

Dear Friends and Family,

General George S. Patton is quoted as saying,
“Never tell people how to do things.
Tell them what to do,
and they will surprise you with their ingenuity”

Jesus said in Matthew 28:18-20,
“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;
and lo, I am with you always,
even to the end of the age.”

We often refer to this passage as the Great Commission.
Jesus commissions His followers,
By telling us WHAT to do.
He does not however,
go into any detail as to HOW we should do that.

Pastor's Point of View

The big question: **How can we be daily focused on the Great Commission?**

Day 1 - READ Luke 2:15-20

1. This scripture is probably one you have read and heard throughout your entire life. Have you ever considered this text in depth? This week, during my sermon, I unpacked these verses a little more.
2. Look at Luke 2:17-18 “*They spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.*” The shepherds went throughout Bethlehem- announcing the arrival of the Christ child! They spread the word! And **ALL** who heard it... Who is all? How many? Who exactly did the shepherds tell?
3. What stands out to you about this passage of scripture?
4. The shepherds were told WHAT happened- the Messiah had been born. They were told WHAT signs to look for - a babe lying in a manger. But! They were not instructed

regarding HOW to go about finding Him. (that we know of). But they did it! They found him and in a hurry too! And then they spread the word!

5. How does this passage shed new light on the great commission?

Day 2 - READ 2 Timothy 1:8

1. This is a remarkable WHAT statement. Paul gives Timothy an exhortation to join him in suffering for the gospel. HOW is by the power of God. Scripture is fascinatingly void of a step-by-step process for doing things. We are given instruction on WHAT we are to do, and even told we have the means by the power of God, but we are then left to our own ingenuity.
2. What personal issues do you need to deal with today as it pertains to being ashamed of the gospel?
3. How did the shepherds react when they heard the good news of the Messiah?
4. What can you learn from these two passages of scripture and how you can be bold in sharing your faith with others and inviting them to church?

Day 3 - READ 2 Timothy 1:9-11

1. Christmas points to the cross. God saved us. Called us. According to His purpose and grace. By Christ from all eternity, who appeared as a baby in a manger. So that...He might go to the cross, abolish death, raise from the grave, bring immortality to light, all ***through the Gospel.***
2. The gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ. Who do you know that needs to hear the good news this Christmas?
3. What do you need to do to ensure they hear the good news?
4. Now, ***how*** are you going to make that happen?

Day 4 - READ 2 Timothy 1:12-14

1. *I know whom I have believed.* No better statement could be found about the relationship we are called to have with our savior. This is no mere religion. We are to know Jesus, in whom we place our faith, and He will keep us until we are together with Him! AMEN and AMEN!
2. So much in our culture today speaks against Christ, the Bible, and sound doctrine. What do you need to do to ensure you are holding to the standard of sound words?
3. Who might you know that speaks against the sound word of God?
4. When speaking of guarding the treasure within us, how can you ensure that those who speak falsely are not stealing the treasure from you?

How then are we to fulfill the Great Commission? Thankfully, Christ promises a helper. Trusting Christ and relying on the Holy Spirit dwelling within us gives us power, wisdom and discernment. Consider Paul's wise words in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22:

*Rejoice always;
pray without ceasing;
in everything give thanks;
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
Do not quench the Spirit;
do not despise prophetic utterances.
But examine everything carefully;
hold fast to that which is good;
abstain from every form of evil.*

May we be bold this Christmas season as we reflect on the birth of our savior. May we count ourselves blessed, just as the shepherds, and joyfully share the good news of Christ! We have a reason to rejoice, a savior is born, to save us all! Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men!

In joy and thanksgiving,

Pastor Matt

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*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*