

THE GLOCAL CHURCH
Far and Near, As We Go
Matthew 28:16-20

Dr. Doyle Sager, First Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Missouri
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LISTEN: <http://www.fbcjc.org/sermon/the-glocal-church-far-and-near-as-we-go/>

Here is what you, the church, said about our preferred future related to global partners: *First Baptist Church is globally-aware and globally-engaged, using its unique giftedness and resources to partner with the international Christian family, sharing Christ in every region of the world. We share Christ.* I recently heard a tech guru from Silicon Valley being interviewed. He explained that it's not a matter of "going global" with his business. He said, "The moment we opened for business, we *were* global." And that's the Church's story, too! We don't GO global; we ARE global, instantly.

And the first thing you need to know in order to be a global partner is that Jesus Christ is above the nations and cares for the nations. In v. 17, the word used for "worship" means bowing low, the same word used in Matthew 2:11 when the Magi visited baby Jesus and brought gifts. So the Gospel of Matthew ends as it begins, with Jesus the Christ, Sovereign over all nations. "All authority," Jesus says! Not some, all! Picture in your mind a giant, striding across mountains and oceans.

In v. 19, the word is "ethne" from which we get our word ethnicities. We can't talk about being global partners without having a conversation about refugees and displaced peoples. This isn't about partisan wrangling. It is higher than that. Our highest patriotism is to the Kingdom of Christ, who is over all ethnicities and who cares about all ethnicities. Just as our church has to balance safety for all of you on Sundays (systems are in place) with equal attention to a warm welcome to the stranger, so does our nation. Our own Hispanic fellowship, FCI, is dealing with pressing immigration issues. Imagine, a Jewish rabbi, talking about "all nations," not just his own. The Gospel calls us to a higher patriotism, to love all.

Now many of us have heard sermons from this great text. And we know that the imperative "Go" in v. 19 is actually a participle, translated, "As you are going..." It's not a thing we go and do once a month; it is a lifestyle. It is not optional equipment, like power windows on your new car; it's essential, like the car's engine. It is for every Christ-follower. This is the call to be a missional people. The word missional means we go to them; we don't wait for them to come to a building. And the going is about being "glocal," a blend word combining global and local. It's everywhere, anywhere, as we go.

You've heard of organizations having a secret handshake? Well, the Jesus Movement has a public one and it's called baptism. And as we go, we baptize, mark them out as belonging to Jesus. This video clip will remind us that the Jesus call is glocal. This was with our partner church in Lviv, Ukraine, last fall. After Pastor Elisey baptized, he explained the Gospel and gave an invitation. A woman gave her life to Christ on the spot and was baptized also! Please remember. The church we sponsor in Western Ukraine is made up of mostly refugees who fled the civil war in Eastern Ukraine. They were welcomed by others.

Teaching them all things, not some things. Teaching them Jesus Christ. Yes, in a skeptical culture, our words must become deeds. But watch how our deeds now must be turned back into words. We must teach! We must tell people that it's because of the Risen Christ we are doing this and invite them to trust him as Lord and Savior.

And where will we get our energy to do all this? "I am with you always..." The Risen Christ. So the Gospel ends as it begins, Emmanuel, God with us. Note the many references to the word "all" in two brief verses: ALL authority; ALL nations; ALL things; ALL the days of the ages.

This is greatest calling in the world. And the greatest privilege. To get in on and to share this ALL. No matter how much you may love your job. This Great Commission endeavor is the greatest project you'll ever be a part of. And if your life is empty, lacking purpose, this is the grand enterprise which you can be a part of. Global partners. The glocal church.