

Pastor Nathan Schultz
Upper Thames Missionary Church
14 November 2021

OUT Pt. 2 – “A GC2 Church”

A Task, like organizing an event is relatively easy

- limited effort
- limited time
- once the event is done, you can put your feet up

-living on Mission

- affects every moment of every day
- takes up all your time
- there is no being done!

Here's the simple test - if it is an event then we will be satisfied with checking a box, filling a role, organizing a successful event....

If it is a mission, we will be excited about **connecting** with people, **inviting** people out to walk through it with us, or a neighbour to come see you acting in it.

We'll be excited because we **care** about that person, because we want them to encounter that **story of hope** in a dark world

Mission is about taking the long view and the slow path – task completion will be short-sighted, and is about instant gratification.

Two main themes:

This life **purpose** or "mission" and it's motivating force: love.

GC2 stands for:

Great Commission

Great Commandment – these are the two “GC’s”

-the bible is clear that these two passages summarize the **WHOLE HISTORY** of God's work, and summarize the **WHOLE FUTURE** of the ministry of the church, up to and including us today.

The Great Commandment is about HOW to walk LIKE Jesus.

The Great Commission is WHERE to walk WITH Jesus.

“You shall love the Lord your God” from Deut 6:5

The commandment Jesus chooses is from the prayer known as the **Shema**, a prayer that devout Jews prayed every morning and actually still do.

Jesus' answer is “traditional yet impossible”

Here's a question for you: When do we experience spiritual breakthrough in our lives and in the lives of people around us?

Here's the answer - When we let God's grace go to work instead of our effort.

Here's a question for you: Is the gospel a story about how God has called us to a higher standard and we're supposed to live better?

Or

Is the gospel story about how we can't obey the law on our own-- any of it-- but Jesus fulfills it for us and invites us to walk with him in his grace and forgiveness?

The first one is not good news even if you simplify it down to one or two laws - the second answer is good news and it is the gospel - in our excitement about the great commandment let's not forget the gospel - we need Jesus to be the one who fulfills this commandment for us, too.

The commandment is an **invitation** into the life that God wants for you for each one of his people - a life that is defined by love

In this commandment we see the purpose and PROMISE of creation - that **love** from the creator God to his people and among his people is the way the world is supposed to be- and that God is making a NEW CREATION – starting with you and I – that will be good and loving again one day.

Warping the Commandments:

Sadly, even within the church and faithful Christians love for God has been turned into an internal personal feeling of holiness - a **private** relationship with God - that leads to hypocrisy when it doesn't change our character.

“love your neighbour as yourself - this passage isn't about encouraging “self love.” neither is it about encouraging “self hate!”

-The author of Leviticus and Jesus both mean that "realistically, it is normal to love "i.e. To be concerned for the interests of" ones own self, but while *normal* such love often overtakes the interests of others. Which is not what God intends.

-Jesus is saying it is normal to take care of yourself - and the command says that people who say they are following Jesus should be just as quick to care for their neighbour as for their own basic needs.

Brothers and sisters, if we let the **love of God** and our **love** for our **neighbour** compel us, THEN we will continue to have very powerful ministry here in the town of Mitchell for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Great Commission:

The Great Commission has only one imperative statement in it - **make disciples - Everything else Jesus says here in Matthew 28:18-20 hangs off of that imperative.**

Yes we go in love, yes we nourish body and soul, yes there are many ways to love our neighbor as ourself and worship God fully - but it's all summed up here with the word **disciple**

Disciple them or "learn them" - means turn them into learners of my whole life everything I taught everything I did that's what Jesus is saying.

- to be a disciple isn't to be someone who takes in content, to be a disciple is to be someone who takes in a person's whole life and learns from and copies every facet of their discipler.

- there are three things that happen that are necessarily tied to that imperative to make disciples
Going
Baptizing
and teaching.

Jesus says make them learners of my whole life –

-in order to do that you will have to **GO**. Go to anyone and everyone who will listen to you

– if they have receptive hearts then welcome them into the family through **baptism**.

-teach them... what? *to keep close* all my commandments and teachings close to their hearts.

My prayer for this church is that we would see more people discipled - more people learning the way of Jesus, more people being baptized, more people holding fast.

If you haven't been baptized and you're following Jesus right now, then we want to welcome you into the family through baptism just as Jesus commands here come talk to me.

Maybe this week you're struggling with the great commandment - is there someone hard to love in your life right now? Consider asking God right now how he's going to help you love that person this week.

All of us need to consider, as part of this church, how we're going to play our part in the mission this fall and Christmas season.