**The “Great” Commission**

**Matthew’s Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)**

Matthew’s understanding of mission is clearly expressed at the end of his gospel, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew’s mission was to *“*all nations,” and was one of “disciple making,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.”

**Mark’s Commission (Mark 16:15)**

Mark’s understanding of mission is found in Mark 16:15, “He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’” Notice the differences. Mark’s mission was to “go” and “preach” and his audience was to be “all creation.” Unlike Matthew, Mark’s mission didn’t include any sort of *baptizing or teaching* calling (although I’m certain God would frown on any efforts to do so). Both were disciples of Jesus, yet in the end both discovered different ways of nuances unique to themselves for carrying outthe mission *they* were called to.

**Luke’s Commission (Luke 1:8)**

Luke expresses his understanding of mission in the book of Acts, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Like Matthew and Mark, Luke expresses his understanding of mission in a slightly different way and emphasizes nuances that were distinct to him. Luke’s calling is unique because it is done with “the power of the Holy Spirit.” Luke’s calling reminds me of the Pentecostal and Assemblies of God denominations. It’s not like the rest of don’t have the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit plays a more central role in their churches.

**John’s Commission (John 20:19-22)**

Finally, John’s calling: “19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”

John’s calling is unique because it was the only one delivered by Jesus *after* His resurrection. Note that, Jesus tells them not just once but twice; “Peace be with you.” As the disciples were filled with fear and hesitation, Jesus calms with peace, but there was more behind His words. His words of peace were not for comfort’s sake; they were for *mission’s* sake. The mission was to leave the locked room, to become “sent ones” and to bring “peace” and “forgiveness” out into the broken world around them.

**Conclusion:**

In theology there is a popular term, *Missio Dei*, which means The Mission of God. Pastors and theologians often search for cultural and historical accuracy of the *Missio Dei.* What we see in these passages is that the *Missio Dei* is expressed differently for each disciple and that each had to grapple with their calling within the grand plan of God.

The question remains: What is your role in the *Missio Dei*? What is your unique expression of the Great Commission?