

“Why Study Theology in the Local Church?”

Matthew 28:18-20

Knowing Him and Making Him Known

The mission of the local church is to make known the revelation through which He is known. Anything less than this is a breakdown in keeping the mission entrusted to the local church.

God has given to the local church a mandate to express itself in what we call missions. Missions makes known the revelation through which He is known. Missions intrinsically instructs on theological areas. Missions is content driven. If we do not know the truth, missions has no basis for existing. Without the proper content missions becomes a humanitarian enterprise.

Today, let us begin by asking ourselves our initial question, “Why study theology in the local church?”

I. In Christ, we have an inclusive power (v.18).

A. His power is inclusive in its resources (“All authority”).

B. His power is inclusive in its realm (“In heaven and on earth”).

II. In Christ, we have a specific program (vv. 19-20a).

“Because of that authority, his followers may go in confidence that their Lord is in sovereign control of ‘everything in heaven and on earth.’” (BKC, 1:595).

A. Going is presumed.

B. Disciple making is the command.

What is a disciple? The word “**Mathateuo**” means, “To make a pupil or student, to enroll as a scholar.” The word has much greater significance than our current culture exhibits. In its historical context, there was a greater sense of commitment and sacrifice than exists today. The teacher would commit himself to the student and the student to the teacher - there was a transfer.

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Please note this with me. Evangelism is *part* of the mission, but not the mission itself. Evangelism that does not have as its goal discipleship culminating in the planting of a local church is inappropriate. The command is not “soul-winning;” the command is to be making disciples.

1. Disciple making looks like baptizing.

2. Disciple making looks like teaching.

Teaching is more than talking. Teaching takes place when what is taught is caught. It is the same idea behind leadership - you are not a leader, if no one is following. Moreover, you are not a teacher without a learner.

This brings us to an interesting area of study. In addition, it brings us to our initial question, “Why study theology in the local church?”

- **First**, theology forms for us the context of our message as we are going.
- **Second**, theology forms for us the content of our message as we are going.

III. In Christ, we have an immediate presence (v.20b).

Jesus just shared with the disciples His will for global impact. The task set before the church is formidable. If not viewed properly, it seems impossible. Then He adds these words, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” This is not our ministry, but His. His immediate presence guarantees the fulfillment of 2 Thessalonians 5:24.