

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 11TH-12TH, 2018 // GO! GROWING OUR SPIRITUAL FAMILY

DESIGNED TO GROW

HUMANITY WAS COMMANDED TO GROW

In Gen. 1:28 God commands Adam and Eve to go and grow their family, which at the time was all of known humanity. God wanted a lot of people to be in relationship with, and mankind was told to make more people for God to love.

- **People that can't have kids aren't less, it means that God knew that some families would need help.**

JESUS REDEFINED FAMILY

In Matt. 12:46-50 Jesus points to His disciples after someone mentions His mother and brothers and says, "Here is my mother and brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father is my brother, sister, and mother."

- **This isn't diminishing physical family, but pointing out that the most important relationships are spiritual.**

SPIRITUAL FAMILY WAS ALSO COMMANDED TO GROW

The Great Commission in Matt. 28:19-20 essentially tells humanity to do the same thing as God commanded them to do in Gen. 1:28, to go out and make the family of God larger.

- This time though, it was a spiritual birthing that would grow the family, not a biological one.
- **Matthew 28:19-20 (CSB)**

MANKIND WAS DESIGNED TO MOVE

Both in biology and spirituality, mankind was never meant to stay the same. Stagnation, both in nature and in the spiritual, is a killer.

- God not only created us to change and grow, but He has commanded us to do so. **What makes spiritual movement so important is that it leads to life everlasting!**

GROWTH BEYOND OURSELVES

Christianity has seasons. When we first become a Christian, it's a time of absorbing/consuming, but there eventually comes a time when we are to be feeding as we are being fed.

- **This means we are to grow into mature believers that make other mature believers. Unfortunately, too many Christians never get there.**

THE SETUP

AFTER 400 YEARS OF SILENCE, GOD SPEAKS

The time between the OT and NT was called the 400 Years of Silence because God hadn't spoken to the Jewish people for 4 centuries. God publicly breaks His silence in Matt. 5 at the Sermon on the Mount.

- Jesus opens up with the Beatitudes that give us hope and encouragement, then He drops a bomb.

WAIT US?

Jesus, God in flesh, looks at His followers and puts responsibility for the hope of humanity on us. Jesus calls us the "salt and light of the world."

- This doesn't mean that we're saviors, but that **we are the vessels to bring salvation to humanity. We're not the light, but the conduits of the Light.**

YOU CAN SEE THE SET UP

Early in Jesus' ministry, He encourages His people, tells them they are the vessels of hope for the world, then He instructs them on righteous living.

- Not only is God setting us up to go out and change the world, He tells us how to live in such a way to do so.

PREPARING TO GO

Jesus was pretty straightforward and practical. He tells us in the Sermon on the Mount how to **love each other**, how to **pray**, to **fast**, to **tell the truth**, to **give**, and to constantly **depend on Him**.

- **God has called us to do amazing things, but we are incapable unless He is with us.**

HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

"I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE."

Jesus reaffirms in Acts 1:18 what He had said in Matthew 28:19-20. The Great Commission tells us to "Go," but Acts 1:8 tells us how we will be successful when we go, by the "power when the Holy Spirit has come on you."

- **Acts teaches us that there is no church without the Holy Spirit!**

PETER TOLD US HOW IMPORTANT THE SPIRIT IS

2 Peter 1:3 says, "God has given us everything we need to live a godly life. We have received all this by coming to know Him..."

- The point is simple: **We must have a relationship with Jesus to have God's Spirit in us. When we are full of His Spirit, we are able to pour out good things on those around us.**

SEEKING THE SPIRIT SO WE ARE EQUIPPED

Paul talked a lot about the Gifts of the Spirit in 1 Cor. 12-14. We are not to be afraid of the Spirit and how it works, but we are to be educated so we can have the tools we need to positively affect people around us.

- Discernment, knowledge, faith, healing, wisdom, prophecy, miracles, tongues, and interpretation are **tools to help humanity.**

THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT WE WILL FAIL

Without the Spirit, even our best works fall flat eventually. We must remember that we are in a broken state, but **God wants to show us grace and empower us to do great things for His Kingdom!**

WHAT GO MEANS

THE GOSPEL IS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE

No one is saved unless they hear and receive the gospel (Rom. 10:13-14). Paul told Timothy that "first and foremost, Christ came to save sinners."

- **The goal of every good deed is to show Christ so that people will accept Him as Savior.**

WE EARN THE RIGHT TO SPEAK INTO PEOPLE

Matt. 5:16 says, "Let your light shine so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

If we are going to speak the gospel, we must first love people and earn the right to speak into their lives.

- **Religion has hurt a lot of people, and we must build the reputation of the church back up.**

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Before anything else, we need to make an impact in our literal neighborhoods. **Yes, this means you have to get to know the people that live around you.** Trim their yard, have them over for dinner, bake them cookies, **do something to serve and love them.**

- **If you haven't started here, you have no business going anywhere else.**

OUR CITY

The local church is the hope of the city. Though Jesus is the musician, we're the instruments He chooses to change the atmosphere of the community. **We need to be present in our city.**

- Build relationships at coffee shops, gyms, grocery stores, etc. Volunteer at a non-profit or serve in a ministry here that goes out.

OUR NATION

Though it may be difficult for everyone to get involved outside our city, the local church needs to be investing in parts of our nation that are struggling.

- **Your giving here allows us to sponsor 4 churches in New England where church attendance is around 2-5%.**

OUR PLANET

Jesus directly tells us to go to the ends of the earth. When He told His disciples they would do "greater things" than Him (Jn. 14), He meant the wider advancement of the gospel to the whole world.

- Jesus also says He will not return until the world has been reached (Mt. 24:14).

We have a very myopic view of humanity in America. We forget, or maybe never knew, how brutal other parts of the world can be. It's not just physical poverty, but the spiritual poverty in many places.

- The greatest gift God gave was his Son, now we're called to take this Gift to the most deprived places on Earth.

EVERY CHRISTIAN IS CALLED TO GO

- We have a **financial obligation** to help others. This comes through tithing and giving.
- We have an **obligation to do good deeds** for others. Whether it's mowing a yard or traveling to Africa, **we're called to show love.**
- We are called to **pray and fast** for others.
- **Your neighbors:** Get to know them and treat them how you'd like to be treated.
- **Your city:** Be present. Get to know your city and serve somewhere.
- **Your nation:** Pray for our nation and for areas that have become post-Christian.
- **Your world:** Pray about taking a mission trip or sponsoring a trip or child.
- Earn the right to speak into people's lives by doing good things for them. When you have earned this, share your story and also share the most important information one could ever hear, the Gospel.