

~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:

Let's go back to Matthew 28:18-19. After declaring His supreme lordship, Jesus then gave a commandment:

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" (Matt. 28:19-20a).

Notice that Jesus used the word "therefore." He said, "Go therefore and make disciples..." That is to say, "Because of what I just said...because I have all authority...because I am Lord...people should of course obey Me...and so I am commanding you (and you should obey Me) to go and make disciples, teaching those disciples to obey all My commandments."

And that, simply put, is the general goal, God's great vision for all of our ministries: Our responsibility is to make disciples who obey all of Christ's commandments.

That is why Paul said that the grace of God had been given to him as an apostle to "bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles" (Rom. 1:5; emphasis added). The goal was obedience; the means to obedience was faith. People who have genuine faith in the Lord Jesus obey His commandments.

That is why Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him [Jesus] both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). Peter wanted Christ's crucifiers to know that God had made Jesus Lord and Christ. They had killed the one whom God wanted them to obey! Under great conviction, they asked, "What shall we do?" and Peter responded first of all, "Repent"! That is, turn from disobedience to obedience. Make Jesus Lord. Next Peter told them to be baptized as Christ commanded. Peter was making disciples—obedient followers of Christ—and he was starting the right way with the right message.

This being so, every minister should be able to evaluate his success. All of us should ask ourselves, "Is my ministry leading people to become obedient to all of Christ's commandments?" If we are, we're succeeding. If we aren't, we're failing.

The evangelist who only persuades people to "accept Jesus," without telling them to repent of their sins, is failing. The pastor who is trying to build a big congregation by keeping everyone happy and organizing many social activities is failing. The teacher who only teaches the latest charismatic "wind of doctrine" is failing. The apostle who plants churches that consist of people who say they believe in Jesus, but who don't obey Him, is failing. The prophet who prophesies only to tell people what blessings will soon be coming their way is failing.