10:32: Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God--

1 Corinthians 11:22: Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!

1 Corinthians 15:9: For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

2 Corinthians 1:1: Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all the saints throughout Achaia:

Galatians 1:13: For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.

1 Timothy 3:5: (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

Note that the singular and plural are interchangeable. "Two or more churches do not make the church, nor are there many churches, but one church in many places, whether Jewish, Gentile, or mixed." (Schmidt, "*Kaleo*," TDNT Abridged)

ii. FL<" (T (L, (*synagoge*; FL< + " (T): to bring together, a convened assembly is the basic idea. "If the NT prefers *ekklesia* for the church, this is perhaps because it helps to make a distinction, because *synagogue* now means primarily the local congregation, because *synagogue* is more closely tied to the building, and because it focuses on the law rather than on Christ. Furthermore, Gentile circles might well associate *synagogue* with cultic societies and thus be led into a misunderstanding of the church." (Schrage, "*synagoge*," TDNT Abridged)

c. English: **Church**: derived from *kuriake*, meaning 'belonging to the Lord.'

2. The NT uses of the concept of church:

a. Variations include (from Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, pp. 556-7):

i. A circle of assembled (Rom. 16:4; 1 Cor. 16:1, Gal. 1:2; 1 Thess. 2:14) believers in some definite location (Acts 5:11, 11:26; 1 Cor. 11:18; 14:19, 28, 35).

ii. A 'house' church (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15).

iii. The singular used in reference to a group of churches (Acts 9:31--**not a denomination!**)

iv. A general sense of the whole body of believers in the world (1 Cor. 10:32; 11:22; 12:28; Eph. 4:11-16).

v. The whole body of the faithful (in heaven and on earth; Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 32; Col. 1:18, 24).

b. Figures of the church in the NT (see some of this in Towns, Vaughan, and Siefert, *The Complete Book*, pp. 226-247):

Image	Scripture
The bride of Christ	Eph. 5:25-27; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Rev. 19:6-8; 21:2, 9-10
The body of Christ	Eph. 1:22-23 and 1 Cor. 12:12-27; see also Col. 1:18
The temple (or building) of God	1 Cor. 3:10-11, 16; Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Pet. 2:4-8
The sheep of Christ the Shepherd	John 10
Branches of the true Vine	John 15
Believer-priests of the High Priest	Heb. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:9
Joint-heirs with the First Born	Heb. 1:2; Rom. 8:17
Harvest after God's First Fruit	1 Cor. 15:23
The New Jerusalem of the King of Kings	Rev. 21:2, 9-10

- c. The church is both **organism** and **organized**:
- i. Organism: the church is a communion of believers--**community** is the key. It is called the *body* of Christ and *living* stones of the temple of God.
 - ii. Organized: The 'mother' of believers; it announces the means of salvation, nurtures, there is a need of leaders and a system of formal organization for its earthly operation.

The church as organized is the means to the church as organism.

3. Two major "divisions":
- a. The **local church**: "an assembly of professing believers who have been baptized and who are organized to do God's will" (Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrines*, p. 141). Note:
 - i. No building is needed
 - ii. They are professing believers
 - iii. The mode of baptism is not defined
 - iv. It is an 'organized organism', though the time and type of meeting is not specified
 - b. The **universal church**: the body of all true believers in the heavenly realms as well as on earth.
4. The function/purpose of the church
- a. In relation to God: it is to send forth praise and glory to God for His merciful dealings with men (Eph. 3:20-21).
 - b. In relation to itself:
 - i. Edification:
 - (1) Building up of the saints (Heb. 10:24)
 - (2) Equipping the saints for service (Eph. 4:11-16)

- (3) Caring for its own who are in need (Jas. 1:27; 1 Tim. 5:1-16)
 - ii. Purification: allowing Christ to cleanse it so as to be a spotless bride (Eph. 5:25b-27), including discipline in the areas of:
 - (1) Morals (1 Cor. 5)
 - (2) Purity of doctrine (2 Tim. 2:16-18)
 - c. In relation to the world
 - i. Mission: It is the agency God has chosen for carrying out the Great Commission
 - ii. Restraining force: it acts as a restraining and enlightening force in the world (Matt. 5:13-16).
- 5. The mark of the true church
 - a. Proclaiming the Word of God
 - b. Celebrating the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper)
 - c. Exercising proper church discipline
 - i. Carrying out the law of Christ regarding admission and exclusion of members.
 - ii. Promoting spiritual edification of believers by securing their obedience to Christ.
 - iii. Giving a testimony to the world of the purity of God's people.
- 6. The church and the Kingdom of God:
 - a. We summarize here several aspects of the Kingdom of God as seen in the NT:
 - i. It is **dynamic**--God's ruling over creation.
 - ii. It is **present** uniquely in the person of Jesus and, in a limited sense, in believer's lives and in the church (see below in the relationship between the kingdom and the church). It is for now only partially manifest, but will eventually be fully manifest.
 - iii. It is **future** and will be fully manifest only in the consummation of this age. This will happen after the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in the whole world. However, when it comes it will catch many unawares, and we must always be prepared for its arrival.
 - iv. It is **eternal** in contrast to all other kingdoms.
 - v. It is **God's**, and He alone brings it to pass, and it will spread despite man's rejection, and it is universal in scope.
 - vi. Its **value cannot be measured**--it is worth all we have and are, and its rewards are determined by God's sovereign grace.
 - vii. It is **entered by repentance and a new birth** which is offered as a gift, but cannot be earned. This is in some way put in the hands of the Church, God's reign on earth (Matt. 16:19).

- viii. It **demands a radical decision from us--we are to seek it above all else.**
 - ix. It **demands a radical adherence to kingdom ethics**, which exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.
 - x. It **belongs to the little ones of the world** (e.g., the poor in spirit and those who are as children)
 - xi. The **least in the kingdom is greater than the greatest on earth.**
 - xii. It **grows and works in hidden ways** (which are not to be mistaken for inactivity).
 - xiii. We are to **pray for its full manifestation.**
 - xiv. It is **manifest through the power of God**, see specifically in the signs and wonders of Christ, especially in the exercise of kingdom authority over demons, diseases, death, and "nature" (see Williams, *Signs and Wonders*, p. 112)
 - xv. It **secrets are "given" (understood) to those who enter, but not to those outside.**
 - xvi. It is **to be preached by its citizens.**
- b. What is the relationship between the kingdom and the church? Several views have been proposed over the centuries. The view that fits best with the full biblical data is one in which the present and future aspects of the kingdom are held in dynamic tension (for an extremely concise overview of contemporary thought on the Kingdom of God, see Kirk, "The Kingdom of God"):

The kingdom really **belongs to the future, but has over-spilled into the present in the experience of the Christian community.** Beyerhaus, for example, calls the manifestation of the kingdom today the "Kingdom of Grace", and the final consummation the "Kingdom of Glory" (Beyerhaus, "World Evangelization", p. 297).

- i. "The kingdom is the whole of God's redeeming activity in Christ in the world, the church is the assembly of those who belong to Jesus Christ. Perhaps one could speak in terms of two concentric circles, of which the church is the smaller and the kingdom the larger, while Christ is the centre of both. . . . The church, as the organ of the kingdom, is called to confess Jesus as the Christ, to the missionary task of preaching the gospel in the world; she is also the community of those who wait for the coming of the kingdom in glory, the servants who have received their Lord's talents in prospect of his return." (Ridderbos, "Kingdom of God", NBD).
- ii. "Is it not better to refer to the church in even more modest terms and call it a *sign* of the kingdom? In a very special way the power of the new age is manifested in the Church, and it can rightly be said that the Church is at the center of God's redemptive dealings with the world. Such a perception, however, should not lead to a church-centered theology, but rather should become part of a kingdom-oriented theology." (Rottenberg, *The Promise and the Presence*, p. 67).
- iii. "In summary, while there is an inseparable relationship between the Kingdom and the church, they are not to be identified. The Kingdom takes its point of departure from God, the church from men. The Kingdom is God's reign and the realm in which the blessings of his reign are experienced; the church is the fellowship of those who have experienced God's reign and entered into the enjoyment of its blessings. The Kingdom creates the church, works through the church, and is proclaimed in the world by the church. There can be no Kingdom without a church--those who have acknowledged God's rule--and there can be no church without God's Kingdom; but

they remain two distinguishable concepts: the rule of God and the fellowship of men." (Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament*, p. 119).

- iv. Williams makes a point worth consideration: . . . we will insist that God's kingdom has now been established in his Son overcoming all that transpired in the Fall. Rather than being satisfied with the Word of God alone, we will expect to see the work of God. Faith will not be left dangling and disembodied in an upper story of idealism or mythological thinking. Since God has restored his rightful, direct reign among his people, we will receive the evidence of that reign. At the same time, we will also experience the tension of living in a kingdom both come and coming, which lies at the heart of the New Testament. (Williams, *Signs, Wonders*, p. 135)
 - v. We also note four aspects of the relationship between the kingdom and the church (Shenk, "Kingdom", pp. 211-2):
 - (1) The kingdom creates the church.
 - (2) The church witnesses to the kingdom.
 - (3) The church is an instrument of the kingdom.
 - (4) The church acts under the authority of the kingdom.
 - c. Finally, we may ask "What should be the relations between the Kingdom Community (i.e., the church) and the world between Christ's comings?" Two suggestions may be noted (*Evangelism and Social Responsibility*, p. 34):
 - i. First, the new community should constitute a challenge to the old. Its values and ideals, its moral standards and relationships, its sacrificial life-style, its love, joy and peace--these are the signs of the Kingdom, . . . and present the world with a radically alternative society.
 - ii. Secondly, as the world lives alongside the Kingdom community, some of the values of the Kingdom spill over into society as a whole, so that its industry, commerce, legislation and institutions become to some degree imbued with Kingdom values.
 - d. Why examine the kingdom of God in evangelism and church planting?
 - i. Confusion over the mission of the church
 - ii. Confusion in church growth, seen especially with the direct equation of church growth with kingdom growth.
7. Conclusion: God has raised up the church as His body both to reach the world and to preserve it until Christ returns. Calvin notes (IV, 1, 1):

But as our ignorance and sloth (I may add, the vanity of our mind) stand in need of external helps, by which faith may be begotten in us, and may increase and make progress until its consummation, God, in accommodation to our infirmity, has added such helps, and secured the effectual preaching of the gospel, by depositing this treasure with the Church.

. . . What God has thus joined, let not man put asunder (Mark 10:9): to those to whom He is a Father, the Church must also be a mother.

The Scope of the Evangelistic Task

- 1. The meaning of evangelism
 - a. Some linguistic considerations . . .
 - i. Greek concepts:

- (1) The *euangelion* family:
 - (a) The noun simply means "good news" or "gospel" (it became a technical term in Greek for "news of victory", *TDNT Abridged*, p. 269). Green relates Paul's usages of the word: "You can spread the good news of it, teach it, announce it, chatter it, make it known, or put it forward for discussion. Similarly, it could be heard, received, accepted as reliable tradition and so on. There was a recognizable shape for it" (Green, *Evangelism*, p. 54).
 - (b) The verb means "to proclaim good news" (*TDNT Abridged*, p. 267).
 - (2) The *keryx* family
 - (a) The verb means "to announce, proclaim". "Fundamentally, *keryssein* is the declaration of an event" (*TDNT Abridged*, p. 432).
 - (b) The noun is simply "one who proclaims".
 - (3) The *martureo* family
 - (a) The verb is "to bear witness". "It is primarily a legal term and was frequently used in Greek to denote witness to facts and events on the one hand, and to truths vouched for on the other." (Green, *Evangelism*, p. 70).
 - (b) The noun is then a person who bears witness or the testimony itself.
- ii. Putting this all together, we can see that to evangelize is to simply proclaim the "good news". Within this framework, we need to define two terms: "proclaim" and "good news". The former term will help us to see what the *work* of evangelism involves, while the latter will help us to determine the *content*.
- b. **Proclaiming** the good news.
- i. Today three ideas are being put forth as the methods of evangelism:
 - (1) **Presence** evangelism refers preaching the gospel through the testimony in the life of a believer who demonstrates through his actions the love of Christ.
 - (2) **Proclamation** evangelism refers to the preaching of the gospel through verbal (or equivalent) means.
 - (3) **Persuasion** evangelism refers to the preaching of the gospel through life and words with the goal in mind of persuading men to respond to the claims of Christ.
 - ii. Paul says, "Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. . . . We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:11, 20). In light of this, and the above discussion, we define the *work* of evangelism as **sharing the good news with the goal of persuading men to respond to Christ**.
- c. Proclaiming the **Good News**.
- i. We know what we are to do, but what is the content of our "good news"? For example, Whitesell points out: "Men are not ready for the good news of the Gospel until they have first heard and believed the bad news that they are lost in sin, condemned, under the wrath of God, separated from Christ, and are without God and without hope in the world." (Whitesell, *Basic New Testament Evangelism*, p. 22).
 - ii. Brainstorming: What is the content of the Good News?

In light of all of the above discussion, and, following the basic NT data, the following is a suggested content for the evangelistic message of good news (from Arthur Johnston, "Theology of Evangelism", pp. 8-9):

- (1) The fact of sin (Rom. 3:23)
- (2) The penalty of sin (Rom. 6:23)
- (3) The penalty must be paid (Heb. 9:27)
- (4) The penalty was paid by Christ (Rom. 5:8)
- (5) Salvation is a free gift (Eph. 2:8, 9)
- (6) It must be received (John 1:12)
- (7) Now is the time to receive it [or Him] (2 Cor. 6:2, Rev. 3:20).

2. The importance and urgency of evangelism

a. The importance to God

Exodus 34:6-7: And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.

- i. God is compassionate (רחום, *raham*; see on 33:19): denotes the strong tie that God has with His children; He looks upon them as a Father upon His children; and a deep, tender love.
- ii. God is gracious (חנן, *hannun*): depicts a heartfelt response by someone who has something to give to one who has a need (Yamauchi, TWOT, p. 302)
- iii. God is slow to anger (ארך אפים, *'erek 'appayim*; see Num. 14:27); "His anger prolongs itself and is not quick to inflict punishment on the sinner, in order that he may repent" (Cassuto, *Exodus*, p. 439).
- iv. God is abounding in lovingkindness (רב-חסד, *hesed*: tender and benevolent affection; loyal covenant love) and truth (faithfulness) (אמת, *emet*: "reliability, trustworthiness," the attribute of someone one can depend on [the Hebrew אמת is from the same root as our "amen," "it is certain"]); certainty, dependability). These two combine in a single attribute--"lovingkindness of truth, true and faithful lovingkindness. He keeps, with complete faithfulness, His promises to shew lovingkindness and bestow good . . ." (Cassuto, *Exodus*, p. 439).
- v. God keeps lovingkindness for thousands (see also Exod. 20:2-7). God punishes sins to the third and fourth generations, but shows love to thousands of generations (the term implies a limitless number; Cole, *Exodus*, pp. 156-7) towards those who love Him. How great is God's mercy in comparison to His wrath!
- vi. God forgives iniquity (see Lev. 1:4; 4:1-3, 35)
- vii. Though He forgives iniquity, this is not a sign of weakness, for God will by no means leave the guilty unpunished (see Josh. 24:19; Exod. 14:3-13; Num. 14:22-25, 34-35; Deut. 4:22-27; Num. 21:6-9; 32:13-15). In fact, He visits the iniquity to third and

fourth generations (in contrast to the mercy extended for thousands of generations; see also Deut. 7:9).

- viii. The frequent use through the rest of the OT of these verses by which the nature of God is portrayed (Num. 14:18; Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:15; etc.) is an eloquent testimony to the centrality of this understanding of God's person. Special note should be taken of its use in Jonah 4:2. Jonah obviously understood a universal extension of the Exod. 34:6 concept, not limiting it to Yahweh's relationship with Israel (an astounding thought to the average Israelite of the day!). The compassion of Yahweh is not bound by Mosaic limits, but is universal as is the Abrahamic covenant.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Romans 5:8: But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:4: But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-- it is by grace you have been saved.

1 John 4:9: This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

b. The importance to us

i. To bring glory to God

Psalms 115:1: Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

Isaiah 43:6b-7: Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth--everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Romans 11:36: For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

1 Corinthians 10:31: So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 5:9: So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

ii. To express gratitude to Christ for what He has done for us and to imitate His own actions towards others

1 Corinthians 6:20: you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

2 Corinthians 5:14: For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. 16. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Ephesians 5:1: Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

- iii. To fulfill our God-given responsibility (note: only the Church can fulfill this responsibility)

Great Commission passages (dealt with above; mentioned below)

1 Corinthians 9:16: Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make use of my rights in preaching it. 19. Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. 21 To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. 23 I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

1 John 5:3: This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

- iv. Those we evangelize are in a far more desperate condition that they know, and God gives us a love for them

Matthew 9:35-38: Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.")

Matthew 12:24-30: But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons." 25 Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? 27 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. 28 But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 "Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house. 30 "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

Mark 3:22-27: And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons." 23 So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? 24 If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25 If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. 26 And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. 27 In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house.

Luke 11:17-23: Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: "Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. 18 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub. 19 Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. 20 But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you. 21 "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. 22 But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him, he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils. 23 "He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

John 3:18: Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

2 Corinthians 5:10: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

1 Thessalonians 2:8: We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

2 Thessalonians 1:6: God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power 10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

v. Our sense of stewardship and reward

Matthew 16:27: For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.

Romans 14:11: It is written: "'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.'" 12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Philippians 3:8: What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9. and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. 10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold

of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. 15. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. 16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

Colossians 2: 18: Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

Hebrews 11:6: And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:24: By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Hebrews 12:2: Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 John 1:8: Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully.

Revelation 3:11: I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

3. The Commission given to the Church

Matthew 28:18-20: Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Mark 16:15: He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

John 20:21: Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Luke 24:45-49: Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

Acts 1:8: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Multiplication and Church Planting

All too often "too much emphasis has been placed upon multiplying converts--and not nearly enough emphasis has been placed in multiplying congregations."

--David Hesselgrave

1. Multiplication: the method to use

- a. The "mother church" mentality
 - i. We need to develop this more!
 - ii. No church is an end in itself--it must see its task of planting and raising more churches.
 - iii. Every small group Bible study has the potential to become a new church. We must not jealously hold on to our members!

If we have a mobilized church, we will constantly be replacing those who leave to start other churches.
 - b. The question of the best size and the Metachurch model
 - i. How big is too big?
 - ii. The need to feel wanted (belongingness).
 - iii. Should a church divide (not split!)?
2. Paul, the church planter
- a. Paul's basic strategy: to establish congregations
 - b. Paul's time framework: an average of a few months
 - c. Paul's vision: reach the world through planting churches
3. Do we have a vision for planting churches?
- a. The best way to learn is by doing!
 - b. Multiplying congregations grow even faster than multiplying individuals. By planting one multiplying church per year, we could plant over 1,000 new churches in 10 years!

