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Update on Tanner and Marsha: Jordyn Hope Turley, Saturday, May 10, 2014, 7 lbs. 8 oz. and 20”

A Tribute to Scarlet Chasteen

- It was on a mission trip that my mom shared the gospel with me and led me to faith in Christ.
- I saw my mom and dad go on mission trips (Ukraine)
- I saw how my mom responded when my siblings were involved in missions (Jeremy in Slovakia for two years; Amy in Slovakia and now in India the past three years)
- In high school, my mom went on a mission trip with me to Haiti.
- My mom joyfully and faithfully supported my desires to take short-term mission trips while in college (Ukraine, China, Uzbekistan). This isn't because she's been trying to get rid of me ☺.
- My mom has been one of my biggest supporters in deciding to move to Boston to plant a church and take all the grandkids with me.
- My mom has had an influential part in shaping how I view life and missions.
- What would lead a mom who deeply loves her children to so gladly send them to the nations?

What we've learned so far: The Drama of Scripture and the Mission of God

- Act 1: Creation (Gen 1-2): Worship was ultimate and mission was non-existent.
- Act 2: the Fall (Gen 3): Worship was distorted by sin and, therefore, mission now exists.
- Act 3: Israel (the rest of the OT): God initiates redemption by choosing Israel to make her a light for the nations (Isa 49:6).
- Act 4: Jesus (the Four Gospels): He came, as Jew, to accomplish global redemption through his life, death and resurrection (Jews and Gentiles)

Context: this story sets the stage to understand these last words of Jesus to his disciples known as the Great Commission before he ascends into heaven. **Read Matthew 28:16-20**

This passage introduces Act 5: the mission of the Church (Acts and NT Letters)

The point: The mission of the church is to multiply disciples who impact the nations for the glory of God.

***If this is going to happen then our church must embrace three core truths . . .

I. Submit to the Authority of Christ (28:18).

- “All” dominates these verses: “all” authority, “all” nations, “all” that I have commanded you, “always” (all the days).
- “ALL authority in HEAVEN and on EARTH”

What is unique about Jesus' authority?

- It is not that Jesus' teaching is more authoritative now, but rather that the sphere in which he exercises absolute authority has been enlarged to include all heaven and earth.

“ . . . that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church,” (Ephesians 1:20-22)

- By virtue of Jesus' resurrection, God's authority is now mediated through him, the reigning King.

- “God does not send out his church to conquer. He sends us out in the name of the One who has *already* conquered. We go only because he reigns” (DeYoung and Gilbert).

The primary implication

- Since the Great Commission proceeds from the authority of Christ, we can engage in this mission with confidence of God’s sovereignty over all the earth.

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.” (Daniel 7:13-14)

Who or what is the authority in your life?

- One of the main hindrances to the fulfillment of the Great Commission is the lack of submission by believers to the Jesus’ absolute authority.
- What would RHC look like if we were characterized by a people completely submitted to the authority of Christ? What should submission look like?
- The Faith of the Centurion (Matt 8:5-13)

“For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it” (Matt 8:9).

- Here is how I teach my kids to obey: right away, all the way, and with a happy heart. Why? Because that is how I want them to obey Jesus one day.

Why don’t you submit to Jesus’ authority?

1. Someone else has taken his rightful place in your life (self, parents, boyfriend/girlfriend).
 - a. Who would you follow at the drop of a word? Who are your ears eager to obey?
 - b. Discipleship requires absolute obedience.

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26)

“Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:27)

“So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:33)

2. You don’t think Jesus is speaking to you.

Illustration: If you were at the main intersection in Medford Square and heard someone say, “STOP!” what would you do? You first discern whether this person has authority to demand my obedience? But second, you discern whether this person is speaking to me? A person’s authority does not lay claim on my life if they are not speaking to me.

Question: Is Jesus speaking to you?

1. In a very real sense, the answer to this is No. Jesus is not speaking to you.
2. On the other hand, in a very real sense, the answer is Yes.
 - a. Jesus did not envision 11 disciples making disciples of ALL nations.
 - b. They were to teach ALL the commands of Christ, including this one, the Great Commission.
 - c. Jesus’ promise to be with them to the end of the age looks past the initial eleven disciples to those that would come after them.

Implications: the Great Commission is not a calling for a special few; it is a command to be obeyed by all Christians.

*** If RHC is going to shake the nations for the glory of God, we must be a people characterized by complete submission to King Jesus and his rightful authority over our lives.

II. Obey the Command of Christ (28:19-20a).

The main emphasis is on the imperative verb “to make disciples of all nations.”

- This is not just a great suggestion, it is a great command. Make disciples who make disciples.
- Paul got this: “[A]nd what **you** have heard from **me** in the presence of many witnesses entrust to **faithful men** who will be able to teach **others** also” (2 Tim 2:2).

“All nations”

- This refers to all people, including Israel.
- With reference to the nations, Matthew’s Gospel has presented Jesus as the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3).
- “Perhaps the most striking element of the present command, however, is the fact that Jesus’ followers are called not merely to disciple *individuals*, but entire *nations*, indeed, *all nations*” (Kostenberger and O’Brien).
- See Matthew 24:3-14

“What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (Matt 24:3 ESV).

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt 24:14 ESV).

The Final Two Acts:

- Act 5: The Church (Acts and the NT Letters): Spread the news of this redemption. We don’t bring redemption; we proclaim redemption accomplished.
 - Social Justice and the Mission of God
 - Our God is a God of justice. We should fight for justice. In three months, my wife and I are traveling to China to adopt a girl and give her a forever home.
 - Complete justice will not reign until the consummation and return of Christ. Our mission is primarily about proclamation (make disciples, baptize, teach) and this proclamation should tell of the ultimate justice that awaits the consummation.
 - Ills: Menstrual Pads and the gospel in India
- Act 6: New Creation (Rev 21-22): Worship is ultimate and mission ceases to exist.

How do the three participles relate to this command to make disciples:

1. Going - attendant circumstance (thus not “as you are going” or “having gone”)

- Some have suggested that this should be translated “as you are going” make disciples and that it establishes no basis for *going* somewhere special to serve as missionaries.
- While it is true that we should be about making disciples as a pattern of our lives, this thrust needs a few qualifications.
 - First, this participle is dependent on the main verb, an imperative, and thus it also receives an imperatival force.
 - Since the context demands a ministry that extends to “all nations,” it is difficult to believe that “go” has lost all imperatival force.
- If the church is going to finish the task of missions, we must go to the nations. Implied in going is that people are being sent. It is our passion to be continually sending people to the nations.

2. Baptizing - this characterizes how disciples are made.

- Proclamation results in repentance and faith and the response of discipleship is baptism and instruction. Baptism implies repentance and forgiveness

“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ . . . So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.” (Acts 2:38, 41 ESV)

- “The NT can scarcely conceive of a disciple who is not baptized or is not instructed” (Carson).
- Trinitarian formula: Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Have you been baptized? Baptism is not a suggestion; it is a command. It is the going public of an internal faith in Christ.

3. Teaching

- We cannot divorce evangelism from discipleship. Our goal is not simply converts but followers of Jesus who are obeying him with their entire lives.
- We don’t just impart teaching or instruction to be learned, but content to be *obeyed*.
- Discipleship is implied in the Great Commission. You can’t teach someone to obey something that you aren’t seeking to obey yourself.
- We have turned holiness into something that is primarily concerned with what we “don’t do” instead of what we “should do.” Teaching people to “obey” involves not only “putting off sin” but also “putting on righteousness,” and this includes obedience to the Great Commission. What if we started measuring holiness at RHC by obedience to the Great Commission?
- If you are going to teach others, you must first learn yourself. Do you need to be discipled?

What is a disciple?

- “A disciple of Jesus is one who has **heard** the call of Jesus and has responded by **repenting**, **believing** the gospel, and **following** Jesus” (from *The Walk*).
- A disciple is both a learner and a follower.

This is the Mission of the Church and should define everything that we do.

- RHC Discipleship Strategy: turning unbelievers into global impacting disciples
- Personal Discipleship Strategy
 - Know what it means to be a disciple of Christ
 - Know the gospel.
 - Respond to the gospel.
 - Follow Jesus in gospel-motivated obedience
 - Prioritize the rhythms of grace through dependent discipline
 - Word, Prayer, Community, Stewardship
 - Make disciples who make disciples in Greater Boston
 - Know, Identify, Pray, Display, Invite, Declare, Disciple
 - Make Disciples who make disciples among the Nations
 - Pray, Give/Send, Go
- Once you embrace this task, it will change everything
 - Money, Time, Relationships, Parenting (teach your kids about the nations)

III. Depend on the Presence of Christ (28:20b).

- Jesus does not say “I *will* be with you” but “I *am* with you.”
- “The whole of every day.” The future horizon and each day is in view.

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us).” (Matthew 1:23 ESV)

- How does Jesus manifest his presence with believers today? His Spirit (cf. Luke 24:44–49; Acts 1:6–8; 2:4).

Implications for missions

- Have we created a church that doesn't even need the Holy Spirit of God?
- “The greatest hindrance to the advancement of the gospel to the nations today is the attempt of the church of God to do the work of God apart from the power of the Spirit of God” (David Platt).
- The greatest hindrance is not the self-indulgent mentality of our society but the self-reliant trust in ones self.
- Are we dependent on ourselves or are we desperate for his Spirit?
- Would RHC be described as a people desperate for the Sprit?

Conclusion

- We do not know how much time is left in Act 5, between Christ's first coming and his return in Act 6. But we do know that he will not return until all the nations hear the gospel. This is the task that should consume our lives until he returns.

How will we finish the mission?

1. Start by making disciples of a few in Greater Boston.
 - Family: moms and dads, make disciples of your kids
 - Co-workers/Classmates
 - Neighbors
 - Friends
2. Will you commit to giving one week of your time to mission efforts in the next year? I guarantee this will transform the other 51 weeks of your year. There's nothing better that you could do to burn a passion for the nations than to take a short-term trip.
 - Toronto Trip: 1st week of August
 - India: first few weeks of November
3. You need to get a passport.

What if RHC began to seriously pursue this vision of raising up a multitude of multiplying disciples who were shaking the nations for the glory of God.