

1) Jesus Has Authority Over All Things

- a) Therefore - in the light of Jesus' authority over all the heavens and earth
 - i) The command to make disciples is rooted in and logically subsistent to the supreme and cosmic authority of Jesus over all things
 - ii) This means that He has something to say about *everything* and that His definitions of virtue, goodness, evil, vice, glory, honor, and immorality are True.
 - (1) "only one thing is necessary" (Luke 10:42) – to sit at the feet of Jesus and humbly learn
- b) Our culture has successfully dichotomized the sacred and the secular into two distinct areas of authority, and the Church has largely swallowed the same
 - i) Public/Private are distinctly separate from one another:
 - (1) Public sphere of life depends on scientific fact and knowledge ("this study shows" trumps all truth claims) and should be binding on all people
 - (2) Private sphere of life is about personal preference, individual choices and desires, but should have no bearing on public life
 - (3) Thus, when Christians attempt to bring the biblical worldview (system of seeing and understanding what is True) into the public sphere we are immediately forced into the "keep it private" sphere where values and faith and personal preference reside
 - (a) And Christians have taken the bait and operated under this framework, keeping the sacred for the Sundays and the secular for the rest of the week *in how we think*
 - (b) We have been deceived into thinking that the public sphere is binding because it is bias-free, value-free, and morally neutral, but it is not
 - (c) The Church has operated this way, relegating the gospel and the authority of Jesus to the internal world, i.e. "the heart", and operating out of a distinctly different sphere at work, i.e. "the mind", as if the gospel had nothing to say to the mind
 - (i) We are to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ: the gospel is for the mind, not only the heart
 - ii) However, Jesus has authority over all things, and we are to set the gospel free from its cage of cultural accommodation to this sacred/secular divide by recognizing that Jesus has authority over Total Truth, not just religious truth
 - (1) Every worldview, whether secular or religious, must answer these types of questions:
 - (a) How did it all begin? Where did we come from? What is Ideal? (CREATION)
 - (b) What went wrong? What is the source of evil and suffering (FALL)
 - (c) What can we do about it? What will make the world right again? (REDEMPTION)
 - (2) We need to learn to "think Christianly" (Harry Blamires) about EVERYTHING because Jesus has authority over EVERYTHING
 - (a) What does Jesus have to say about art? Literature? Work? Retirement? Sexuality? Family? Authority? Submission?
 - (b) What does Jesus have to say about my job and how I work?
 - (3) Jesus reveals to us the Truth about the whole of reality, a perspective for interpreting every subject matter
 - (a) We have moved the gospel into the realm of only private and personal salvation, but the gospel also gives us a lens by which to interpret the entire world
 - (b) We need to submit to Christ Jesus for all things, and to help one another interpret the world around us biblically, in the sciences, politics, economics, bioethics, sexual ethics
 - iii) Discipleship is a cultural shift, not merely a personal shift
 - (1) Christians have believed that we can legislate a cultural transformation, thus more Christians are entering politics
 - (2) But, the reality is that politics and legislation *follow* a culture, not lead one

- (3) The only way to transform a culture is make disciples of Jesus and teach them what He says about everything as the sovereign King over the heavens and the earth
- c) This command to make disciples is rooted in, subsistent to, and dependent upon the authority of Jesus over *everything*, from art to math, Nature to knowledge, whether public or private
- 2) Make Disciples - a constantive aorist imperative, indicating *solemnity*, "Make this a priority"
- a) This is the overarching command from the authoritative Savior King
- i) Devoted Worshippers of God – He has ultimate priority of value and worth
 - ii) Faithful Witnesses to His Son – He has ultimate authority in heaven and over earth
 - iii) Humble Servants of His Word – He has the words of life which we trust
 - iv) Dependent upon His Holy Spirit – He has power poured out upon us with His very presence
- b) This command is a plural command
- i) The work of making disciples is not an individual endeavor, but a communal one
 - ii) It is the body of Christ making disciples, empowered and gifted by His Holy Spirit for this purpose, every part working for the unified purpose of the glory of God through the making of disciples
- c) "As you are going"
- i) The term "go" in the English makes the term sound like the command, but it is not. Rather, it is a temporal participle - "as you are going"
 - ii) Therefore, Jesus' command is not merely a command to go, but a command to make disciples "wherever you go"
 - (1) This makes our disciple-making endeavor extend not merely to intentional travel or cross-cultural mission, but rather to the entire culture of wherever the church exists as well. Therefore, we are to go and proclaim the gospel cross-culturally to "the nations" and we are to proclaim the gospel inter-culturally to "Jerusalem" as well. That is, our own culture.
- 3) The Means of Making Disciples is Union with Jesus and Knowledge of His Word
- a) BAPTIZING: Baptizing Them (Disciples) - present participle
- i) Evangelism and Conversion
 - (1) Imploring people to entrust themselves to King Jesus for their salvation and united to Him by such faith
 - (2) This union with Him, symbolized and sanctified by baptism, is the key to discipleship and transformation into His image
 - ii) Remember, this command is given in the context of the authority of Jesus over all things
 - (1) He is *worthy* of our allegiance
 - (2) He defines Truth: what is Real in every area of life
- b) TEACHING: Teaching Them (Disciples) - present participle
- i) To Keep His commands
 - ii) To Keep All His commands
 - iii) For He has commanded them
- c) The manner by which we make disciples is by seeing people united to Jesus Christ by faith (as symbolized and sealed by the act of baptism), and teaching the converted what King Jesus has revealed is true, right, and good so that we might walk according to His commands
- i) Baptize and Teach
 - ii) We do this as a community
 - (1) This is not to ignore that some are gifted in evangelism, proclamation, preaching, teaching, etc.
 - (2) Some are also gifted in mercy, hospitality, tongues, etc. and these gifts are to be used to build the church through conversions and the growth of knowledge of Jesus and allegiance to His commands, i.e. coming into line with His declaration of what is Real, good, and True

4) We Make Disciples by Baptizing Them

a) Christian Baptism signifies and solemnizes union with Jesus

i) We are united to Jesus by faith alone

(1) By the kind of faith which submits everything to Him, even the right to inform us and hold us accountable to how we ought to live

(2) "Faith without works" is a *kind* of faith (a dead one), but "faith which is evidenced by humble obedience" is the *kind* of faith that unites one to Christ Jesus

ii) Our baptism symbolizes this union

(1) Buried with him (under the water) – no more sin to pay down (rescue from God's wrath)

(2) Raised with him (up from the water) – newness of life, accepted by God as heirs

(3) Born to new life (born of water)

(4) His work makes our repentant faith effective, not our baptism, but baptism symbolizes this union

(a) Romans 6:3-6

(i) All baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death

1. Buried with him

2. United with him in a death like his

(ii) All baptized into Christ Jesus are raised to newness of life

1. United with him in resurrection like his (future)

2. Old self crucified so that we might live to God now, no longer slave to sin

(b) Galatians 3:27

(i) All who were baptized into Christ have 'put on' Christ

(ii) This is union language

(c) Colossians 2:12-13

(i) Dead in trespasses, alive with Christ (all the work of God)

(ii) Christians are clothed with Christ through faith

b) Christian Baptism also unifies us with His Church

i) One flock with one Shepherd, many branches in one Vine, Temple stones cemented together on one foundation, one body of many part with one Head, one Bride made pure for One Husband

ii) United to Him means that we are united to one another

(1) John 17:11,22

(2) Eph 4:1-6

(a) One body and one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism

(b) We are united together when we are united to Him

iii) Our baptism welds us to Him and to His Church

(1) Baptism is a little like a wedding ceremony and exchange of rings – the sign of the union

(2) It is the formal declaration of the covenant made from Christ to the Believer

(3) It unites us to a deep commitment to one another, too

(a) It's not just "me and Jesus", but "Jesus, my brothers/sisters, and me"

5) We Make Disciples by Teaching Them to Obey Jesus' Words Because of His Worth

a) The Gospel is the Power of God (Rom 1:16)

i) It is not a *mere* proclamation – it is the POWER OF GOD to all who believe

(1) 1 Cor 1:18 – the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but the power of God to those being saved

(2) 1 Thess 1:5 – gospel comes in the power of God with the Holy Spirit

- (3) 2 Thess 2:14 – it is the means of God’s effectual calling (“called through our gospel proclamation”)
- (4) 1 Pet 1:23 – it is the source of His regenerating work in those whom He has called, causing us to be born again to eternal life by repentant faith
- ii) If we want to see the power of God in our lives and in the lives of others, then it will only come through bringing the Good News of our union with the Authoritative Savior-King to our own souls and to the souls of others
 - (1) It is not our love for one another that is God’s power, but the gospel is God’s power
 - (2) It is not our love for the world that is God’s power, but the gospel is God’s power
 - (3) It is not our methodology or our winsomeness or our website that creates faith which grows into the fullness of Christ, but the gospel
- iii) The Gospel is the very Word of God, and we know that God’s voice has absolute power:
 - (1) Ps 29 – the voice of the Lord is powerful and majestic, bringing strength and peace to His children
 - (2) Ps 18:6,13-19,49 The voice of the Lord rescues powerfully
- b) The Gospel Brings and Grows Life (Col 1:6)
 - i) As God’s Word is it a living thing (bearing fruit and growing)
 - (1) When people lack life, true life, being bound up in the boredom and fruitless meanderings, they need the hope of the gospel
 - (2) Hopeless people, at a loss for life, need to hear about the Great King who died that they might live, renewed, forgiven, beloved by God
 - ii) bears fruit “as we understand it”
 - (1) This shows us that the key to discipleship is in understanding the gospel more and more
 - (2) If we want to grow, it comes through seeing more and more of Jesus and His glorious gospel of God and its expansive application to all things
 - iii) Continues throughout our lives “as it has been doing since the day you heard...”
 - (1) We never stop “learning the gospel”
 - (2) Our help to the world’s spiritual malaise never goes beyond the announcement of the gospel and what its implications are
 - (3) We are to be helping each other understand it better, apply it more precisely, and relying upon Christ fully, trusting in the promise that He who began this good work will be faithful to complete it (Phil 1:6) in the day of Jesus
- c) The Gospel is Our Hope (Col 1:23)
 - i) All of our problems come from a failure to know or apply the gospel to our minds, hearts, and actions
 - (1) Luther quote: “The truth of the Gospel is the principle article of all Christian doctrine....Most necessary is it that we know this article well, teach it to others, and beat it into their heads continually.” -Commentary on Galatians
 - (2) We all, to differing degrees, live around the truth of the Gospel and don’t “get” it.
 - (a) We grow, says Paul, by understanding all of its truth and walking accordingly
 - (b) Bold Humility of the Gospel
 - (3) A stage of renewal or growth is always the discovery of a new implication or application of the gospel – a seeing more of Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. (Col 1:28 ESV) until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (Eph 4:13 ESV) of its truth and heeding it.
 - (4) Both for individuals and for a church
 - ii) Paul refers in Colossians 1:23 to "the hope of the gospel."
 - (a) And there is no sweeter message of hope in all the world than to hear God announce that when you get up in the morning miserable and depressed with a sense of guilt and estrangement before a holy God, you can go to bed that very night—this very night—with a

quiet and peaceful heart knowing that every sin you have ever committed and ever will commit is forgiven and you are reconciled to the Almighty by the death of his Son and His Spirit is among you to transform you into the image of Jesus. That's the free offer of the gospel!

- (b) There is no more encouraging message of hope than to know that whatever you do, whether you make souffles, or shoes, or write novels, or fix cars, or raise children, you can do to the glory of God and it delights His soul *just as much as the "full-time" ministry things*
 - (i) I preach the Word to glorify God by revealing Him to you so that you know Him
 - (ii) But your punctual completion of those TPS reports at work can glorify God *just as much*, and He delights in such work *just as much* when it is done for Him

6) We Make Disciples According to the Glorious Promise of the Sovereign King's Nearness

- a) "Behold, I am with you"
 - i) Again, "behold" draws our sight, our vision, our gaze upon this truth: Jesus is emphasizing and drawing our gaze upon His nearness and His authority for our hope
 - ii) Thus, we have hope for the "how" because the Spirit of Christ is among us to see this goal met according to His power
 - (1) This is why the Spirit gives gifts within the Church, "for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith, even the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children..."(Eph 4:12) easily deceived or led astray.
 - (2) Note that maturity, i.e. mature disciples, is Christlikeness which is rooted in discernment of Jesus and resistance to deceitful schemes. Thus, teaching rooted in the proper understanding of the person and work of Christ Jesus is what matures us and unifies us.
- b) The import of the word "always"
 - i) This is our hope: we are never without the Spirit of Christ for our good and to fulfill that for which he has set us apart
 - ii) Jesus always finishes the work that He begins, so do not fear O Christian. Trust Him
 - iii) Cry out to Him in the moment of frustration and failure, of powerlessness in prayer, for He is near and He is powerful and He loves you more deeply than you can even comprehend
 - (1) The Cross proves that love
 - (2) The empty tomb proves that authority
 - (3) The gift of His Spirit proves that nearness

The Proclamation and Teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ's Accomplishments, Authority and Commands is the Means of Making Disciples.

This gospel is being preached in all creation under heaven, and it is for everybody! It belongs to the very heart of the gospel that you don't have to be Jewish, or Anglo-Saxon, or free, or male, or even good in order to be rescued and united to Christ Jesus, transformed to new life and being transformed by God through Him. It is a worldwide hope, bringing new life and flourishing joy throughout the entire world, and nothing else will satisfy our hearts in the end. It is the voice of the Lord that strips the forests bare. It is living and active and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit (Hebrews 4:11-12). It is like fire, says the Lord, and like a hammer which breaks the rock in pieces (Jeremiah 23:29) and melts the heart of stone. It goes forth from his mouth and does not return empty, but accomplishes that for which he sent it (Isaiah 55:11). The grass withers and the flowers fall but the word of our God stands forever (Isaiah 40:8).

And therefore it will reach to every people and tongue and tribe and nation; the ransomed will be called; the full number of the redeemed will come in; the eyes of all true Israel will be opened; and the Son of Man will come on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. The wheat and the tares will be divided: one into the furnace of fire, the other into the master's granary. And those who have believed the gospel will shine like the Son in the kingdom of their Father. And they shall reign forever and ever in the kingdom of light.

This is the great global hope of the gospel! Let him who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires take the water of life without price. Receive the gospel. Stand in it. Hold it fast. There is no other hope than "the hope of the gospel"! Amen!