

All That Jesus Taught Bible Study - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

The Great Commission is not just about evangelism, but also about making disciples, which requires a deep love for Jesus and a willingness to give up one's own will and possessions.

Duration: 26:21

Scripture: Luke 14:27

Topics: "Discipleship", "Following Christ"

Description

This sermon delves into the importance of balancing the Great Commission by not only focusing on evangelism but also on making disciples as instructed by Jesus. It emphasizes the need for Christians to love Jesus above all earthly relationships, their own will, and material possessions, illustrating the three key conditions of discipleship outlined in Luke 14. The speaker highlights the lack of emphasis on discipleship in modern Christianity and the negative impact it has on the church's witness. The message calls for a deeper commitment to following Christ daily, denying self, and forsaking possessiveness to truly be His disciples.

Transcript

We're going to start a study today titled all that Jesus taught and the burden I have on my heart is to bring a balance in this matter of fulfilling the Great Commission. All Christians know how important it is to fulfill what is known as the Great Commission which Jesus gave to his disciples just before he left this earth. The first part of that Great Commission is found in Mark's gospel chapter 16 and verse 15.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creatures. He who believes and is baptized will be saved but he who does not believe will be condemned. But there's another part of this Great Commission, I call it the other half of it, which is described in Matthew chapter 28 and verses 18 to 20.

And there it says all authority, Jesus said all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all 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'm with you always even to the end of the age. Now as I have observed Christendom and born-again Christians and Christian missions and Christian churches in the last 52 years since I was born again, I find that most Christians major on the Mark 16 15 aspect of the Great Commission and very few major on Matthew 28 verse 19.

My guess would be 99% major on Mark 16 15 and about 1% major on Matthew 28 verse 19 and 20. So this is to use an illustration it would be like a hundred people carrying a log and 99 people at one end of the log and one person at the other end of the log struggling to hold that end up that's the way I see it. So I found that the Commission the Lord gave me when I began to teach the word as he gifted me was to emphasize that other aspect of the Great Commission the one which is being fulfilled only by about 1% whereas it should be 50-50.

The first part of the Great Commission is what we know is evangelism and what's generally called missionary work going out into unreached areas very essential to bring the message of the gospel that man is in sin all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and Christ died for the sins of the world he is the only way to the Father Christ rose from the dead and he who believes in him and is baptized will be saved and he who does not believe will be condemned but did the Lord want it to stop there that once a person has believed accepted the fact that he's a sinner and received Christ as his Savior is that all what about Matthew 28 verse 19 where he said we're to go into all nations and make disciples now what does it mean to be a disciple those early apostles who heard that the first

time they had no doubt in their mind as to what was meant by disciples because Jesus had explained it very clearly to them in Luke's gospel in chapter 14 in Luke 14 when Jesus saw a great multitude of people coming along with him we read in Luke 14 and verse 25 great multitudes were going along with Jesus and he turned and said to them some of the hardest words that he ever spoke to anyone now most preachers and pastors if they see a great crowd coming to listen to them would never dream of speaking words like this and then we see that Jesus was different he was not interested in the numbers now there are very few Christian preachers today who are not interested in numbers and what you see in the subsequent verses till the end of Luke 14 is Jesus emphasizing quality he wanted disciples

and so he turns around and tells them if any of you come to me and you don't hate your father mother wife children brothers and sisters and even your own life you cannot be my disciple it's not that you can be a second level of disciple you just cannot be a disciple so here we see the first condition of discipleship the Bible says that we got to honor our father and mother so what did Jesus mean when he said we got a hate it's a relative statement Jesus used some strong language sometimes like if your right eye offends you plug it out if your right hand offends you cut it off it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom if you don't eat my flesh and blood you don't have eternal life many strong words the words that he spoke was

spirit in life so what he meant here was that in comparison with our love for him our love for our earthly relatives and brothers and sisters should be darkness compared to light to use an illustration if your love for your parents wife children brothers sisters like the light of the stars your love for Christ must be like the light of the Sun and when the Sun comes up the stars as it were become dark they are there but it's dark so that's what it means here your hate means your love for your father and mother almost invisible it's you love them but in the light of your love for Christ which is like the bright shining Sun that is almost like darkness it's like hatred as it were and it also means that we should not allow our relatives or brothers or sisters to hinder us from following

whatever the Lord may call us to do so the first condition of discipleship is a supreme love for Christ where we love Christ more than our parents more than our wives more than our children more than every brother and sister in our blood relationship all within the church and our own life now would you say that missionary work and evangelism has brought Christians to this place you every person who claims to be a

born-again Christian would you say that he has come to this place have you yourself if you claim to be a born-again Christian come to this place where you can say you love Christ supremely more than anyone on this earth well in my observation of believers in many lands over these laws this last half century I don't find that to be true they've accepted Christ they sing my sins

are all forgiven and I'm on my way to heaven but they haven't become disciples second condition of discipleship is mentioned in verse 27 whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple again that's that absolute cannot what does this mean to carry the cross every day it says his own cross I don't have to carry the cross of Jesus Christ I don't have to carry anybody else's cross I have to carry my own cross and in another passage in Luke 9 in verse 23 Jesus explained it like this that if anyone wishes to come after me Luke 9 23 let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me there the word daily is added which applies here as well so if we are to take up a cross every day of our life our cross and follow Christ it must mean that Christ himself

carried a cross daily otherwise how could he ask me to follow him daily taking up my cross so there was an inward cross in the life of the Lord Jesus all through those 33 and a half years which culminated in a physical cross that he carried to Calvary so we need to understand what this inward cross was because if I don't take up that cross in my life that same spirit that motivated and urged Jesus in his earthly life I cannot be disciple now today we don't use the word cross much because except it's become a the symbol of Christianity people have golden crosses and ivory crosses and things like that but in the day when Jesus spoke about it it was the most horrible means of executing people that the Romans had invented today is something more appropriate would be the hangman's rope or the

electric chair or something like that or the guillotine to be executed so the cross was a symbol of execution of a man being hanged put to death because he's a criminal only criminals were crucified so here Jesus was speaking about something in us that had to be put to death every day if you are to follow him what is that and as we see in other places Jesus spoke about our self-life if anyone loves his own life his self-life he will lose it so this is the cross that we have to take where our self is crucified every day or in other words I say like in the words of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane not my will but thine the strength of myself is found in my will I want to do my will I want to do what pleases me this is the root of all sin and if that is not put to death I'm not taking up

the cross and we saw that that's got something that's to be done every single day it's only then that I can be a disciple in other words every single day I don't have to necessarily say those words but I must have that attitude where I'm not going to do my will this thing in any area I'm going to do the will of God you know it's one of the things that Jesus taught us to pray I will be done on earth as it is done in heaven you know in heaven none of the angels do their own will they always wait upon God to see what God wants them to do and that's what they do every single day in heaven and if our days are to be like the days of heaven on earth while life is to be a heavenly life here's the secret I will be done on earth as it is done in heaven in other words my attitude to the Lord is Lord

I never want to do my own will in anything I don't want to marry whom I like I don't want to take the job I like I don't want to live where I like I want to know what your will is in every single area when somebody treats me badly I want to react in the way you want me to react and not the way my flesh my self-life wants to react this is the meaning of taking up the cross every single day and he says if you don't do that there's an absolute cannot be my disciple so when Jesus said as we were looking at the Great Commission the other half of the Great Commission in Matthew 28 do you find that the believers you have met are walking

in this way of taking up the cross every single day dying to themselves every single day are you doing that yourself and there you can see how little the

commission given in Matthew 28 verse 19 has been taken seriously by Christians so the third condition for discipleship is in Luke 14 and verse 33 the first as we saw was to love Jesus more than all our relatives friends and anyone on earth the second is to love Jesus above our own self-life and our own will and the third is to love Jesus above all material things Luke 14 and verse 33 where Jesus says none of you it's an absolute statement no one of you can be my disciple Luke 14 33 who does not give up or forsake all his own possessions now what does this mean in practical terms we need to understand it does it mean we have to become hermits and sannyasis and go off into the jungles and live there forsaking everything possessions refer to those things that possess us my possession is what

possesses me if my house is my possession I cling to it because it's mine and I possess it possess it and it possesses me could be a expensive car that you've got or very valuable stocks and shares you possess them and they possess you because your mind is so much on those things your mind is not on the worthless things that you have in your home but these very precious possessions so what does it mean when it says that we have to give up our possessions if we are to be his disciple do I have to sell everything that I have there was one particular young man who came to Jesus we read in Mark 10 whom did Jesus did tell him to sell all that he had but Jesus never gave that command to everyone Zacchaeus for example said to Jesus in Luke 19 that he would give away half his goods to the poor

and and repay those whom he had cheated and Jesus said that's fine he said salvation has come to this house he didn't demand of Zacchaeus that he should give up everything like the rich young ruler in the house of Mary and Martha and Lazarus Jesus didn't even demand that they should give up anything so he is he didn't tell everyone that they should sell everything it's like cancer you know in some cases the cancer is so widespread that a doctor says the only way you can be cured is by removing the entire organ it could be some internal organ that's cancerous and the doctor says there's no other way you got to remove the whole organ otherwise you'll die but in some cases the cancer are not spread so much and they need to cut out just a little bit so the love of money is like a cancer in

the case of that rich young ruler it had spread so much that the Lord had to tell him you got to sell all that you have give it to the poor but in the case of others in Zacchaeus it was less and in case of Mary and Martha it was much less so he didn't give that same command to everyone it depends on how much the love of money has gripped you the how widespread that cancer is in your life that determines how much the Lord will tell you to actually give up and sell your possessions but this attitude of forsaking what we have is understood perhaps best by thinking of the story of Abraham and Isaac Abraham possessed Isaac as his own he he loved him and he possessed him and he was the darling of his heart he cared more for him than even for his wife and God saw that Isaac was a little idol in

Abraham's heart Isaac was actually Abraham's God he loved him so much and God wanted to detach him from that idolatry of possessing Isaac so he said take him to Mount Moriah and kill him get rid of him and Abraham obeyed God gave him three days to think about it and so he walked all the way to three days for him to reach Mount Moriah and he said yes Lord I worship you I offer Isaac up to you but as he took the knife to slay Isaac God said stop take him home so from that day onwards we can say Abraham did not possess Isaac but he had him he was still in his house he was still in his son he was still his son he wasn't dead but he never possessed him and that's a very beautiful picture of what it means to forsake our possessions think of the things that are most valuable earthly things

material things that you have in your life what are the things that you value which are very very very important for you perhaps you should make a list of them those are your possessions and you've got to be very honest if you want to really be a disciple you've got to be honest about what your possessions really are and then you must decide am I willing to stop having a possessive attitude to these things it's like you know possession would be when you hold on to something tight for example if I hold this pin tight in my hand I'm possessing it it could be your house it could be your bank account it could be your stocks and shares it could be your car it could be anything valuable that you have property real estate to have it means you open your palm and it's still there it's still in

your palm you haven't given it up to somebody else but you say Lord I recognize this is not something that's mine it's yours you've given it to me and I'm a steward and I want to use it faithfully but I'm not going to be possessive about it this doesn't possess me I have it thank you for allowing me to have it so this is the difference between possessing and having and it says here that I must forsake all my possessions I can still have many things that the Lord gives back to me and I can use them but I no longer possess them so the third condition of discipleship is that I love Jesus more than all earthly things so here we have the three conditions of discipleship in Luke 14 first to love Christ more than anyone and any human being on this earth whom have I on heaven but the end there's

nothing and no one I desire on earth more than you that's Psalm 73 and verse 25 this is the confession of a true disciple I do not desire anyone on earth more than Christ Psalm 73 25 the second condition of discipleship is I want to love Christ more than my own will in my own choice Lord I don't desire my choice in any matter I want your will in every single area of my life how I'm to spend my time my money my energy my life my ambitions my future is all laid at the feet of Jesus and the third condition is that to that I don't possess anything that everything on earth I will hold loosely Christ means more to me than all those things if the Lord takes away some of those things or I lose some of those things I say like Job said in Job chapter 1 the Lord gave and the Lord had taken away

blessed be the name of the Lord that is the attitude of a true disciple now if a person does not fulfill these three conditions of discipleship according to Luke 14 he's not a disciple so when Jesus told his Apostles to go into every nation Matthew 28 19 going to every single nation and make disciples he meant that you've got to bring people not only to the place where they know Christ as the forgiver of their sins but as their Lord that means he is we love him more than anyone on earth more than our own life more than our own will and more than all the things we possess on earth he means more to us than all of that now would you say that Christian missionaries and evangelists who preach the gospel have fulfilled that second half of the Great Commission I would say no do you see why I use

that illustration of 99% fulfilling just Mark 16 15 and 1% fulfilling Matthew 28 19 and 20 99 people holding one end of the log and one person holding up the other end of the log that's why I found that the Lord called me to go and help the people or the one person who's holding up the one end of the log I believe that's a great need today and this is also the reason why Christianity has got such a bad testimony in so many nations and all of us know how born-again Christians have brought such disgrace to the name of the Lord why is it because they've just been brought to conversion they've not been brought to discipleship they have not been brought to giving up their own will or being detached from the things they possess and therefore the end result is like Jesus said in Luke 14 they are

like people who have laid a foundation Luke 14 in the middle of this whole section on discipleship Jesus speaks about a man who wants to build a tower that's picture of the entire Christian life and by the time he

finishes the foundation it says he doesn't have enough to complete it and the meaning is if you see it in the context of these three conditions of discipleship he's not willing to complete the tower by paying the price maybe he has the money but he says no I don't want to complete it so the foundation is our sins being forgiven and I've received the Holy Spirit I'm a child of God is that all there is to the Christian life it has to be a tower according to what Jesus said and such a person who does not complete the tower is the object of ridicule it says in verse 29 and the

angels in heaven are amazed at Christians who just lay a foundation in their Christian life and imagine that that is Christianity so that's why it's very important for us to emphasize and understand what it says here in Matthew 28 verse 19 that we must go into every nation and make disciples whichever nation you are in today if you are preaching you should be making disciples I want to say one more thing before I can conclude and that is it is in connection with this that Jesus said lo I'm with you always if you do this go into all nations make disciples I'll be with you always how can people lay claim to that promise without fulfilling the condition what a wonderful assurance it is I determined to go into all the world preach the gospel and make disciples the Lord will be with me always

so let's have a brief prayer our Heavenly Father help us to understand this in our life so that we examine our own lives and be disciples ourselves first and where we have the responsibility to preach to make disciples of others we pray in Jesus name Amen

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Nhodbx2OqdWE.mp4>

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