

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah. – Psalm 60:4

The Mission from God in The Gospel of John

Chapter 20

Understanding Divine Commission in Christian Theology

Introduction

The Gospel of John, known for its profound spiritual insights and theological depth, culminates in Chapter 20 with a vivid depiction of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This chapter not only serves as a testament to the risen Christ but also outlines the mission bestowed upon His followers. Through various encounters and instructions, Chapter 20 presents Christians as individuals on a divine mission, entrusted with the continuation of Christ's work on earth.

The Resurrection of Jesus

The chapter begins with the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene. She finds the stone removed and the tomb empty, and she runs to inform Simon Peter and the other disciple, often believed to be John. This moment marks the beginning of a new era, wherein the resurrection of Jesus signifies the victory over death and the promise of eternal life. For Christians, this event is foundational, affirming their faith and empowering them to carry forward the mission of proclaiming the Good News.

Mary Magdalene's Encounter with the Risen Christ

After informing the disciples, Mary returns to the tomb, where she encounters two angels and then Jesus himself. Initially not recognizing Him, she converses with Him until He calls her by name. This personal encounter underscores the transformative nature of recognizing Jesus' presence. Jesus then commissions Mary to go to His brothers and inform them of His ascension. Her obedience and proclamation make her the first messenger of the resurrection, highlighting the role of believers in sharing the message of Christ.

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

Later, Jesus appears to His disciples who are gathered behind locked doors, fearful of the Jewish leaders. His greeting, "Peace be with you," offers them comfort and reassurance. He shows them His hands and side, providing tangible proof of His resurrection. This appearance serves multiple purposes: it removes their doubts, restores their faith, and prepares them for their mission. Jesus breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." This act empowers the disciples, conferring upon them the authority to forgive sins, symbolizing their role in the ministry of reconciliation.

The Commission to Spread the Gospel

In verse 21, Jesus explicitly states, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." This commission is central to the chapter, emphasizing that just as Jesus was sent by the Father to fulfill

His divine purpose, so are the disciples sent to continue His work. This mission involves bearing witness to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and spreading the message of salvation. The disciples are to embody the teachings of Christ, living out His love and truth in their interactions with others.

Thomas' Doubt and Belief

Thomas, one of the twelve, was not present during Jesus' initial appearance. His skepticism and demand for physical proof highlight a common human struggle with faith and doubt. A week later, Jesus appears again and directly addresses Thomas' doubts, inviting him to touch His wounds. Thomas' subsequent declaration, "My Lord and my God!" is a powerful affirmation of faith. Jesus' response, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," extends this blessing to all future believers, reinforcing the importance of faith in the mission of Christians.

The Purpose of John's Gospel

The chapter concludes with a statement of purpose for the entire Gospel: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." This purpose is intrinsically linked to the mission of Christians. Belief in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God is the foundation of the Christian faith, and through this belief, Christians are called to share the life-giving message of Jesus with the world.

Implications for Christians Today

The events and teachings of John Chapter 20 have profound implications for Christians. The resurrection of Jesus is not just a historical event but a present reality that empowers believers to live out their faith boldly and with conviction. The personal encounters with the risen Christ, such as those of Mary and Thomas, illustrate the transformative power of recognizing and responding to Jesus.

The commission given by Jesus to His disciples extends to all Christians. It is a call to action, a reminder that their faith is not a private matter but a public mission. Christians are to be ambassadors of Christ, sharing the message of His love and forgiveness, and working towards the reconciliation of all creation with God.

Conclusion

In conclusion, The Gospel of John Chapter 20 vividly portrays the resurrection of Jesus and the commissioning of His disciples. It underscores the mission of Christians to continue the work of Christ by spreading the Gospel, living out His teachings, and embodying His love. This chapter is a powerful reminder of the divine mission entrusted to every believer, calling them to be active participants in God's redemptive plan for the world. As Christians embrace this mission, they carry forward the legacy of the risen Christ, bringing hope and life to all they encounter.

Definitions Taken From Webster's 1828

MIS'SION, *noun* [Latin *missio*, from *mitto*, to send.]

1. A sending or being sent, usually the latter; a being sent or delegated by authority, with certain powers for transacting business; commission; as sent on a foreign *mission*

How to begin, how to accomplish best

His end of being on earth, and *mission* high.

2. Persons sent; any number of persons appointed by authority to perform any service; particularly, the persons sent to propagate religion, or evangelize the heathen. The societies for propagating the gospel have missions in almost every country. Last week a *mission* sailed for the Sandwich isles. We have domestic missions and foreign missions.

COMMISSION, *noun*

1. The act of committing, doing, performing, or perpetrating; as the *commission* of a crime.

2. The act of committing or sending to; the act of entrusting, as a charge or duty. Hence,

3. The thing committed, entrusted or delivered; letters patent, or any writing from proper authority, given to a person as his warrant for exercising certain powers, or the performance of any duty, whether civil, ecclesiastical, or military. Hence,

4. Charge; order; mandate; authority given.

EM'ISSARY, *noun* [Latin *emissarius*, from *emitto*; *e* and *mitto*, to send.]

A person sent on a mission; a missionary employed to preach and propagate the gospel.

If one of the four gospels be genuine, we have, in that one, strong reason to believe, that we possess the accounts which the original emissaries of the religion delivered. Taken From

Sent in John 20:21

Original Word - ἀποστέλλω

Transliterated Word – apostellō

Phonetic Spelling- ap-os-tel'-lo

Parts of Speech - Verb

Strong's Definition

From G575 and G4724; set apart that is (by implication) to send out (properly on a mission) literally or figuratively: - put in send (away forth out) set [at liberty].

Thayer's Definition

to order (one) to go to a place appointed 1. to send away, dismiss to allow one to depart, that he may be in a state of liberty a. to order one to depart, send off b. to drive away c. 2.

Send in John verse 20:21

Original Word

πέμπω

Transliterated Word

pempō

Phonetic Spelling

pem'-po

Parts of Speech

Verb

Strong's Definition

Apparently a primary verb; to dispatch (from the subjective view or point of departure whereas ἵμι hiēmi [as a stronger form of εἶμι eimi] refers rather to the objective point or terminus ad quem and G4724 denotes properly the orderly motion involved) especially on a temporary errand; also to transmit bestow or wield: - send thrust in.

Thayer's Definition

to send; to bid a thing to be carried to one a.; to send (thrust or insert) a thing into another

Special note: The Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the doubt demonstrated by Mary, Peter, John, and Thomas in John 20 are all directly related to the Mission.

I. The New Commission i.e. the mission now at hand

- John 20:21 KJVS – “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.”
 - This is the first of three instances where the New Commission was given to the Apostles and by a greater extension the Church; (1 Cor. 15:5)
 - The second is The Great Commission, the heart of the mission – (Matthew 28:18-20 and Mark 16:15-18; 1 Cor. 15:6)
 - The third – (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:3-8; 1 Cor. 15:7)
- The Apostles, and by extension the church, were given a task and God given authority to achieve a special objective - (John 20:23, Matthew 28:18, Luke 24:47, Mark 16:16)
- The period of ignorance among the gentiles has ended . Every Christian should have a deep love and affection for the Gospel, “For it is the power of God unto salvation!”
- The command to go is not subjective (John 20:17; Acts 10:20; Acts 16:7-10)

II. Carrying Out The Mission

- The officers of the New Commission – (Ephesians 4:11-12, Psalm 24:8,10)
- The angels and the candlesticks, the two witnesses, are emissaries that publish and proclaim the Gospel in the one that sent them, Jesus Christ – (Revelation 1:13-16; 2 Cor. 5:20-21; Ephesians 6:18-20; Hebrews 13:17)
- Kingdom builders – (1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 4:12-16; 1 Peter 2:5)
- There is no age of retirement from being engaged in the mission (2 Timothy 4:6-8)
- It requires everyone to be engaged! (Acts 8:1;4; Joshua 7:3)
- Teach Bible doctrines! – (2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 10:14;17; Matthew 28:19-20; Hebrews 5:13-14; Hosea 4:6)
- Weaponry and Armor – (Hebrews 4:12; 2 Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:11-22)
- Battleplan is executed by faith - (Matthew 17:20; Matthew 21:22; Hebrews 11:33)
- Above all presenting Christ in our bodies – (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Timothy 2:21)
 - Sanctification is mortifying of the flesh making it subservient to the will of the Spirit – (1 Timothy 2:21)

III. The Mission's Theatre

- Identifying the opponent – (1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; Revelation 12:10; Ephesians 6:12)
- All nations, all the world...Laying siege to the stronghold of Satan, “Whom say ye that I am?” – (Matthew 16:15-19a)
 - Upon Simons declaration that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God Jesus directed him to how he arrived at that conclusion.
 - It was not arrived at from a fleshly descent, but rather a spiritual descent.
 - You must be born again! – (John 3:3, 5-6; John 1:13)
 - “The gates of hell shall not prevail” - Though often interpreted as the church being in a defensive posture the truth is the battle was to be brought to Satan’s very gate and like Jericho it stands no chance against the omnipotent God. Jesus was not held by the grave. (Revelation
 - Note: Gates are only ever used for the purposes of keeping in/out. In heaven, the gates are never closed. – (Hebrews 11:30, Revelation 21:25)
- The rules of engagement
 - Love your enemies - (Matthew 5:46-47)
 - Take the Gospel message to places you abhor – (Jonah 4:2)
 - At great personal risk – (2 Corinthians 11:24-30)
 - The church thrives during periods of persecution - (Romans 8:35-39; Hebrews 11:33b-40; Psalm 116:15)

IV. Victory Is Confidently Assured

- If we are truly overcomers – (Revelation 3:21; 1 John 5:4-5; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 2:13-14; Revelation 12:11, 21:7; Revelation 17:14)
- If we have an internalized view of the mission – (John 2:18-19; Colossians 1:21-29; Acts 7:59-60; 1 Corinthians 15:9)
- Fight the good fight of faith – (1 Timothy 6:12-16, Jude 1:3b, Philippians 4:8-9)
- Reserve the battle and recompense to Christ – (Judges 7:2,4; Psalm 98:1; Romans 12:19)
- At the last day – (John 6:39-40, 44, 54; 1 Corinthians 15:51-58)
- Gathered around the throne – (Revelation 7:9-10, 13-15, Romans 1:16)