



HILL COUNTRY
BIBLE CHURCH | AUSTIN

Commissioned Sermon Series

The Method

Tim Hawks, Lead Pastor

January 27, 2013

Well good morning. I guess you guys made it through the race lines and some of y'all finished up and got over here, and so I apologize for whatever you had to run through. And if you guys did the 18 miles and you need to just fall asleep, I get that.

So, we want to welcome you to our service. We're in the study called Commissioned, and we've been commissioned by God. And I think I realized, maybe for the first time what it meant to be commissioned when I was trying to pay my way through college. I got a couple of summers that I got to work in the automobile factory making cars. It wasn't a privilege because of the work, it was a privilege because it was money and I needed money to pay for college. Anybody here work on a manufacturing line some place? Work in a manufacturing process? A few of you guys know what that is, right? So the product starts out as nothing and then it travels down the line and each station or each person is adding something to it. So what this person adds to it is necessary before the next person can add something to it, and at the end of the line it comes out as a finished product. And I was working for Fisher Body making Oldsmobile's. So everybody that's in their late 50's or older know what an Oldsmobile was. It's actually a car - they made Cutlasses, Ninety-Eights, Eighty-Eights, Tornados. Some of you are thinking 'Sweet' - 442's, you know. So anyway I built those things. And so essentially what, how that worked was for 623 yards there was a track running, and these little buggies that carried what was going to become a car. And it started out down in the body shop with the first piece of metal going on the floor, and that thing build up. And as it

traveled down the line everybody put their parts on it. One year I was putting in windows, one year I was doing vinyl tops. Can you remember a vinyl top? Aren't you glad we got rid of those things.

So I did all kinds of stuff building these things, and I remember when I first got there for the first day for the first job there was this little space. Like here was my line where it started and here's the line where it ended. It was actually longer than that, that the car would travel through. And there was a group of guys working the line behind and there was a group of guys working the one before. And they were theoretically supposed to put their piece in place so we could put our piece in place, so the next person could put their piece in place. The problem was this group was notoriously slow. And they would actually ride the line across our space - can you imagine. And they would be crowding our space and then we would have to hurry, hurry, hurry to get it done. And the guy that I was working with, that was training me, was a veteran and he was always upset about this because he liked that extra 15 seconds of being able to sit and relax because, you know, you're not supposed to work too hard at work. And so anyway, I just remember they kept doing it and they kept doing it and they kept doing it, and finally he uttered the words that should never be spoken in a manufacturing situation. He said "Let this one go."

And so we sat and watched as they worked into our space, and then we didn't do what we were supposed to do and it went on into the next one. And you would have thought that a nuclear explosion happened in the factory. These people were yelling (those in the group before them), these people were yelling (those in the group after them). The foreman for these people (those in the group after them) comes running in, our foreman comes running in. The guy on this side pulls out his awl and is waving it in the face of the other guy. And I'm thinking he's going to kill him right here in the factory. I'm standing there - now this guy's, he's a longtime union member so he wasn't going to get in trouble, and I'm thinking uh oh, I'm prob - this may be my last day on the job. And I came to realize at that moment, I had been commissioned to do my job in that space. And if I didn't do my job then the next guy couldn't do his job, and the next guy couldn't do his job, and the whole thing was messed up. You say, 'Well why didn't they just hit the button and shut it all down.' Yeah . . . think about that and put like 5,000 people idle. I mean it was just a major deal. And so I came to realize you never say 'Let's let this one go' when you've been commissioned and everybody's counting on you.

Now the same thing applies in the spiritual realm. If God has called us to go on mission with Him, He's got a role for us to play in that mission. And if we decide 'I'm just going to let this one go,' let this opportunity go, 'I'm going to take a day off from His work, I'm just not going to do it, I'm going to back out,'

what happens. Now God is different than General Motors because God has the ability to actually get His plan accomplished and He will do it. He'll use someone else. But God's intent is for all of his people to go on mission to do their part in the commission that he's called us to. And that's why we've been in the study called Commissioned, where we're looking at what Jesus said to His disciples from the time of the resurrection until the time of the ascension. And we're actually looking at it in chronological order. In other words, what did He say first, what did He say second, what did He say third. Kind of building in them an understanding of what they're supposed to do and what we're supposed to do as well.

And so last week we looked at the first statement, the day of the resurrection, that evening the disciples are scared to death, gathered in the upper room. Jesus walks into the upper room and He gives them the first part of the commission. He says to them 'As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.'" He gave them no other information. He tells them to meet him on a mountain in Galilee. So when we come to the next statement it actually happens probably about a week later, you can imagine all that they were thinking during that week. Three days' journey to travel to the mountain, and they get to the mountain and in Matthew 28, where we're going to be today, He gives them the second commission.

So Matthew 28, starting in verse 16 we pick up reading there. In Matthew 28, versus 16 it says:

"Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw Him, they worshipped him; but some doubted."

And that makes a lot of sense, right? So they see Jesus there on the mountain. Chances are they didn't seem Him in between - we don't really know, but they see Him on the mountain and they're overwhelmed. They're reminded again that it's true that He has risen from the dead, that Jesus is not dead, He's not gone, He's alive, He's God. And they fall down to worship Him, but there's also a lot of questions. What does this mean? What are we going to do? How does this play itself out? People doubting what was taking place, some were probably even wondering if what they saw the night of the resurrection was really real because it's so hard to believe that someone could rise from the dead. And so they're in the midst of this doubt, and in the middle of that Jesus states, what is called by the church as The Great Commission. It's the most extensive and most explanatory of all the commissions given to the church. In other words, the first one in John, the one we looked at last week with Pastor Russell

teaching, that was the model, like Jesus so us. This is the method. Here's how we go about doing it.

Look at what Jesus says in verse 18:

"Then Jesus came up to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Now this great commission, first of all is "**Great in Authority**". In versus 18 He says:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

What Jesus is saying there is God the Father, who is sovereign over all has given Jesus the authority to execute the plan to establish His kingdom by gathering to himself worshippers who put their trust in the sacrifice of Jesus as payment for their sins. And Jesus has been given authority to do that. In other words, He has the right to do it, He has the power to do it. God's not going to change His mind, the plan is set, Jesus is going to accomplish it. And there is no power in heaven or on earth; that is there is no spiritual being, no demonic being that can stop Jesus. Nor is there any earthly being, there's no power on earth that can trump what Jesus is calling His people to do. Now we read in verse 19 He says:

"Therefore go and make disciples."

And so there's no authority that can stop His church from sharing the gospel and making disciples. So think about it this way. When a government says 'We will not allow our citizens to speak in the name of Jesus Christ,' now that government can jail its citizens. That government can kill its citizens, but that government cannot stop Jesus' people from talking about the gospel. In fact, the situation came up really early in the church. Peter and John are walking into the temple, they heal a man that's crippled, they begin to preach the gospel in the name of Jesus and all the religious and civic leaders pull them aside and they say, 'Listen, we command you. You cannot speak in His name anymore.' And it's almost humorous what they say. They look at them and they say, 'Uh guys, do you think it's better for us to obey God or to obey you? We obey God or you?' Well obviously you obey God. And so they said 'We can't stop speaking in His name because Jesus has all authority and His authority trumps government.' And so Christian missionaries go to all corners of the world, even

in places where the government says don't go. Now they can kill us, they can jail us, but we still are responsible under the authority of Jesus to get the gospel out. That has implications for us here too.

In other words, there's no human business that can stop us from sharing the good news in a Godly, Jesus Christ-like way with people. Now they can tell you 'Do it on your own time.' They can say, 'Get your work done.' But they can't stop you from doing that. Now they can fire you. They can. They are the employer and they can fire you if they want to, but anytime we say 'Well I cannot,' in a Godly, gracious, humble way, 'I cannot follow the prompting of the Spirit to tell a person how they can have eternal life, how they can know the love of Jesus and be forgiven. I can't tell a person that because some human says I can't.' That human does not have authority in that regard.

Now as I say that, I say that with a little bit of caution because I know lots of people have said 'I claim the authority of Jesus Christ' and raised a war banner over their troops and marched in and murdered people. I know people who have political agendas claim that they're doing it in the name of Christ, as if Christ somehow has insider care or concern as to what the government's doing. Christ is interested in what His church is doing, okay. What are we doing. And so as I say that I say that with some level of caution to remind us, we're here to represent Jesus not to represent an agenda, and we have the authority to represent Him to the people around us. Okay?

So great in authority. We must speak boldly. In addition to that it's "**Great in Scope**", it's great in scope. Look at it, He says in verse 19, He says:

"Therefore" because I have all authority, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations."

So we're supposed to make disciples of all nations. Now think about 11 guys that are standing on top of this mountain in Galilee and they're looking around. They can't see very far because it's not a very big mountain in Galilee. And Jesus is saying, you know, kind of like 'Look around to the whole nations. Your job is to take the gospel to the whole world, to all of the nations.' Now what do "nations" mean? When we think of nations we think of geopolitical units. In other words geography borders and the politics, who runs it. So like the United States would be a nation in our mind, or Mexico would be a nation, or Canada would be a nation. That's not what this word means. This phrase in the Greek really refers to not geopolitical groups, but ethno-linguistic groups. In other words people that share an ethnic heritage and have a language that they share in common. Now the difference between these two is really big, because if you just look at the geopolitical groups the way we define nations, there's 238 of

those on the planet. But if you look at the ethno-linguistic groups, that is the people groups, the clans of people that have their own unique heritage, their own unique language, among that particular group there's over 16,000 of those groups. So actually within countries sometimes there may be 100 different nations, Biblical nations within that, and to show you how much God cares about people - not politics, but people - He's saying that we need to go to every one of those individual ethno-linguistic groups with the gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that we actually make disciples of all of those nations.

Now let me give you some progress reports, okay. So we live 2,000 years approximately after the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His ascension to heaven. How we doing? How we doing of making disciples of all the nations? Well right now there's actually 16,302 of these nations, of these ethno-linguistic groupings. And of that group of people we consider 9,653 reached. Now to be reached means that there is a group of indigenous believers, believers from that group who have some level of size and muscle to be able to plant churches and to reach that group with the gospel. So that means we're just a little less than 7,000 from having the gospel to every single group. Okay. You say, 'Well how in the world, like how are we going to reach 7,000.' Well let me tell you know we're doing it, like how we - you and me - as a church are doing it.

Let's take one specific example. In 1998 a couple at Wayside Chapel in San Antonio felt God's call in their life to go to a particular group of people in East Asia. D and S (*names changed for their protection*), and their family felt the call to go to the Z people, a group of people of about 8 million who had their own unique ethnic language background who had no gospel in their language. Now at the time that they went, this is 1998, so not too long ago, less than 20 years. At the time they went there was only one known Z believer out of 8 million people. Words like grace and forgiveness did not exist in their language. Like they had no concept of those ideas that are so precious and fundamental to us in understanding who God actually is. So D and S (*names changed for their protection*) joined together with a team, some other people and Hill Country Bible Church financially supported them and sent them out along with some other churches. We sent them with some teams to go to the Z people and they began to do ministry there. What's happened over this 14-year period? They have now, not only learned the Z language, but they began to write it down, they've translated a whole New Testament into their language. They're starting to work on the Old Testament right now, and there's over 10,000 believers in 14 years in the Z people.

Now since that time we've continued to be involved. Let me give you just some more information as you kind of look at the pictures. (*For the security of the missionaries, their images are protected*) As part of the process, Hill Country

Bible Church has prayed, cared for dozens of missionary families that are there, have sent five missionaries for a year or more from our body to serve in that region. So people who are sitting in the seats just like you felt called, got up, spent a year or more going to serve that team to work with them to reach that group of people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are currently sending T and J (*names changed for their protection*) from our staff that are going to begin the work in a close ethnic group. They're leaving here to go be part of the next wave of this. They're joining a Pioneer's Team to work with a team that's further south, and obviously there's more people needed, but what you guys gotta know is really, in our lifetime, in less than 14 years and some of you guys in your lifetime (pointing to the youth in the congregation), one of those 7,000 groups is nearing the point where we would say they have been reached with the gospel. That's Hill Country Bible Church. By the way, we have 43 other missionaries, not all doing the same kind of work, but they are out there in the world. Now just think about it - 7,000 people, 7,000 people groups. What if the churches of Jesus Christ got serious about reaching every one of those people? I mean we could literally see every one of those people groups reached in our lifetime. We have the power, the technology, the resources, and the people to actually reach the whole world in our lifetime. And let me show you why this matters. So many people are focused on the end times, what's Jesus waiting for, why doesn't He come back, the world's getting so bad, when's He going to return. And people are studying nuances of prophecy and nuances of what's taking place in the culture and around us, and what's happening in the world. Do you know that there's only one place where Jesus clearly communicates something that absolutely has to happen before the end comes. That's in the same gospel in Matthew 24. I would encourage you to turn to it and circle it about four times, unless you're using electronic communication and then you're going to have to highlight it and maybe put some smiley faces beside it. In Matthew 24:14, look at this passage. It says:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to" who? "to all nations, and then the end will come." "And then the end will come."

Do you realize that in our lifetime, if we in the church at large is faithful to do what we are called to do, what we are commissioned to do, that we actually may be breathing this air on the day that the last person walks into the last nation group to begin to tell them the good news of Jesus Christ. And as those people begin to understand it and come to faith, Jesus Christ will return and establish His kingdom. And we get to do something to be part of that. That's why when we talk about things like "Let's Change the World", why not? We actually can

do this. We have the ability to do this. And I would give the example of D and S (*names changed for their protection*), and the people that have participated – many of you from here.

I don't know if you guys even realize this, but you know the plate goes by, and you kind of obligatory 'Yeah I need to give.' We're not just keeping the lights on folks. We're changing the world. We're supporting people that are changing the world. It's great in scope. That gives us a reason to get up in the morning, right?

Not only is it great in authority and great in scope, but it's also "**Great in Task**". The task itself is a noble, awesome task. So how do we go about doing it? Back in Matthew 28:19 He says:

"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."

So there's one verb here and three participles that add color or clarity to that verb. And the one verb is the verb "make disciples." So how do we reach the nations? We make disciples. So you say 'What is a disciple?' A disciple very simply is a learner or a student or a follower. And so part of the problem we have is when we think about a learner or a student we think about the person in the front of the classroom and we're in the back taking notes. Right? Or we're not taking notes. We're in the back cheating off somebody else, and it's kind of an information transfer, right? That's not the concept in the New Testament. Learners in the New Testament would attach themselves to a leader and they would live with him, and they would be with him, and they would follow him, and they would learn his ways, they would talk like him, their passion would be his, their cause would be his. They would actually take on his characteristics. And so in this case what we're talking about is a disciple of Jesus Christ is an authentic follower of Jesus who's becoming more like Him day after day. That's all there is to it. That's all there is to it. Like you don't have to, you know show up at Kirby Lane at six o'clock every morning, every Monday morning and go through two books to be able to become a disciple. Even though that might help you. You don't have to take seminary classes. You don't have to read 20 or 30 Christian books. You don't have to do that to become a disciple. What you have to do to become a disciple is put your trust in Jesus Christ and begin to follow Him, live with Him, talk to Him, act like Him. And you begin the process of walking with Him. That's what it means to become a disciple.

Some people think, 'Well I can't make a disciple until I be one.' Yeah, that's probably right. 'In order to be one, I've got to jump through a lot of religious

hoops. I've got to get a lot of information.' And so a lot of people sit on the sidelines and they don't get involved. Let me just challenge you with that, that actually if you're going to follow Jesus and be like Him, be one of His disciples, what Jesus did was He brought people with Him. He took people along. See you actually can't be a disciple unless you're making disciples. The two of those go hand-in-hand. You don't have to arrive at the destination to take somebody with you. If I told you today, "Hey, I want to go to Dallas and I want my friends to go with me, and so I guess I better drive there first, and when I get there then I can say 'Hey y'all come.'" You'd say, 'Awh you don't have to get there to invite people to come. Like you get in your car and they line up behind you, and you know, you carpool together, and you go together.' That's what discipleship is. "I'm going with Jesus, come with me, let's go together." That's what it means. Okay.

And some people may actually pass you on the way. You know if they're like my wife, she's heavy footed, she would whip out and she'd get to Dallas before me, which is good okay? That's good, that's not a bad - well I mean it's good when it comes to discipleship, let's put it that way. So basic follower of Jesus Christ, authentically learning and living with Him.

Having said that there are three nuances to how we go about doing that, and He lays those out. First of all He says *"Therefore go."* *"Therefore go."* Literally you could translate this as you are going. As you are going, make disciples. Now as you are going really implies two things. The first is that all along the way of life you're making disciples. When you're working you're making disciples, when you're at home you're making disciples, when you're playing you're making disciples, when you're traveling with your sports club you're making disciples. When you're on vacation you're making disciples, and in every aspect of your life all the time in every place and every way you're looking for opportunities to influence people with the gospel and then help them become like Jesus Christ. It should not be uncommon for you to be thinking about people at work that are kind of in the process of coming to understand who Jesus is and how you're going to help them with that. In the neighborhood, how that's going, and at school, how that's going. And as you're going, as you go about the day-to-day life this is something we just do, it's who we are.

In addition to that there's also the concept of going to places where nobody's act. In other words going to the nations. And a group of people like us, we ought to be strategically thinking about where are the places in the world that need people like D and S, like T and J (names changed for their protection). And how do we make sure that we get some people ready and prepared and supported and there to do missionary work in those places. And so we want to be sending people. At Hill Country Bible Church we have a full time pastor, C.M.

(names changed for their protection) is our Go Pastor. It's his job to understand the places in the world where we need to send people and to be working with you guys to mobilize people. People who are sitting right here in this room, to be part of going to the nations. And we have so many people that have experienced that on a short-term basis and some that are experiencing that on a long-term basis. If you've never gone on a short term mission trip - how many of you guys have gone on a short term mission trip (asks for a show of hands) somewhere. Okay, maybe half. For the rest of you I would challenge you. Get on our website, we've got trips going all over the world this year. And you say 'Well I don't want to do that because God may call me.' So if God calls you to something do you think it will be what's best for you? That's kind of like saying 'You know I don't want to trust in Jesus because I'm not sure heaven's going to be any good.' Considering the alternative, yeah probably it's gonna be okay. So if you trust God with your salvation and your future, why wouldn't you trust Him with His plan for your life? Get a little crazy. Get out there. Let God do something different. Get on a short-term mission trip. So we're going and then we're sending people.

In addition to that He goes on to say:

"Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

And so we go, we share the good news of Jesus Christ. People come to faith in Jesus Christ; they put their trust in Him. Then what's the next step for them? The next step for them is baptism. Baptism is very important. Think about this - Jesus qualified, made disciples with three things. And one of those three is baptism. You say why is baptism so important? There's two reasons. First of all, baptism is your public identification with the triune God. When you're baptized you're publicly declaring to the people in your future and in your present world that you are in allegiance to God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. That's your one God, that's the God you worship, that's the God you follow. You have no other Gods. You're attached to no one else, and so you're making it a public statement that you follow the triune God.

But the second part is more personal. You're making a personal experiential identification with the actual death, burial, and resurrection with Jesus. In other words, you're personally physically identifying with what He did for you on the cross. Paul explains this in Romans 6. He says, don't you know that those who were baptized were buried with Christ? So when Jesus died on the cross His life left Him, He was buried in the ground. When you stand in the waters of baptism we put you under the water, and as you go under the water and the water closes around you it actually physically is giving you the

experience of death. Being cut off from the ability to breathe, from sound. I mean you're literally in a state that identifies with His death. And then it says, Paul says as Jesus was raised to a new life so too we are raised to a new life. As we come up out of the water we breathe again. It's like we're physically experiencing this, the sensation of being reborn as the waters wash off of us. The sense that the old is now gone. The old me is dead and buried, now I'm living a new life. That is very important for you and every single person who has placed their faith and trust in Jesus to go through that to communicate both publically and personally your identification and experience with Jesus Himself. That's why Jesus tells us to do it.

Now let me just apologize on behalf of the church historical. We've used baptism for all kinds of things. I'm talking about the church of history. We've used it as an initiation rite to decide who's in the church and who's not in the church. It doesn't have anything to do with that. We've used it to count heads. 'How many baptisms did you get this year', 'Well how many did you get this year?' 'Well we got this many,' 'Well we got this many.' As if somehow that's some kind of ecclesiastical lottery, or kind of we won't the lottery this year - we had a bunch of baptisms. We've even decided that the best way for some people is to start really young. And you've got the infant baptism where the person doesn't even have any idea what they're, what they're committing to so - you can't really physically experience being buried with Jesus and raised again. You can't really publically declare your Trinitarian commitment when you don't understand all of that. So I apologize that the church has kind of messed us up a lot. And I just say to you - I'm not here to try to correct all the theology. I'm just - just read the passage folks. What does He say? And if you've never personally gone through baptism as a believer that really expresses these things and drives them deep into your heart, I would say do it. Like we can help you out here. That's what we do, we help you out. You need to experience that, you need to communicate that. And don't let the fact that you don't like to be in front of people - this is public - or that you might get your hair wet. Or you don't look good, you know, when your make-up runs. Permanent make-up helps, okay. You know whatever that is, to let that get in the way of really genuinely having this incredibly both physical and mystical encounter with Jesus Christ, that's baptism. So people come to faith and get baptized, and then after that He gives us one more. He says, and verse 20

"And teaching them --"

Everything I have commanded you. Is that what it says? Is that what it says? Get those commands memorized. And teaching you to know everything I've commanded you. Is that what it says? Look at the text; what does it say?

“And teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Here’s the struggle. Having information does not have the same power as experiencing that information put to life. You don’t really, really know until you’ve experienced it. Okay? So a day in the life of our student ministry. Watch this.

(Video Begins)



(Steve Mielke – Discipleship Pastor) Hey it’s almost noon. You guys want to grab some lunch?

(Ryan Shomaker – High School Pastor) For sure.

(Joey LoSurdo – Middle School Pastor) Yeah I can do lunch, I’m getting pretty hungry.

(Steve Mielke) Aw, let’s get something like super spicy.

(Joey LoSurdo) Yeah, you know I mean I guess we could try that. I’ve never really had spicy food before. I’m not super sure what that would taste like.

(Ryan Shomaker) How do we really know what spicy is? I mean what's spicy to you might not be spicy to me. I mean I'm from New Orleans. I can take this stuff.



(Steve Mielke) Hey guys, so I found this on this Wikipedia site, so this dude, Wilbur Scoville created the Scoville Scale in 1912. So it's a scale that measures the pungency of chili peppers. The number of Scoville units indicates the amount of this chemical capsaicin that's present. So you know like a jalapeno pepper, that's 5,000 Scoville units, right? But this Mad Dog 357 Sauce is 357,000 Scoville units. That's like, that's like literally a billion times hotter.

(Joey LoSurdo) I get that Steve from an intellectual perspective, I mean I get the facts of it, but I can't say I really still understand. I can't say that I really know what spiciness is all about.

(Steve Mielke) That's true. But I think this video is going to show us how hot this hot sauce is. Check this out on You Tube you guys.

(Steve, Joey, and Ryan watch video)



(Ryan Shomaker) I get it. It makes sense now.

(Joey LoSurdo) Oh man, that was something else. I gotta be honest though, I mean I understand spiciness from an intellectual perspective. I've even kind of seen it in action from what that guy on that video had to go through, but I still don't think I really know. Guys I gotta be honest. I think the only way we're going to know and really learn is I think we've got to try this Mad Dog 357. I think each of us needs to take a spoonful of it.



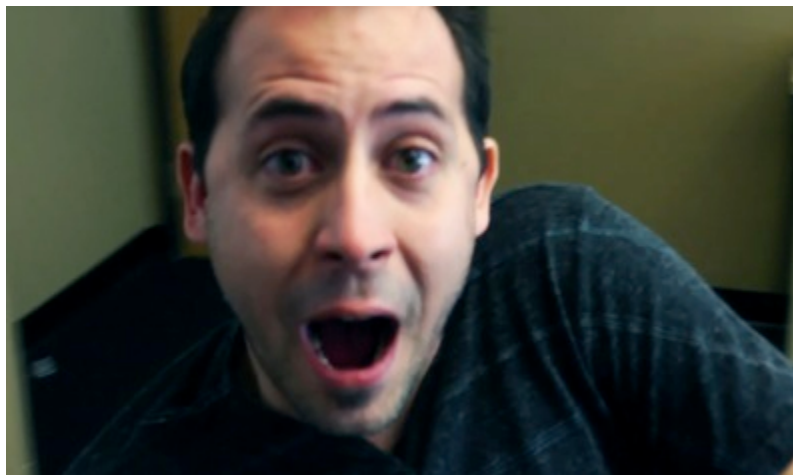
(Ryan Shomaker) Joey I hate to say it, but I think you're right man. Let's do it. I'll go first. All right, let's do it.

(Steve Mielke) Oh yeah.

(Ryan Shomaker) I guess I'm about to find out how really hot this is going to be.



(Ryan Shomaker) (Coughing and choking) Wooo! My mouth is on fire. Wow. I had no idea. (Hiccups) Clearing out my sinuses (hiccups). You two have got to try it to fully experience it.



(Steve Mielke) Uh, I mean we would, but like we don't have any spoons.

(Joey throws his spoon behind them)

(Steve breaks his spoon and throws it behind them)



(Video ends - congregation laughing)

(Tim Hawks) And as bad as that may seem, Ryan told me the second time he experienced it was actually worse than the first time he experienced it. So, why would we do those shenanigans? Well I don't know why they would do it, but why would I show you what they do? The reason why I show you what they do

is because I want you to clearly remember this, okay? The power of Mad Dog 357 can only fully be understood in the partaking of Mad Dog 357, and the power of Jesus' commands can really only be understood in the obedience of Jesus' commands.

So here's what we've got to get. When Jesus says 'Love your enemies. Do good to those people who mistreat you. Pray for those people who despise you.' When Jesus says that, we can intellectually understand how the world would be different if we all sat together and held hands and hummed. We can get that in our brain, but you have no idea the transforming power that will explode in you and in your circumstances if you personally will do what He's telling you to do. There's so much power of personal experience and life change that the Holy Spirit wants to work in people that actually will do what Jesus is saying -- to love your enemies. But we think about that and we go 'Yeah I could see how that would work, but yeah not for me.' And we value it on the basis of what we think it's going to do for us. We just have no idea. When Jesus says to forgive, you have no idea how much that's going to make you like Jesus when you do it. How beneficial that is for you and for the world. When Jesus challenges us to open our mouth and share the good news with people around us, see you'll never know about how the Holy Spirit is specifically working in the lives of the thousands of people in your world until you begin to engage them and talk to them and find out that He's already been at work. This is not all about you. And all of a sudden you begin to get a global idea that God's out there in everything working all the time. But if you never obey His command to share the gospel you'll never know that. It will make sense 'This is a good idea', but you'll never know it. I mean how many thousands of Holy Spirit inspired transformations are you not experiencing today because you are not willing to simply obey and do what Jesus tells you to do? I fear that the church in America is loaded down with information and lacking in application. The obedience leads to transformation.

I challenge you today, go home and think of the one thing that you have not been obeying. What's that one thing? And make a decision to obey. You're going to begin to experience something that's just incomprehensible. You would not know the power unless you do what Jesus says to do. And so make disciples. He's saying 'Listen everywhere and anywhere you're going, when you get out there share the good news, bringing people to a place where they truly commit, they demonstrate that and experience it through baptism, and then they begin to understand day-by-day, learn what the commands of Jesus are and learn to practice them as they watch you, as they're encouraged by you, and in that they become authentic followers of Jesus Christ. And they begin to reach out to their friends and do the same thing.

Now what we have here is “Great Authority”, “Great in Scope”, “Great in Task”, and finally He wraps up with this incredible promise. “Great in Promise”. Look at what He says in the end of verse 20, He says:

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Jesus says I’m not sending you guys out there on your own. I am with you. I am with you always. What that means for us is that Jesus is present all the time. He was present in the first century, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the twentieth, and the twenty-first. Jesus is always present. Jesus is present at all times. In addition to that Jesus is present individually all the time. So whether you’re awake, whether you’re sleeping, whether you’re playing, whether you’re studying, whether you’re working, whether you’re on vacation Jesus says ‘If you go on mission with me, if you go on mission to become a disciple maker, I’m going to be there all the time helping you, guiding you, giving you strength, giving you wisdom, working with you.’ So many of us, because we’re not on mission to make disciples we wonder ‘Jesus where are you?’ And Jesus is saying ‘Hey, do what I tell you to do and you’re going to see me all over your life.’ You’ll see me all over your life.

And finally Jesus is present in all the world. Whether we’re here in the United States, whether we’re in Mexico, whether we’re in Indonesia, whether we’re in Iran, whether we’re in the former Soviet Union countries. Wherever we are in the world Jesus is going there too. He’s going to be with us in all of those places. And Jesus says,

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

What happens at the end of the age? Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom. Here’s what He’s saying, like ‘I’m sending you guys; I’m commissioning you guys to go gather up disciples. And you’re going to keep gathering them from the nations and gathering them until we get to the end of the age when I establish my kingdom. Literally I’m commissioning you to be gathering my people, bringing my people into my kingdom. And I’m going to work with you in the process.’

So I ask you, can we change the world? We’ve been called to change the world, to work with Jesus until the kingdom is established. I can just see the joy on your face. Standing there on the day of Christ’s return with a whole group of people that you discipled, you shared with, that you brought along. And on that day you will understand what obeying Christ’s command to make disciples was so worthy of every moment of your life, because it all leads to the kingdom to His glory and to eternal, eternal bliss.

I want us to bow our heads as we wrap up today. I just, I want to ask a couple of questions. And I want to ask those questions without any distractions, so if you would just bow your head and just close your eyes. I just, I just want you to think about a couple of things. First of all I want to ask you this: Are there people in your life that as you think about them you can't imagine being in the Kingdom of God without them? You can't imagine being in the Kingdom of God and them not being present. Are they worthy of you reaching out to them? To make disciples? Are there endeavors that you're pursuing, are there endeavors that you're pursuing that are greater in magnitude than building the Kingdom of Jesus Christ? Jobs, diplomas, looking good? Are there endeavors that you're pursuing that are greater than building the Kingdom of Jesus Christ?

Father in heaven may we understand how privileged we've been, to first know about you and then to be called and commissioned. To see our friends and our neighbors, and even strangers around the world get to be part of your kingdom, and we get to be part of doing that. Father overwhelm us with a sense of destiny. Fill us with the courage to fully obey you. May we live as people who are commissioned. For we pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.