

International Conversation Cafe

Bible Topic: The Great Commission

There are many people around the world who ask themselves, "What is God's plan for my life? What does God want me to do?" It's certainly an important question that is worth finding the answer to. But life is often complicated, unexpected, mysterious, and difficult. How are we supposed to figure out what God wants us to do? While questions like, "What car should I buy?" or "Whom shall I marry?" are not written in the pages of the Bible, there is an overall theme to the direction our lives should take. The good news is that God hasn't hidden the answer from us; He wants us to know His will for our life!

Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
4 For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods. ~Psalm 96:2-4

*Though this Psalm was written to Israel, who was Israel supposed to welcome to know God?
How would you describe what is the most important purpose in your life?
How does this Scripture fit in with your plans?*

God's plan to bring people salvation, that is to be saved from judgment came through Jesus Christ. Jesus came to the earth, to be the sacrifice for our sins and wrongdoings. He did this so that we could be accepted by God when we turn from our sins and trust in him. After Jesus died and came back from the dead, He met with the disciples several times. He could have just gone straight to heaven after his resurrection, but He chose not to. Obviously, He had something important to say to the disciples. During one of these moments, Jesus told the disciples,

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 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, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. ~Matthew 28:18-20

Restate the passage in your own words.

The word disciple means a follower, like a student or a trainee. According to this verse, how does one make a disciple of Jesus?

How do you feel about Jesus' command?

This wasn't the only time that Jesus spoke to His disciples after His resurrection. There were several other times that He expressed that He wanted His followers to tell people His story. Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-47, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8 all record Jesus telling the disciples to share the news with others. Why did Jesus say it five separate times though? Repetition is a way of emphasizing something important. Jesus wanted to make sure the disciples heard how he wanted the world to know about his love, sacrifice, resurrection, and offer of eternal life. John 3:16, the most famous verse in the whole Bible, sums up the good news.

God loved the world so much that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

This was something that everybody needs to hear, and God wanted to make sure His followers understood the importance of spreading this message everywhere.

Why do you think it is important to God that people throughout the world hear about Jesus Christ?

Though Jesus emphasized telling the good news of Jesus to the world, the idea of bringing the nations to know God is not new. As long ago as Abram, God revealed a plan to bring the nations to worship him. About Abraham he said,

Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. ~Genesis 18:18

This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. All families of the world find blessing through knowing Jesus.

God's goal is to have all people around the world know God and to worship Him. In fact, there are over 1,600 times in the Old and New Testament where God talks about 'all nations' or 'all peoples' worshipping Him! For example, when God rescued the Hebrews from Egypt, He said that He did it so that the world would see His mighty power (Psalm 106:7-8). When David fought against the giant Goliath, he said it was so that all would know that God was real and that He was with Israel (1 Samuel 17:46). David's son, Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, prayed that if anyone from any nation visited God's temple in Jerusalem and asked God for something, that it be given to them to show God's power (1 Kings 8:41-43). A famous Bible verse, Psalm 46:10, reads, "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

What is surprising about these examples?

What other examples of God's power, point people to know and believe in Him?

The question of what is God's plan for your life or what does God want me to do with my life, is partly answered in His desire to have all people know Him through Jesus Christ.

How would you say God's plan fits with your life plans?

How we enact this 'mission' will be different for each person. How do you think God could work through your talents, abilities, and opportunities to tell others about God's love through Jesus Christ?

What sacrifices to take part in the Great Commission might you have to make?

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How would you describe this painting to someone who had not seen it before?

