

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
June 30, 2024



"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;" – 1Peter 3:15

“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Psalm 111

Leader: Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart,

People: In the company of the upright and in the assembly.

Leader: Great are the works of the LORD;

People: They are studied by all who delight in them.

Leader: Splendid and majestic is His work,

People: And His righteousness endures forever.

Leader: He has made His wonders to be remembered;

People: The LORD is gracious and compassionate.

Leader: He has given food to those who fear Him;

People: He will remember His covenant forever.

Leader: He has made known to His people the power of His works,

People: In giving them the heritage of the nations.

Leader: The works of His hands are truth and justice;

People: All His precepts are sure.

Leader: They are upheld forever and ever;

People: They are performed in truth and uprightness.

Leader: He has sent redemption to His people;

People: He has ordained His covenant forever;

Leader: Holy and awesome is His name.

People: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;

Leader: A good understanding have all those who do His commandments;

People: His praise endures forever.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Galatians 3:26-29

*Hymn #116 (red hymnal) – “For the Beauty of the Earth”

Scripture Reading – Mark 16:14-20; Acts 1:1-11

Ancient Creedal Reading – Apostles Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #51A** (red hymnal) – “*God, Me Merciful to Me*”

Prayers of the Church & Lord’s Prayer (sins)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Cambridge Platform (1648 AD), 2.5

Leader: A Congregational church is by the institution of Christ

People: A part of the militant¹ visible² church,

Leader: Consisting of a company of saints by calling,

People: United into one body by a holy covenant,

Leader: For the public worship of God,

People: And the mutual edification of one another,

Leader: In the Fellowship

People: Of the Lord Jesus.

Biblical References: Ex 19:5,6; Deut 29:1,9,15; Acts, 2:42; 1Cor 1:2; 12:27; 14:26,28,36

¹ “Militant” refers to the church on the earth now, fighting the good fight.

As opposed to the church “triumphant” which is in heaven, whose rest is won.

² “Visible” refers to the church we see, which is a mixture of true & false Christians.

As opposed to the church “invisible” which is the perfect church God sees.

Question: Why no reference to missions, outreach, evangelism and/or the Great Commission in these great creeds?

Ministry of the Word – Preaching

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Matthew 28:18-20

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

Sermon – “*Missions, Part I – The Great Commission*”

***Hymn #460** (red hymnal) – “*Amazing Grace*”

***Benediction** – Numbers 6:24-26

Announcements

- *Remember: Church in July & August starts at **9:30 AM**.*
- Pastor Doug's Bible studies (on Tuesday & Wednesday) have stopped for the summer.
- Adult Studies will return this fall with the following topics:
 - Sunday Morning: Westminster Larger Catechism.*
 - Women's Sunday Morning Study: A study on cults*
 - Tuesday Morning: An introduction to medieval theology through reading sections from Aquinas.*
 - Wednesday Evening: 2Peter, Jude, and an introduction to the origins of the Bible.*
- Pastor Doug will be on vacation from July 8th through 22nd. Elder Jon Haulenbeek will be preaching those Sundays.
- This summer we will be doing a short sermon series on the Book of Haggai, once Pastor Doug returns from vacation. This fall we will be going through a section of Revelation taken from the usually forbidden chapters 4-19!
- The Elders and Deacons are trying to think of a **local charitable outreach** TRC could do, either for someone in the church, or someone / something in the community - If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or requests, please see Pastor Doug.
- If you would like to **help the Franceschetti family** (Dave, Janelle & baby Caleb) there are a few options:
 - Prayer, which is always greatly appreciated.
 - The Franceschetti's have a gofundme account at: <https://gofund.me/1c7aaeb4>
(Or you can search for: "gofundme Franceschetti Family")
 - If you would like to donate a meal, see Julie Latina.
(julieannalatina@gmail.com; h=860-824-8410; c=860-480-1687)
- There are **Bibles** and "**Basics of the Faith**" pamphlets about various theological topics free if you are interested.

Upcoming Special Events

- On Saturday, **July 20th** (with a rain date of July 27th), there will be a **pool party and picnic** for the church at the Decker-Gabelmann house, starting at noon. The address is: 101 Wallens Street, Winsted (it is a long driveway with the house a bit off the road.) You can park anywhere along the side of the driveway as well as at the end of the driveway where the 2-car garage is located.
- On Saturday, **September 7th**, there will be a **picnic** for the church at the Winters' house, starting at noon.
- On Saturday, September 21st, will be a joint Elders & Deacons' meeting at Pastor Doug's house.
- After church on Sunday, **November 10th**, will be the **Annual Meeting**.

Normal Weekly Schedule

Sunday

10:30 AM **LORD'S DAY WORSHIP** – Lord's Supper on the 1st Sunday
c.11:40 AM **Coffee Hour**

Friday

6:30 PM **YADG** – Young Adult Discussion Group (Pastor Doug's house)
1st & 3rd Fridays

Saturday

[*morning*] **Prayer Group** – Meets at the Decker-Gabelmann house.
If you are interested, please contact Sheryl Gabelmann.

Online Resources

Internet Prayer Chain: If you have any prayer requests you would like the Internet Prayer Chain to pray for, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

Church's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/

Church's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org

Church Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

Pastor Doug's Youtube Channels:

Simply Reformed: youtube.com/simplyreformed

Pilgrims of Plunder: youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

Leadership

Teaching & Preaching Elder: Pastor Doug Aldrich
(860-379-1147; douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net)

Ruling Elders: Bob Ensminger
(860-485-8738; robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com)
Rich Gabelmann
(860-605-7852; rgabelmann0415@gmail.com)
Jonathan Haulenbeek
(860-283-0224; jhaulenbeek@icloud.com)

Deacons: David Mattson (*chair*), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell,
Mason Goodell, Dean Winters

Music Coordinator & Treasurer: Cindy Rines

Clerk: Sheryl Gabelmann

Sunday School: Verna Aldrich, Mason Goodell

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Sermon Notes

Matthews 28:18-20

Missions? (Part 1 of 2)

June 30, 2024

Introduction

- 1) *Question:* How should this church do Missions?
 - a) As we build, hopefully by God's grace and good pleasure, this new church, it is exciting to look at everything anew.
 - b) How do we go beyond this congregation and engage the unbelieving world with the Gospel and works of charity?
 - c) Should we form a Missions Committee that meets monthly to give out money to local, national, and/or international groups that do missions (whatever that means) to the world?
 - i) Is that the best way to do things?
 - ii) Why do churches' do it that way? Is it an ancient tradition?
 - iii) Is it even biblical? What does Scripture command about missions?

- 2) Let's ponder this for the next two Sundays.
- 3) Today, let's start with the foundation: What does Scripture command?
- 4) And when it comes to missions, there is one passage that universally first comes to mind:
The Great Commission.

The Great Commission

- 1) The Great Commission, from the last three verses of the Gospel of Matthew (28:18-20), is one of the most famous sections of Scripture.
- 2) And probably one of the most misheard texts in the Bible.
 - a) I think most modern evangelical Christians hear this:

“And Jesus said to me (the individual hearer), ‘All authority has been given to Me (Jesus) in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and do random acts of kindness and share the Gospel with everyone, telling them how much I love them, and encourage them to invite Me (Jesus) into their hearts, and I will be with you (singular, the individual hearer) always.”
 - b) That is not how the text reads or what it teaches.
 - c) Remember my suggested primary rules for reading the Bible:
 - i) Read the text in its surrounding context, understanding the historical and grammatical setting to know the intent of the author.
 - ii) Unpack and define the pronouns. (I, you, he, she, it, we, you'll, them, etc.)
- 3) The text actually reads: *“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘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.”* – Matt 28:18-20
- 4) What is the context?
 - a) The Lord Jesus was crucified, dead and was buried, Matt 27:33-56
as described at the end of chapter 27. Matt 27:57-66
 - b) Chapter 28 is about His resurrection.
 - i) The Lord first appeared to Mary Magdalene and “the other Mary”, Matt 28:1
(i.e. “Mary the mother of James & Salome”) Mark 16:1
 - ii) He orders the two Marys to *“go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.”* – Matthew 28:10b
- 5) So, who is the “them” in Matthew 28:18? (“*And Jesus came up and spoke to them . . .*”)
 - a) It is *not* all Christians!
 - i) It is the Twelve (now eleven minus Judas) handpicked lieutenants John 20:24
of Christ, known as the Apostles. Acts 1:26
 - ii) Yes, this text has implications for all Christians throughout this age, however, the context is clear. This is first and foremost about the Apostles.
 - b) Matthew 28:16-18a is very clear: *“But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying . . .”*
- 6) So, unpacking what follows, our thinking should first concentrated on what the Apostles were commanded to do.

All Authority – Matthew 28:18

- 1) The Lord Jesus begins by focusing on Himself, since He is God incarnate. John 14:6
- 2) He states, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*” – Matthew 28:18b
- 3) The purpose of creation, all of history, and even why the fall happened, is so that God will be glorified to Himself through His Son. Is 4:5; 43:7; Is 44:23; 49:3; John 13:31ff; 17:1ff; Rom 8:20
 - a) The Father spoke the creation into existence by His eternal Word, Who is the Second Person of the Trinity, who became incarnate in the person of Jesus. Gen 1:3,26 John 1:1-5,14,18 1Cor 8:6; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2
 - b) It is through the Word and Spirit (the 3rd Person of the Trinity) that all creation is upheld. John 3:36; 6:63; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3
 - c) The pivotal point of all of history is the Christ’s first advent. (From His incarnation to His ascension into heaven.) Gal 4:4; Eph 1:10; Heb 1:1-2
- 4) Christ now reigns in heaven. Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9-10; Col 3:1
 - a) The Son, and the Father, send the Holy Spirit to dwell in His people in a special way, giving them new life. John 14:16-31; 16:5-15 Rom 8:1-27
 - b) The Son and Spirit intercedes for us. Rom 8:26-27,34; Heb 4:15; 7:25
 - c) All of history is being worked out so that the Son’s enemies are being put under His feet, while Christ gathers all His people to populate God’s Kingdom. Ps 110; Matt 22:44; 25:34; 26:64; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42-43; Acts 2:34-35; 1Cor 15:23-25; Eph 1:20-22; Col 3:1; Heb 1: 3,13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 2Pet 3:7-9
- 5) Christ gives His Church, founded on the Apostles, enormous power. Matt 18:18
 - a) Matthew 16:19 – “*I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.*”
 - b) John 20:23 – “*If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.*”
- 6) This conquest, in the spiritual sense, begins through His Apostles, who are given a mission: “*Go therefore and make disciples.*” – Matt 28:19 Mark 16:15-16 Acts 1:8; 14:21

The Kingdom – Going Forth (Matt 28:19-20)

- 1) Apostles are commanded to “*go therefore*” to “*all the nations*”.
 - a) With the New Covenant, the faith is not just for one nation (Israel) but “*all the nations*.”
 - b) Off on a tangent: There is a modern trend for those who want the church to engage in politics to make the “nations” in Matthew 28 refer to governments and states.
 - i) That is not the meaning of nations here. Matt 4:15; 6:32; 10:5; 10:5,18; Matt 12:18,21; 20:19,25; John 18:36
 - ii) This is referring to all different ethnic groups. (The word for “nation” here is literally “*ethnos*”). Rom 3:22; 1Cor 12:13; Gal 3:28; Col 3:11
 - iii) The organized church is called to go to all of the different types of people and convert them. It is not called to desire worldly political power. Matt 20:25-28

2) The Apostles are to go and “***make disciples of all the nations***” - Matthew 28:19

- a) A “disciple” is someone who is a student/follower of a master. Matt 10:24; Luke 6:40
 - i) It is both those concepts put together, not either/or.
 - ii) It is not taking a philosophy class in college and saying, “I kind of like Plato.”
 - iii) It is saying, continuing with the ancient analogy, “I am a Platonist!”
(Literally, “a follower of Plato.”)
 - That I am committed to following, obeying and proclaiming the teachings of Plato, because his teaching is true.
 - And I will move to Athens to learn from, and follow, Plato himself.
 - To put it simply, you are committed to Plato.
- b) To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to be committed to follow, obey and proclaim Christ and go live with Him.
- c) It is that, and much more, because Jesus is not a mere human philosopher.
- d) We see this is what follows!
 - i) We have to go and live with our Master. John 6:68; 12:26; Phil 1:21-23
 - ii) But where is He?
- e) These disciples need to be brought into Jesus.
 - i) Christ’s spiritual body on earth is His church. Matt 16:18-19; 18:17; 1Cor 5:12-13; Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18; Heb 12:22-24
 - ii) But how are people brought into His church?

3) “***Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit***”

- a) The symbol that we are brought into Christ’s body is the sacrament of baptism. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 16:33; 22:16; Rom 6:3; 1Cor 1:13-17; 6:11; Gal 3:27; Titus 3:5
- b) Yes, this is a sign and a seal that we are His disciples, but much more. Rom 4:11
 - i) We need to be washed because of our sins.
 - ii) Baptism is the sign that we are washed because we trust in God’s promises to us and our children.
- c) This is also an act of worship. Rev 5:6
 - i) Note the clear Trinitarian language: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
 - ii) There is only one God who eternally and co-equally exists in three Persons.¹
 - iii) We are redeemed because the Father has ordained our salvation, the Son has accomplished it, and the Spirit applies it.
- d) So, the Lord Jesus is not just our Master. He is our Lord, Savior and God! And thus, He must be worshiped. Matt 8:2; 28:9; Luke 24:52; John 9:38
- c) Though baptism is very important, it is only the beginning.

4) “***Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you***”

- a) As disciples we have to learn what our Master wants us to know, believe in, and do..
- b) However, see how easy it is to slip into focusing on ourselves first.

¹ Gen 1:1-3; Deut 6:4; Ps 119:154; Matt 3:13-17; 28:19; Luke 10:21-22; John 5:18-24; 14:26; 15:26-27; Acts 2:32-33; Phil 2:4-11; Gal 4:6; Col 2:9-10; 1Pet 1:2; 1John 4:13-15; Rev 5:6-13; 22:1-6.

- c) Question: Who is the “them” and the “you” in the “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you”?
- i) The “them” are all the new disciples.
 - ii) The “you” is still the Apostles.
- d) You cannot sever the Lord Jesus from His Apostles.
- i) You cannot say: “I follow Jesus and not Paul.”
 - ii) You cannot say: “I am a red letter Christian”.
 - Many modern Bibles put the words of Jesus in red.
 - This theology thinks the red letters are more important than the other black letters. Forgetting all the Bible is God breathed. 2Tim 3:16
 - iii) Nor can you say, “I just follow Jesus and not any church tradition.”
- e) Notice the focus in all these statements is not really on Jesus.
- i) It is on the individual self.
 - ii) To reject the Lord Jesus’ handpicked lieutenants who receive special power and authority from Him, and the church they created, is to reject the Lord Himself.
- f) Did not the Lord Jesus state: “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” – Matthew 10:40
- i) And that He promised “the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” – John 14:26
 - ii) Who is the “you”?
 - iii) From the context it is the Apostles. Matt 10:1-5; 26:20; John 13:1-6
- g) Does not the Bible warn that those who add, or remove, Rev 22:18-19
from the Apostles’ teaching will be damned?
- 5) So the Great Commission is about the commission of the Apostles to create Christ’s church.
- a) Yes, the commission continues to this day until the end of the age in the organization the Apostles were commanded to create, the church.
 - b) And yes, the church is made up of individuals who are called to remain faithful and do the works of God.
 - c) However, notice the order of focus:
 - i) First, and always, Christ.
 - ii) Second, the authority of the Apostles, whose inspired teaching is found in the 27 books of the New Testament.
 - iii) Next, the church, that organization Christ creates on the foundation of the Apostles.
 - iv) Finally, individual Christians.
 - d) If you only hear #4 and #1, (me & Jesus, usually put in that order) you are not being a good disciple of the Master.
 - e) Your thinking has to be Christ focused, which means being biblical, and has to be rooted in the Apostolic (i.e. of the Apostles) church.

What is Not in the Great Commission

- 1) As we ponder missions, notice what is not in this text:
- 2) There is no reference to works of charity.
 - a) Should Christians do good works of mercy to our neighbor?
 - b) Can we mix charity with evangelism?
 - c) Yes! Lev 19:18; Matt 5:43-44; 10:42; Rom 13:8-10; Gal 6:10
 - d) However, that is never the focus of missions, let alone evangelism.
(As we read here in the Great Commission and the rest of the New Testament.)
- 3) The focus is not on trying to encourage a personal conversion experiences.
 - a) The focus is not on trying to growing the church, or even trying to get people saved.
 - b) Yes, the church should desire to grow, and each new disciple has to repent, believe, and follow Christ.
 - c) The focus is making disciples.
- 4) The focus is not on individual Christians doing evangelism, or that it be turned over to para-church organizations.
 - a) Yes, individual Christians must *“sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”* – 1Peter 3:15
 - b) Yes, Christ gives a fierce warning that those who deny Him in public, Matt 10:33
He will deny them before His Father in heaven.
 - c) Yes, para-church missionary organizations are not forbidden.
 - d) This commission, and its power, is given to the Apostles and the church Christ has founded, to bring people into individual congregations that are apostolic.
 - e) Throughout the New Testament the focus is not on individuals doing missions, but those commissioned by the church.
- 5) Though the Great Commission is very, very, important, it does not say it is the most important thing.
 - a) In the same Gospel of Matthew, the Lord Jesus told us what is the most important: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment.”* – Matthew 22:37b-38
 - b) No doubt, part of loving God is seeing that Christ’s church do the Great Commission!
 - c) However, when you study God’s Law, there seems to be an Ex 20:1-17; Deut 6:4-11;
order of importance of what should be done in the church: Matt 22:36-40; Eph 4:4-13
 - i) First, the correct worship of God.
 - ii) Second, discipleship of the saints.
 - iii) Outreach to the world with the Gospel and works of charity.
 - d) I am firmly convinced they must be done in that order, less you lose all three.
- 6) Does the Great Commission still apply to the church today?
 - a) Of course it does! We are to continue the Apostles’ work.
 - b) We need to go out into the world and proclaim the Gospel.

- c) However, I think we (the modern) church have been doing it very differently then how the ancient church did it.
- d) I think we might have misread the Great Commission.
- e) Do we actually do missions in a biblical, apostolic, church focused sort of way?
- f) Or has individualism, pragmatism, and marketing become our foundations?
- g) Next week we will look more at the history of missions.
- h) Today, however, I we wanted to stay close to the text, so let us end where it ends.

Conclusion

- 1) This Great Commission ends gloriously: *"and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*
– Matthew 28:20
- 2) The word "lo" here is from a Hebrew interjection, i.e. "a marker of exclamation".
 - a) Used to make the narrative dramatic and is very common in the Bible. Gen 1:31; Rev 22:12
 - b) To change the focus, to emphasize an idea, and/or to call attention to a detail.
 - c) Translated = Look!, Suddenly!, Now!, Here!, There!, Look! Now!, Behold!
- 3) It literally reads: *"Look, I am with you all the days until the full completion of the age."*
- 4) Let's ask that radical question: Who is the "you" in *"I am with you always, even to the end of the age"*?
 - a) From the context, it first has to be the Apostles.
 - b) It excludes "us"?!
No, of course not.
 - c) However, the promise that we will have Christ with us always is because we are His disciples, in His church, which was founded by the Apostles.
- 5) And what great assurance it does bring that what Christ promised to the Apostles has come true!
 - a) Where are the Apostles now? In heaven ruling on Twelve Thrones.
 - b) Has Christ's promise of their commission been successful?
 - c) Yes, we are living testimonies of this power!
 - i) When we look in a myopic narrow way this seems hard to see. However, when you step back and look at the big picture, it is so obvious.
 - ii) The fact that many of us are from ethnic groups the Apostles never heard of (English, Irish, Chinese, Native-American, etc.) on a continent they never knew existed some 5,600+ miles away from Jerusalem, and that 2,000 years after this Great Commission, Christianity would be the most influential ideology in world history, and there would be 2.38 billion people who live on the planet in 2024 AD who claim to be Christians, is truly a work of God's power.
- 6) If we know such a power, how can we not as a church go and make disciples of all the nations?