

I will give a big picture overview and then highlight 2 major elements from this explanation.

Great Mandate (GM) - Fill Earth with God's Glory (GM —> earth circle || God circle)

God made man in His image, blessed them and told them to be fruitful and fill the earth.

GM = Fill the Earth with the Glory of God / His image

I used to think of God's glory mainly as His greatness, in isolation.

Now, while I see that this is still true, I noticed this week how the Scriptures describe glory as something mankind gives to God for His greatness in *direct relationship* to how He has related to His people.

- Israel - glorifying God after deliverance from Egypt
- Worshippers giving glory to the Lamb in Rev 5
- Imagine an entire world full of people knowing, loving and worshiping God

Due to the Fall, mankind did not fill the earth with God's image / glory. Instead, the earth was filled with violence, evil and all kinds of godlessness.

How do we fulfill the GM?

As non believers, we lived outside of God's will, not concerned about God's glory.

It is only through Christ that we can begin to fulfill the GM. We do this through:

Greatest Commandment - We glorify God by loving God first.

Christ deals with our sin problem and it is only through Him that we can Love God.

Much of what we have talked about these past 9 wks would be categorized under: Spiritual Formation.

(Spiritual Formation: knowing God, issues of the soul, growth, healing, pursuing Christ)

Individually, we want to grow in the greatest intimacy possible with God.

We want to do this until we see Jesus face to face.

J Fleming's book: Pursue the Intentional Life (a woman doing this until the end)

Choice:

- Limp along with Christ for a lifetime: meddle with doubt, not deal with sin, choose not read and apply the Word, don't seek the counsel of the Holy Spirit all day, every day, don't grow in your relationship with your heavenly Father, fritter away your life
- Run with Christ: turn struggle with doubt —> seek God with all your heart, immerse yourself in Scriptures, let the Word take root in your heart which gives the HS room to produce faith in you

Second Commandment

-We touched on the topic of loving others last week. We are to love all people, inside and outside the circle, but the Scriptures seem to put a greater emphasis on loving other believers, the household of God. God wants us to see our relationships with other believers as extremely important to Him. Why?

-In the Lord's prayer you see the idea of a collective body of believers. "Our Father..."

-Local churches provide a local expression of the larger body of Christ, where we can live out in our relationships our functions, roles and gifts in Christ's body. While we speak of church as our local church, the Church is the body of believers, worldwide and throughout time, who have put their faith in Christ. Christ the the Head and we members of His Body, members of one another.

-You could say that all believers are seeking to do the Greatest Commandment, in varying degrees.

Notice how loving others, obeying the second greatest commandment is part of the fulfillment of GM.

We see Loving God and Loving People further expressed:

Great Commission (GC) - What is the GC?

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of

the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

God tells us to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.” As His enemies, we received the good news of Christ, experiencing salvation. God then gives us the GC. In doing so, we turn around and share the same message of forgiveness which we have received to others who have not yet experienced His great mercy and grace. We become His ambassadors. The GC is a way to love God and love others, all in one! God’s original promise to Abraham to bless the nations in Genesis 12 continues on through the Great Commission.

As the gospel spreads to others in far off lands, we begin to see the GM taking root in greater proportions on the earth. Remember how the GM’s focus was the glory of God? One day there will not be a need for missions.

John Piper said, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.”
Let the Nations Be Glad!

Great Day of the Lord - The OT has prophecies about this coming day...

Mal 4:1-6 A day is coming where God will judge the wicked and receive his righteous children

Mt 25:31-46 God will separate the sheep from the goats

New Heavens and New Earth

God will recreate the world where righteousness dwells. God’s Dwelling Place will be with Man

Great Mandate, man’s purpose to fill the earth with His image/glory, will be fulfilled at the end of time.

The glory of God will fill the earth with true worshippers, God’s people, His portion.

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Let’s take this Biblical metanarrative and make it personal to our lives.

Matthew 25:1-13

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

What did you learn from this parable?

The story in Matt 25 tells of the 10 virgins who were to get ready to meet the bridegroom. When the Bridegroom arrived unexpectedly, not all were prepared to meet Him. Since we do not know when Jesus will return, we each need to be wise and live lives that are ready for Jesus’ second coming at all times. At the beginning and end of the book of Revelation, Jesus’ return is described as soon to come. How would you live life differently if He was going to come tomorrow? What would you get in order?

What should be important to you as we move toward Jesus' return and the Great Day of the Lord?
 So how should you prepare? What should your focus in life be? God's priorities and Biblical values should guide your thinking, your plans and frame your life direction. Remember brainstorming your bucket list of dreams/ desires for your lifetime? I believe that they should all be under this larger goal:

Goal: Glorifying God by Loving Him First	GM/1st Command	1 person
Objectives to reach this Goal:		
Having Biblical Community by Loving One Another	2nd Command	Several People
Discipling the Nations	GC	Nations / World

Do you see how these Greatest Commandment, Second Greatest Commandment and the Great Commission all relate to the Great Mandate?

Doing each of these will fulfill God's Great Mandate to man in Genesis: filling the Earth with His Image / His Glory!

Let's start back at the top:

Importance of the Glory of God

1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Rom 11:36

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Discipleship, your relationship with Jesus, is meant to be directional. It is missional.

*others centered

*world oriented

1 Peter 2:9-10

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

What has God done in our lives? How does God describe His people? What are they to do?

Biblical Community - Lessons from Steve Timmis - Total Church Conference 2009

Imagine being in a community with other believers where you truly and deeply love one another, serve one another when you face needs, forgive one another when you have conflicts and extend grace and the love of God because of the Cross.

Imagine being a people who are dependent upon God, where you're welcoming and accepting, a loving community whose ruler is Jesus and He reigns supremely.

Imagine being in a community that is vulnerable, accessible, approachable, counter cultural. Imagine being sinners saved by grace, where you point others to the one you all love, your great Savior, Jesus.

Imagine creating a community where we confess our sins openly, where there is safety to be real and to need help, where we know that we will be encouraged in our repentance and asking for support from one another is welcomed. This would be contrasted against needing to look good and keeping an appearance of perfection. Instead, in this community, you can expose the broken, ugly, spoiled by sin areas of your life and be received with grace, hope, help and love.

Your community will be an outpost of the Kingdom of God, a foretaste of eternity. You will be a people who are gloriously inheriting the Kingdom of God here on earth, because He's come and He reigns in your hearts. Talk about being a priesthood to our God, a people who are zealous for good works, a people who are His possession and glorify Him!

Each of you are leaders. God has built you up in Christ, far beyond many of your peers. You have been entrusted with much. God wants you to pour into the lives of others who desperately need Him.

What is involved to create a community like this? Certainly depending upon the Holy Spirit is essential. How would you lead a group to help create biblical community?

Life Group example...

Love in Biblical Community = Jesus' plan for world outreach

Matthew 5:16

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

John 17:20-23

these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

We are to collectively to become this Bride who has made herself ready to meet her Bridegroom.

Revelation 1:5-7 Summary of book

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

Revelation 19:7-8

Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure" —
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

How did she make herself ready?

Spend your lives, being active in good works together, loving one another
Good Works & One Another Sheets: starting point

His People - not yet completely in the fold

Help Gather His own - be active in this section of His unfolding Story

Great Commission - God makes us each leaders in the world with a commission/objective

He wants to multiply what He's done in your life, into the lives of others

you + the church collectively = His missions strategy to reach the world

Sheep not in the fold, around the world: Nations

Is 43:6-7

For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,

Cush and Seba in exchange for you.
Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.
Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.
I will say to the north, Give up,
and to the south, Do not withhold;
bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the end of the earth,
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”

What stood out to you from this passage?

Matthew 4:12-16

Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles —
the people dwelling in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,
on them a light has dawned.”

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Notice how God calls his followers to witness of Him locally, regionally and out into the ends of the earth?

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Not everyone can go. But everyone can and must make disciples. You can play various roles in world missions. You can support a friend going on a summer trip. You can pray for missionaries around the world. You can go on a short term trip. You can begin to financially support a missionary monthly. You can send a care package to a missionary family. You can get Operation World and begin to pray for countries around the world. You can be a host family to an international student, where you befriend a foreigner.

Distinctiveness of Missions: reaching the nations, other peoples. It is not just local evangelism/ministry.

A collective command to all believers.

To make disciples, you will need to learn how to articulate the gospel and then disciple them. We will talk about how to articulate the gospel in our last study. Then help them grow / walk with Jesus.

Remember the Great Day of the Lord where God will separate all people from those who know Him and His enemies. Have you made Christ your Lord? This Great Day of the Lord is coming.

Song: Adam's Hope