



# Midtown Messenger

Volume 3

January 5, 2020

Issue 1

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

By: Ronnie Scherffius

One of the most well known texts of the New Testament is found in the closing words of the book of Mark: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). This verse is referred to as the *Great Commission*. Notice that it is the Great Commission **not** the Great Suggestion. It is a commission given to man by God to declare the gospel to family, friend, and neighbor. God has entrusted us with the gospel that will cause man to be victorious over sin and the world! Are we actively engaged in the Great Commission? What are some reasons we should take the Great Commission with greater seriousness?

First, we should realize that **the Great Commission is a possible commission**. Some may suggest that taking the gospel to the lost is “too great a work,” or “an overwhelming work.” Some may go so far as to say “it is an impossible task.” Such a view necessarily puts God and His word in a position of weakness. Through Isaiah God affirmed: “I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me” (Isa. 46:9). Of the power and efficacy of His word God declared: “it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” (Isa. 55:10-11). When one assumes a defeatist mentality of the great commission it is because they are considering their own abilities rather than the power of God and the gospel of Christ!

When fulfilling the Great Commission we must understand the power is not with us! It is not because of one’s oratory skills or even one’s depth of understanding a difficult passage of Scripture that convicts one of their sin, but the power of the gospel (Rom. 1:16). Fulfilling the Great Commission we are simply sowers of

seed. As a farmer is but a sower of seed and God the one who causes the seed to produce a great harvest, even so it is with man declaring the gospel to others. Paul wrote: Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase**. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; **but God that giveth the increase** (1 Cor. 3:5-7). The Great Commission is a possible commission because it is God working through the power of His word.

Second, we should understand that **the Great Commission is a personal commission**. In his book titled *Go Ye Means Go Me*, Ivan Stewart asked the question, “Does ‘go ye’ really mean ‘Go Me’?” One may assume that the commission was given to the apostles and not to man today. However, the very words of Jesus to the apostles, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:20), necessarily binds that same commission on us today. Furthermore, Paul’s words to Timothy clearly instructs us of our obligation to the Great Commission: “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

A point to be made just here is that the *going* of the Great Commission does not necessarily mean going to the farthest reaches of the earth. In fact, the Greek terms translated *go* and *teach* are in a tense that carries the sense to “teach as you go” or to “teach while going.” This is exactly what we see with the first century church! Indeed, some went (great distances) to teach, but some simply taught where they went

(Acts 8:4; 11:19). The Great Commission is a personal commission and we should be personally engaged in the work of teaching others.

How serious are we about the Great Commission? The answer to the question is not in our words but our actions. Are we taking the Great Commission with great seriousness? Are we teaching the lost as we go?

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### **My Kingdom Is Not Of This World**

I would summarize the Story of the Bible in this way: it opens with God as the King of the universe. He establishes a special relationship with the nation of Israel. This special nation eventually rejects God from being King and asks for a man to rule over them in order to be like the nations around them (**1 Sam. 8**). God gives them a king. He gives them many kings, and the kings end up becoming the problem. Even the best of them are flawed. The books of 1 & 2 Kings tell that sordid story, but the prophets announce that God will rule as King once again. This is what Israel longed for during their years of exile.

When Jesus came on the scene, He seemed to be the likely candidate—the one who would deliver them from their oppressors and create a sovereign nation. The Gospel accounts support their expectations, but the disciples of our Lord were thrown for a loop because the kingdom God established was not the kingdom they expected. When Jesus stood before Pilate, he said,

My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world (**John 18:36**).

Twice, Jesus emphasizes the point that His kingdom is not of this world.

This is not to say that the kingdom had nothing to do with the world. John makes the striking statement, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever” (**Rev. 11:15**). When Jesus says that His kingdom is not of this world,

He is saying that the source or origin of His kingdom are not of this world. The disciples were right about Jesus. He was the One through whom God would rule. He was seated on David’s throne when He ascended and was exalted to sit at His Father’s right hand. This is one of the main points of Peter’s sermon on Pentecost (**Acts 2:22-36**).

The supernatural activity that accompanied Jesus’ ministry is another indicator that His kingdom was not of this world. When Nicodemus approached Jesus by night, he said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him” (**Jn. 3:2**). We often think of the signs Jesus performed as evidence that He was God in the flesh, and that is fine (**Jn 20:30, 31**), but it is evidence of more, in particular, of the otherworldly nature of the kingdom. One of the many supernatural activities of our Lord was casting out demons. On one occasion, He was accused of having done so by the prince of demons. After reasoning with His accusers, Jesus informed them, “If it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (**Lk. 11:20**). Jesus’ power over the demonic world was evidence that the kingdom is come.

Jesus implied the same thing when disciples of John came asking if He was the one to come or whether they should look for another. Jesus said,

Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me. (**Matt. 11:4-6**)

This echoes what Isaiah wrote in 35:5-6 and 61:1. Anyone familiar with Isaiah would have recognized Jesus’ response as a prophetic indicator concerning the kingdom.

There are other aspects of Jesus’ kingdom that distinguish it as otherworldly, but one final aspect is its permanence. Kingdoms of men come and go. They have been removed, or “shaken” (**Hag. 2:6, 21**). We have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken (**Heb 12:27**). It cannot be shaken precisely because it is not of this world.

**PRIVILEGED TO SERVE**  
Week of January 5, 2020

**Sunday Morning:**

Announcements: Mark FitzSimmons  
Scripture Reading: Kirk FitzSimmons

**Lord's Supper & Offering**

Bread: Bryce Dolan  
Fruit of the Vine: Clifton Rutherford  
Offering: Dale Hill  
Assist: Curtis Scherffius, Pat Gooch, Isaac Jobes

**Sunday Evening:** Bryce Dolan, Clifton Rutherford

**Prayer**

A.M. Closing: Mark Jones  
P.M. Closing: Steve Randle

**Song Leaders:**

Sun. A.M.: Mike McVey  
Sun. P.M.: Jerry FitzSimmons  
Wednesday: Anthony Scherffius

**Usher:** Allen Clifton

**Wednesday Devotional:** Lupe Escojido

**Open/Close Building:** Whites

**Sound System:** Will Burleson

**Greeters:** Lupe Escojido  
Doug Jobes

**Prepare Communion:** Dolan

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Today is the last day to update the Pocket Directory in the foyer for the 2020 Pocket Directory. If there are no corrections needed, please put a check mark. Also, please put an asterisk (\*) next to each baptized member in your family.

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Sunny Glen Children's Home is requesting the following items only: Gallon freezer bags and fruit drinks like capri suns or kool aid jammers. Please place the items in the donation box in the hallway. The truck will be here to pick up February 11-12.

**IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

Renulfo Rodriguez, friend of Lupe Escojido, who is having health issues.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Jan. 5: Bridal shower for Alex Scherffius at the home of Nia FitzSimmons from 2-4pm. Alex is registered at Bed, Bath & Beyond, Target, Amazon.  
Jan 5: Men's Meeting @ 3pm here at the building  
Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28: Tuesday Men's and Ladies Bible Class  
Jan. 11: Picture Day for Wall Directory  
Jan. 12: Jr/Sr. High Devo hosted by the Dolans

**AREA EVENTS**

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:**

Happy Birthday: Gayla Pitchford (5); Elana Carroll (7); Richard Hill (11)

Happy Anniversary: Jeff & Amy Harris (9)

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**Sign Up Sheets on the Bulletin Board:**

Please sign up to update your family photo for the Pictorial wall directory on Sat., January 11, 2020. Also, Please sign up to Open/Close the building, Prepare Communion, and host Youth Devotionals for 2020.

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**KEEP IN PRAYER**

**MIDTOWN MEMBERS:**

Jeff Cannady  
Les Daltry  
Dee Gilpatrick  
Wayne Martin  
Ann Pantel  
Veronica Serenil  
Clark Withers

**SHUT-INS:**

Faye Henderson  
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

# MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Minister:** Ronnie Scherffius  
**Secretary:** Nina Siegel

## TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM  
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM  
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

## RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of December 29, 2019

Bible Class.....	110
A.M. Worship.....	145
P.M. Worship.....	84
Wednesday Bible Class.....	86

Offering      \$4,209

## Reading for this week: Revelation 12-14

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

Revelation 14:13



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## SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli

Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore

Southwest School of Bible Studies - William Pedigo

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## GO PAPERLESS!

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