

FOR PASTORS

The King and His Command



**“The Great Commission
Is not an option to be considered,
But a Command to be obeyed.”**

Hudson Taylor

THE KING AND HIS COMMAND

Matthew 28:18-20

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

The above verses are what are commonly called, "The Great Commission." it is divided into three parts. **First**, God said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations:" This means that Christ wanted the disciples to "preach the Gospel to all nations." All other teaching comes later. **Second**, Christ gave the disciples the commandment to baptize them. The second part of the Great Commission clearly reveals that He was talking about preaching the Gospel and getting people saved, because he immediately followed that by commanding them, saying, "...baptizing them in the name of the of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Therefore, the first part HAD to be talking about teaching a message where men could be saved. Salvation is always a prerequisite for baptism. **Third**, God said, "Teaching them to observe all things..." Before giving the disciples these commands, Christ "sets the stage" by clearly showing to them, that he has the authority to give them commands.

I. THE POWER OF THE KING'S COMMAND (Mathew 28:18)

In Matthew 28:18 Christ states, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye **therefore**..."

Anytime you find the word, "**therefore**" in a text, always go back and see "what it is there-for!" It always has a purpose for being there. It always refers back to "something" that has great emphasis on what the speaker is about to say. In this case, Jesus Christ was about to give the Disciples a commandment. Before doing so, He is reminding those disciples of Why they should go when He gives them a commandment!

In many places in the Bible the English word "power" comes from the Greek word, "dunamis," which, in the English means "**Dynamite**." That is the case in Acts 4:33, which says. "And with great power (**dynamite**) gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."

The word "power" used in Matthew 28:18 is not the Greek word "dunamis." It is the Greek word, "exousial," which in the English means "Authority." It is military term that was often used in the days when the Bible was written. The words "Go ye **therefore** ..." in verse 19 refers back to verse 18 where Christ said, "All power (**All authority**) is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

When Christ said, "given unto me, he was reminding the disciples that "God the Father" in heaven had delegated "all authority to Him! Go to Ephesians 1:17-23 and you will see one of the scriptures where God delegated ALL AUTHORITY to His son, Jesus Christ.

*"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put **all things** under his feet, and gave him to be the **head over all things to the church**, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."*

After declaring that "all authority" had been given to Him by the Father, He further explained to the disciples "the scope" of that authority. He said, "All power (authority) is given unto me ... **in Heaven and in earth.**" What was Christ saying about "the scope" of His authority? Christ said that God had given him "authority" over things in heaven.

The angels of heaven are subject to Christ's authority! If Christ says to an angel "Go," then the angel goes! The angels "do not talk back" to Christ! The angels do not "ask questions" such as, "Why?" They are obedient. They do exactly what Christ commands them to do. The **angels** are subject to the authority of The King! The angels know that Jesus Christ is the King of Kings. They know He is their "commander-in-chief" and they obey His every command! Then Christ continued by saying, "...and in earth."

The demons are subject to His authority! The devil himself, and all his demons have to "have the permission of Christ" before they can do anything they desire to do. (See Job 1:6-12). In Matthew 8: 28-32, the demons, when they were ordered by Christ to come out of the two men whom they had possessed, had to ask the permission of Christ before they could enter the herd of swine! When Christ said, "Go," they went! The demons know that "Jesus Christ is the King of Kings. They know that He is the "Commander-in-chief" of the universe! They know that He has "all authority." Therefore, the demons of hell obey His every command!

That is the reason for the word, "therefore" in Matthew 28:19 where Christ said, "Go ye **therefore**..." Again, that phrase was a "military term" which was used often in that day and that culture. Everyone understood that "phrase" as a military command. Jesus Christ was establishing the fact with his disciples, that He has "all authority" over them and that He has every right to tell them what he was about to tell them. In simple language, that everyone understands, Jesus said, "I have the authority" to call whomsoever I will. I have authority to send them wheresoever I will. I have authority to tell them to do whatsoever I want done!

I was in the United States Marine Corp from 1954 through 1957, therefore, I can identify with "authority" and with commands "to go" and do a certain thing. I was taught and trained to "be obedient" and to follow the command, regardless of if I understood why or "what for." I obeyed the command given regardless of "if I wanted to or did not want to." I was trained to say, "Yes Sir" and obey! To my knowledge, I obeyed every command given me! On Parris Island, the Marine Drill Instructor had a "saying." I learned that the Drill Instructor

"said what he meant and meant what he said." Then, the saying was, "We might not be able to make you do what we command you to do, but we can make you wish you had!"

The local church of today needs to realize that "we are in the military." We are "soldiers of the Cross." First Timothy 1:18 states that truth.

*"This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good **warfare**;"* You and I, according to II Timothy 2:3-4, are "soldiers" and we are in a warfare! The Church is "in a warfare."

*"Thou therefore endure hardness, **as a good soldier of Jesus Christ**. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."*

Dr. John R. Rice, in a song which he wrote years ago, said, "**It's a battlefield brother, not a recreation park....**" You and I are in a warfare! The church is in a warfare! Yet we act as if we were having a Sunday School social! We should not act like that. We are "soldiers of the Cross!" We are to march "**Beneath the Banner of the Cross**" - **under the King's Command - and we are to be obedient!**

The words found in Matthew 28:18-20, in military language of today, Jesus Christ is the "Supreme-Allied-Commander-in-Chief" and gives marching orders to the New Testament Church. Better stated, it is a commandment, "to **His church!**" We are the church that Jesus Christ purchased with His own blood! Am I correct in thinking the church should be obedient?

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:27)

That commandment was given to "His church - to His people." Who is included in His commandment? Every person in the church is included. There are "no exceptions!"

II. THE PEOPLE OF THE KING'S COMMAND (Matthew 28:19)

In Matthew 28:19, to whom was Jesus talking? He was talking to His disciples. He was giving them "marching orders" to "go to the battlefield" and to "engage in a warfare!" Concerning those last words that Jesus Christ spoke to the church, I think they are some of the most important words that He spoke during his time he was on earth in the form of a man. I am sure everyone knows and agrees that Jesus Christ and God the Father are one. Keep that truth in mind as I share an example. Using myself as the example, as a father of three children, I have tried to imagine myself being in Christ's place. If I had reached the time in life when I knew that I was going to depart and leave "my children" for a long, long period of time, I would choose the most important words that I had ever spoken to "my children" before I departed and left them. My words, at that time in my life, would be the things that I most wanted them to remember and the things I most wanted them to do while I was gone. I believe that is EXACTLY what Jesus Christ did when He said those departing words to "His children" shortly before He departed to Heaven! To Christ, I believe they were

the most important words that He could have spoken. If He were here today, He would repeat those very same words, with no changes whatsoever.

To whom was Jesus taking? In that day, He was talking to His disciples. To whom is Jesus talking today? He is talking to "the local church." The disciples, in verse 16, were the "foundation of the first church ever established on the earth." Those disciples took that commandment seriously. They "went" and they preached the Gospel everywhere in the known world at that time! Today, we are sure beyond that, Christ giving that commandment to each "local church." The command "Go ye..." is immediately followed by the command of God, to "baptize" them. The local church is the only institution on earth that has Biblical authority to "baptize."

This section is titled, "THE PEOPLE OF THE KING'S COMMAND. Which people in the church are to be involved in carrying out the King's Command? We stated before, referring to the book of Nehemiah, that the Bible is clear that "every" person has a part and every person is needed. That is illustrated in a "trio" of chapters in the Book of Acts.

Let me give you a Bible illustration. Every person on the earth today, their family's tree, can be traced back to Genesis 9:18-19 and verified in Genesis 10:31-32. We are descendants of Ham, Shem, or Japheth. These are the three sons of Noah who came forth from the ark.

"And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread." (Genesis 9:18-19)

"These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations. These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood." (Genesis 10:31-32) I care not what the modern-day Anthropologist says about there being 4, 5 or 6 nations on the earth today. They do not correct the Bible. There is no person on the face of the earth today that did not originally come from the "three sons of Noah."

God, through those three men divided the earth into three races or divisions. Today, those three races have been identified by "honest" Anthropologists or Biologists as 1) Shem - Mongoloid, 2) Ham - Negroid, and 3) Japheth - Caucasoid.

Now, let's go to Acts 8:26-35 and see who God used in reaching a "man from Ethiopia," the descendants of Ham.

*"And the angel of the Lord spake unto **Philip**, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, **a man of Ethiopia**, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep*

*to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? **Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.**"*

God used a man named Phillip. Who was Phillip? **Phillip was "a deacon!"** (Acts 6:5).

Now, let's go to Acts 9:10-12 & 17 and see who God used in reaching a man named "Paul" "who was a "Jew" and of the Mongoloid race, the descendants of Shem.

"And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord." (Verse 10)

"And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth," (Verses 10-11)

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." (Verse 17).

God used a man named Ananias. Who was Ananias? **Ananias was "a layman!"**

Now, go to Acts 10:1-2, 20-22 & 34-36 and see who God used in reaching a man of the Italian band, which was of the Caucasoid, the descendants of Japheth.

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway." (Verses 1-2)

*"While **Peter** thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?" (Verses 20-22)*

*"Then **Peter opened his mouth**, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)" (Verses 34-36).*

God used a man named Peter. Who was Peter? Peter was **"a preacher!"**

In those three chapters we have a man from each of the three races on the earth; the Mongoloid, the Negroid, and the Caucasoid. God used three different men to reach the three different races of whom the earth is covered, with the Gospel of Christ. He used Phillip, a

deacon, Ananias, a layman, and Peter, a preacher! **Those three men picture "people in every group, in every New Testament church in the world! Those three groups of men "make up t he church!"** They all had part in Preaching the Gospel to the "...uttermost of the earth." Who are "the people of the King's Command?" EVERY PERSON IN EVERY CHURCH are to have a part in "Go ye..." The King's Command should be the "center of everything and every activity" which the church has! Preaching the Gospel to the uttermost part is the MAIN business of the church! Moreover, the MAIN thing in a church is to be sure the MAIN thing, stays the MAIN thing. The King's Command is "what the church is all about."

III. THE PLAN OF THE KING'S COMMAND (Matthew 28:18)

The King's command has been passed down through the ages to every Bible believing local church on earth today. Sad to say, the church today does not seem to take the commandment of Christ as serious today as churches in the past took the commandment. In the last section, the Scripture painted a picture of "the scope" of the authority which Jesus Christ has. He has "all authority" and that authority extends to things in heaven and earth. We pictured His authority over the angels. Then we pictured His authority over the demons. They all obeyed His commandment. However, there is one group of people, over whom God has authority, who, from their actions, seem to take "The King's Command" as something the church should "be involved in," but it is not the "THE MAIN THING." What group is that?

The people of God! This is the only group in "heaven and in earth" that are not totally and completely obedient to the Commandment of the King! The King's Commandment is not the MAIN thing in the church today, at least when you consider what most churches are doing "in their church" as compared to what they are doing "outside of the United States." Look at Isaiah 1:2-4.

*"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, **my people doth not consider.** Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward."*

The same is true today in the New Testament Church. We read the commandment of the King in Matthew 28:19 where He says, "Go ye..." and we act like He said, "If you can make time, please go an tell" or "If you do not have anything more important to do, I would appreciate it if you would go and preach the Gospel."

The church today, by in large, does not take the commandment of the King as seriously as it was to Him, when He gave it! Most churches today "boast" in the fact that their church is giving 10% of their total income to missions. That means that that church is spending 90% of their total income on themselves!

The church today does not take it as seriously as the disciples did when Christ was on earth and gave the commandment. You may be asking the question, "How do you know that is truth." I will give you "three facts" that testify that the church has not taken the King's commandment seriously.

THE CHURCH'S LABORERS HAVE GOTTEN FEWER!

In Matthew 9:37-38, Christ said, "...*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*" If the harvest was plenteous and the laborers were few in that day, what would the Lord say today?

According to www.census.gov the population of the world today is 7.8 billion. According to the same site, of that 7.8 billion, 330,494,117 are in the United States! That means that 4.4% of the world's population live inside of the United States. That means that 95.6% of the world's population live "outside" of the United States!

There are no means of determining the total number of missionaries who live and serve in the countries outside of the United States, as all news and web sites that post numbers on that subject, include missionaries who do not preach the Gospel, like the Catholic Church, Jehovah Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventist, and several others which are "false prophets." However, Missionary Research, a few years ago, determined that of all "full-time" people in the ministry that preach the true Gospel, about 94% of the "full-time" workers serve inside the United States. That 94% are ministering to 4.4% of the world's population. That leaves 6% of all full-time workers outside the United States, who are ministering to 95.6 % of the world's population! That is WAY out of balance! In "my opinion," I cannot imagine God planning it to turn out that way. The "cause and the solution" to that problem can be found in one simple "two-fold-phase:"

"We reap a harvest where we put a strong emphasis - we reveal where our heart is by where we put a strong emphasis."

Why is this happening? It is happening because churches in the United States ARE NOT OBEYING the "marching orders" which God gave to the church. God clearly said, "Go ye...to ALL nations". God reminded us of that command in John 4:35, "*Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and **look on the fields;** for they are white already to harvest.*" Think about this. How many times have you heard a pastor of an independent Baptist church in the States preach from Matthew 28:18-20? How many times have you heard a pastor preach and challenge people to "surrender their life" to serve God on some foreign field where the Gospel has not been preached? I understand that most churches have some type of a "Mission Conference" once a year. I have preached many of those conferences. A Mission Conference should be to "challenge people to obey" what their pastor has been preaching through the year!

Also, many times when challenged to surrender their life to God to "go" and preach the Gospel in some country where people have never heard the Gospel, men young and old have made excuses. Having been in the ministry for over 50 years, I think I have heard, at least, almost every excuse, and there have been plenty of them! I recall a couple of excuses I have heard. One excuse I have heard several times is, "God is using me in a good work here!" Who do you think God calls to go to some foreign field where people have never heard the Gospel? God does not call some person sitting on the back row on Sunday morning who is "as dead and dry as last-year's-bird nest!" When God called Paul to the mission field in Acts 13, the Bible says, "*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me*

Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." They were working in the church there, and God said, "Go!" That is the type of person God calls to the foreign field.

God was not talking to "certain" members of the church when He gave the commandment "Go ye...!" God was talking to "every member" of the church when He said, "Go!" Many of you have heard me say, "The New is in the Old Contained, the Old is in the new explained." Turn in your Bible to the book of Nehemiah chapter four. God had commanded Israel to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was their leader. In Nehemiah 4:17, after the people had been assigned a part of the work of rebuilding the walls in chapter three, it states, "*They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, **every one** with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.*"

If you go back one chapter in Nehemiah to chapter three, and read the entire chapter, you will find that in verse one, the **work started with the "high priest."** That is where EVERY work of God should start. From that point on in the chapter you will find the phrase, "next to him built..." or "next to him built..." at least 30 times! In between those 30 times, there are at least 10 verses where it gives the names of families and the part they had in building the wall! There was only one group who did not "take part in the work." That group is found in verse five where it says, "and the nobles put not their necks to the work of the Lord." The "nobles" were people who thought they were "above" doing that kind of work!

The King said, "All authority is given unto me, Go ye therefore ..." What was Christ saying to the disciples? He was saying I have all the authority in the universe! I am your commander-in-chief. I have every right to tell you what to do! What is Christ saying to the church today? He is saying, I have "all authority;" therefore, I have every right to tell you to "Go ye therefore and..."

It has been said that "this was Christ's last message to the church." That is not correct! Matthew 28:19-20 was the "last message" that Christ gave to the church, while He was still here on earth, in the form of a man. God's last message to the New Testament church is found in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. In that "message to the church," God said, REPENT or else!

That means that we have far, far more soldiers at home than we do "on the front lines" where the fields are white unto harvest. The church's laborers have gotten fewer, and fewer. At the same time...

THE CHURCH'S FIELD HAS GOTTEN SMALLER!

A few years ago, I was preaching a Mission Conference in a distant State for a very good friend of mine. I will not use his name as he is "at home with the Lord" now, but his name is still very well known. I had preached his Conference several years and we had a great relationship. One day during the conference, he came by the motel and picked me up to go to lunch. After lunch, we got back in his car and started to the motel when he asked, "Are you busy at the motel this afternoon?" I responded, "Not really. What do you have in mind?" He said, "If you are not busy and don't need to get back to the motel, I'd like to drive around and show you "our church field." I said, "Oh, no! I don't have time to see your church field." He said, "Oh, it won't take long. Maybe a couple of hours at most."

I said, "Oh, no! There is not any way in the world for you to show me your church field in two hours." Again, he responded, "No, no, we can see it in not more than two hours." (I was not being humorous and not trying to "have fun" but to make a point.) I said, "Brother _____, if you and I are going see your church field, then we need to start by flying to Mexico and surveying that country. That will take us at least a month. From there we can move to Central America, and then to South America and survey all of the counties there. That will take several months. After that we can fly to Africa...." I finished by quickly touring the world and closed by saying, "If we are going to see **your church field**, it cannot be done in less that two years!"

He laughed and said, "Ernest, you know what I'm talking about." I responded, "Yep, I know exactly what you're talking about. The problem is - you don't know what you're talking about!" We laughed and he continued to show me "the area around where his church is located."

Churches today have a "very small view" of what their church field "REALLY is," according to the Word of God. The field of the local church is "the world!" In Matthew 13 Jesus had given a parable of the "wheat and the tares." The disciples then asked him to "explain" that parable to them. Jesus explained the parable to them in Matthew 13:37-38, which says, "*He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; **The field is the world;** the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;*"

I understand, and agree, that the church has a great responsibility to reach the people in the neighborhood in which that church is located. However, we should never forget that when we stand before the "Judgment Seat of Christ" and he says, "Give an account," it will be just as much for the people in the jungles of South America and the darkest part of Africa, as it will be for the "neighborhood around our church." God help us "to enlarge our vision and burden our hearts for the people of the world, as we have for the neighborhood around our church."

Before the first local church was even totally established in the book of Acts, Jesus Christ said to that small group of disciples, "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and **unto the uttermost part of the earth.***" PLEASE NOTICE that the Lord Jesus said, "...to the uttermost part..." It does not say, "...to the uttermost partS..." There is no "s" on the word "part." It clearly teaches that Jesus Christ instructed that first church "to do all that they could possibly do to preach the Gospel to the world" to the "last place on earth, and to the last person on face of the earth."

Again, I am not being critical. This is simply a "lack or being taught or lack of understanding, on the part of many pastors. I have heard a good number of pastors use the language I will share following this, and I feel 100% sure they "meant well." However, when a good independent Baptist church in the States has a Mission Conference, many times the pastor will walk to the pulpit, introduce the missionary by name who is speaking that night, and say, Brother _____ is going to come to the pulpit now and is going to "share **his**

field with us." No! He is not going to share "his field" with the church. A missionary DOES NOT HAVE A FIELD. He is not going to work on **his field**! He is going to go to the pulpit and "share with the church the needs on a part of THEIR field." God has called him to "go and labor" on that field, but that field is "the church's field."

I do not recommend that a young missionary who is starting out on deputation do this, but it would be "scriptural." I am simply trying to "make a point" and cause people to think.

A missionary on deputation, according to the Scriptures, could call a pastor and say, "Pastor _____, I am missionary John Doe! You need to give me a date when I can come to your church for a service. God has called me to go and preach the Gospel on a part of "your church field. I need to come to your church and tell you and your church about a part of **your church field** that is in terrible condition. It is all grown up with grass, weeds, thorns and thistles and it is not producing any converts for the cause of Christ. God has called me to go there, on your behalf - and to **labor on your field**, and you need to "know what the condition is and how great the need is on that field. Also, you need to take me on for support because it is "your church field" and one day you will have to give an account for the people who live there who have not yet heard the Gospel.

We need to all remember this. The King gave the "Great Commission" to the church. God did not give the Great Commission to "any missionary." Missionaries are only men whom God calls "out of churches," that the church "sends to that country" to plant churches, on behalf of "the church."

As I said, I do not recommend the above. But, let me ask you a question. "Would that be according to the Scriptures? A second question, "How would a pastor react if he got a phone call like that?" There would be a negative response by the pastor - IN SPITE of it being true and scriptural! The church needs to "wake up" and realize that according to the Scriptures they will one day "give an account for their field, which is the world." The church's laborers have gotten fewer, the church's field has gotten smaller, and

THE CHURCH'S BUDGET HAS GOTTEN LARGER!

I shared earlier that only about 6% of all "full-time true Christian workers" that teach and preach the truth concerning Salvation, are serving in countries "outside" of the United States and that about 94% of true Christian worker are living and serving "inside" the United States. Not only is that percentage true about "laborers" but according to reliable sources, they estimate that only between 6% and 8% of every dollar that churches spend is spent outside the United States. That means that between 92-94% of every dollar that churches spend, it is spent "inside" the United States on "the church's budget." To narrow that down even further, the regular independent Baptist church in the United States is spending 90% of their total income - within in 10 miles of their church's building.

Analyzing the "commandment" that the King gave to the church those figures should be reversed! The church in the United States should be spending 10% on themselves, and 90% to reach the people with the Gospel that live on the "fields that are white unto harvest" and have never heard the Gospel.

Please do not misunderstand me. I have nothing against a church having a nice building in which to meet. I am not against, nor do I have any problem, against a church that has various ministries, staff members, etc., but, at the same time, the church should always keep their priorities in the right order. Most of the churches in the New Testament were successful and blessed of God, but did not have a building of any kind to meet in! The "commandment" given to the church by Christ should be **"at the top"** of the church's list of priorities. Every other thing in the church should come behind "the commandment" and everything else that the church does should have the purpose of "promoting and contributing" to the carrying out of "The King's Command!"

Dr. Vance Havner was preaching at the Southern Baptist Convention National Meeting in 1960. He preached a message titled, "God's Anyone's" out of Revelation 3:20. His theme was that the Convention have been God's Anyone's for so long that they had gotten where they thought they were God's "Only Ones" and if they did not repent, God would "set them aside as God's only Ones" and would find others who would be willing to be "God's Anyone's." He closed the message by saying, "Churches today are building million-dollar launching pads but lighting fire-crackers; they are dressed up like deep-sea divers and pulling stoppers out of bathtubs!" They reminded him of "a cat drowning herself in a bowl of cream." That pretty well describes the church in the 21st century!

In my 50 years of being in the ministry, traveling and preaching Mission Conferences across the United States, I know of only one pastor who had a goal of his church giving 90% of their income to missions. That was Dr. Harold Sightler who was the pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. He and I preached together a couple of times. Once we were in Fitchburg, Massachusetts together preaching a Mission Conference. During the day we visited D. L Moody's school in Northfield Mt. Hebron. On the school grounds, there was a granite monument that had the names of 100 young men who stood on that spot and surrendered their lives to the call of God to preach the Gospel on foreign fields. Dr. Sightler and I knelt and had prayer. I can still hear Dr. Sightler praying, "Oh, God! Do it again God, do it again!" He had a heart for missions. Another day we visited A. J. Gordon's grave, and then, another day, we visited the church in Salem where Adoniram Judson went to church, after which we drove to Marblehead, where Judson boarded a ship, sailed to Burma and did not return for 35 years. Each place we knelt and had prayer together. Dr. Sightler, wept and begged God, crying, "Do it again, God! Do it again!"

It was on one of those days, that Dr. Sightler and I were having lunch and shared his burden for Tabernacle Baptist Church. I still remember his words as if they were yesterday. He said, Brother Gambrell, I believe every church should be giving 90% of their money to missions. After all, 90% of the world lives outside the United States. He never reached that goal, but when he passed into heaven, Tabernacle Baptist Church was giving 72% of their total income to missions! Amen!

Personally, I would not say that churches should be giving 90% of their income to missions, but I do think that in the light of the truths we know in the Bible and the great number of people around the world, outside the United States, that have never heard the Gospel and do not have any idea how to have their sins forgiven and go to Heaven, I believe every Bible believing church in the United States should be giving at least 50% of their income to reach those "on fields white unto harvest."

Even our Lord Jesus, when He was on earth, in the form of a man, said the following:

*"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, **Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.**" (Mark 1:35-38)*

*"And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, **I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.**" (Luke 4:2-43)*

IV. THE PROMISE OF THE KING'S COMMAND (Matthew 28:20)

The Promise of the King's command is "brief and simple." Christ said,

*"... and, lo, I am with **you** always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

What better promise can we ask for? What better reward could you have for "being obedient? None! Jesus, the Son of God, the second part of the Godhead that created the heavens and the earth, promised, "He would be with us." The same Jesus that walked on water promised He would be **with you!** The same Jesus who made the blind to see promised He would be **with you.** The same Jesus who turned water into wine promised He would be **with you.** The same Jesus who raised Lazarus from the dead promised He would be **with you.** That same Jesus that made a promise to Joshua when He said,

*"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. **Have not I commanded thee?** Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: **for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.**" (Joshua 1:8-9)*

*"And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." As I was with Moses, **so will I be with thee.** (Joshua 3:7)*

That same Jesus promised that He would be with you, and, He would be with you, "...unto the end of the world. Amen."

What better promise could you ask for? There is not a better promise in the universe! Therefore, Honor the King, obey His Command, and He will honor you! He will "...*make thy way prosperous, and THEN thou shalt have good success!*" (Joshua 1:8)

GOD'S POSSIBLE RESPONSE TO DISOBEDIENCE.

Just before Christ ascended back to Heaven, He appointed the church as His steward over His work on earth while He was gone. What will "the church" say when Christ comes again, and ask the church to "give an account?" Has the church been "a good and faithful

steward of "the King's Command"? If you consider, 1) The Scriptures, and, 2) the Statistics, how can anyone defend or justify the actions of the church over the last 60 to 70 years? How can anyone believe that God **intended, planned or approves of** the church in the United States to keeping 95 % of all full-time workers in this country, which has less than 5% of the population of the world, while sending only 5% of full-time workers to other countries, which make up 95% of the population of the world? I am only asking a question. "Can anyone believe that God planned it that way?" Can any church believe that God is such "a bad mathematician" that He figured those percentages? Can any church believe that God is so "unfair and unjust" in sharing the gospel with "all people" that He "led the church" to use 95% of their resources, both manually and financially, in their local neighborhood? The answer is No; God did not plan it that way! God is not a bad mathematician. God is not unjust or unfair in who he wants to hear the Gospel and who He does not want to hear the Gospel. God planned to have His Gospel preached to every tribe and every nation on the face of the earth, "... to the uttermost part!" In other words, His plan was that the Gospel be made known to the last creature on the face of the earth! Has the church been "a good steward of the manifold grace of God?" I have my opinion, but I will let each church individually answer that question.

I am sure that most people reading this message has studied the "Old Testament." Bible colleges and institutes call the course, "Old Testament Survey." In a study of the Old Testament, you will find that God, in all five of the dispensations found in the Old Testament, which start in Genesis and continue through the entire Old Testament, you will find that "God gave man the responsibility of "managing" His creation." In all five dispensations, "from Genesis 1 through Genesis chapter 11, man failed in their "stewardship" of God's work. From Genesis chapter 11 through the end of the Old Testament, the nation of Israel, who were "God's chosen people," failed. Why did they all fail? In every case they failed, because they **"thought that they knew better** than God knew, how to manage life and work on His earth."

The church today seems to have fallen to that same point. The church thinks they know better how to manage God's work than He does. Please keep in mind that the church of today is serving in what is called The Laodicea Age. God said of the Laodicea church, "*Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked...*" (Revelation 3:17). That description seems to fit most churches in the 21st century. Dr. Vance Havner's illustration, which I quoted above, "Churches are building million-dollar launching pads and lighting firecrackers, they are dressed up like deep-sea divers and pulling stoppers out of bathtubs."

For examples of what Dr. Havner was referring to, nowhere in the Scripture does God so much as mention the church "building a building." I am not against churches having a building. Buildings are nice but, to spend millions of dollars on buildings while billions of people have never heard the Gospel, I cannot picture Jesus and the apostles building that type of building.

To some degree, that same thing seems to have happened to the "early church" in the book of Acts. In Acts 1:8, Christ gave "The Great Commission" to the early church, only in different words. He said, "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon*

you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

From the Scriptures, the apostles and disciples were busy serving the Lord. However, this is no record of them going outside of Jerusalem to preach the Gospel until you reach Acts chapter 8, which is about one year later. At that time, the Scriptures read...

*"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.**"*

I am wondering. Is that what it is going to take, for the church of today to start obeying The King's command, and start, "balancing the books" and start sending more and more men to "preach the Gospel" to the "...uttermost part?" I do not know the answer, but I cannot help but believe that God is displeased with the manner in which the church has taken His commandment so lightly and has used 95% of their man power and 95% of their financial resources on their "own church buildings and ministry."

In Revelation 3:18, as the Lord closes his letter to the church in Laodicea, He said,

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and ... anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

It seems that - that is what the church needs to do today. "...that thou mayest see." See "how far out of balance" the use of the church's manpower and financial power is being used by the church of today. After looking, God said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." As you know, the word "repent" means, "turn and go God's way! My prayer as I come to the close of the message, is that the church will truly repent and will

...turn and go God's way!