

August 2020

The Lighthouse

The Great Commission

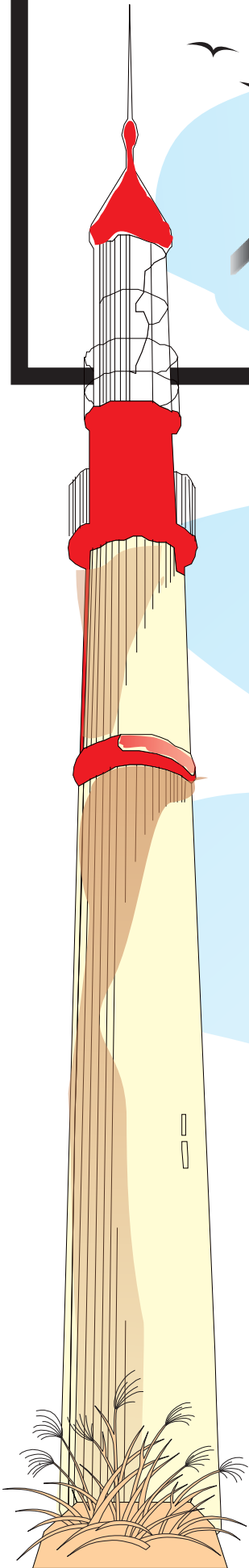
We refer to Matthew 28:18-20 as the Great Commission: “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”” (Matthew 28:18–20, ESV)

In this statement Jesus is commissioning his followers to make disciples as they went out into the world, initiating these new disciples into the church, and teaching them to observe all that Jesus commanded. The fact that Jesus promised to be with them always, to the end of the age, indicates that this commission wasn't only for those first disciples, but all disciples throughout the ages.

This is the task before us as a church and as individual Christians. We must take up the call and get to work making disciples. This is the mission of God for the church. It is not optional; nor is it a suggestion. In fact, there are other “great Commissions” in the Bible.

For example, when Jesus appeared to the disciples after his resurrection, Luke tells us that Jesus ate with them “and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”” (Luke 24:46–49, ESV)

“To all nations” is a bigger task than those handful of disciples would ever be able to accomplish in their lifetimes. It is up to succeeding generations to take up the mantle, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and proclaim the Gospel to the world.



Again, after Jesus rose from the dead he appeared to his disciples. John records his words for us. “Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (John 20:21–22, ESV)

We need to take this call seriously and go in confidence that the Holy Spirit will empower and use us to make disciples. This requires for us to step out in faith with boldness and a humble reliance upon the Spirit's help. May we remember that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16).

Again, Peter speaks to all of the church when he writes... “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.” (1 Peter 2:9, ESV)

Our mission as a church is to proclaim the Good News about Jesus and make disciples of those who respond to that call. That applies to every believer, not just the pastor, or the officers, or the women's leadership team. All of us should be seeking how we can get the Good News about Jesus out to the lost around us. May the Lord give us grace to move us out of our self-satisfied comfort zone and get serious about telling people about Jesus!

Grace & Peace,

Tim



Just As I Am

words by Charlotte Elliott
music by William B. Bradbury

“The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” John 6:37

She was an embittered woman, Charlotte Elliott of Brighton, England. Her health was broken, and her disability had hardened her. “If God loved me,” she muttered, “He would not have treated me this way.” Have you ever felt this way?

A Swiss minister, Dr. Cesar Malan, visited the Elliott's on May 9, 1822. Over dinner, Charlotte lost her temper and railed against God and family in a violent outburst. Her embarrassed family left the room and Dr. Malan was left alone with her.

“You are tired of yourself, aren't you? You are holding to your hate and anger because you have nothing else in the world to cling to. Consequently, you have become sour, bitter, and resentful.”

“What is your cure?” asked Charlotte.

“The faith you are trying to despise.”

As they talked, Charlotte softened. “If I wanted to become a Christian and to share the peace and joy you possess,” she finally asked, what would I do?”



“You would give yourself to God just as you are now, with your fightings and fears, hates and loves, pride and shame.”

“I would come to God just as I am? is that right?”

Charlotte did come just as she was, and her heart was changed that day. She claimed John 6:37 as a special verse for her”.... All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.”

Years later, to help raise funds for a school her brother, Rev. Henry Elliott was overseeing for the children of poor clergymen, she wrote a poem. The leaflet said: Sold for the Benefit of St. Margaret's Hall, Brighton: Him That Cometh to Me I Will in No Wise Cast Out. The poem became the most famous invitational hymn in history.

Charlotte lived to be 82 and wrote about 150 hymns, though she never enjoyed good health. After her death, over a thousand letters to her were found in which people expressed their gratitude for the way this hymn had touched their lives. Do you remember these words from the poem?



*Just as I am, without one plea, but that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come!
Just as I am, though tossed about, with many a conflict. many a doubt
Fightings and fears within, with-out, O Lamb of God, I come!
Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind: Sight, riches, healing of the mind.
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come!*



from The Sings My Soul, by Robert J. Morgan

Keep a Song in Your Heart, Melba Sipriano

Happy Birthday
for August

John Chaney 6th

Skipper Jones 19th

Ken Gosnell 29th

