

### **THE PROMISE AND ITS PURPOSE (part-three of a seven-part study)**

The Great Commission mandate of Matthew 28:19-20a contains one primary verb, translated as “make disciples.” It is connected to three participles: going, baptizing and teaching; with straightforward implications. There is also one area of controversy revolving around the expression: “of all the nations.” Dominion Theology expands this imperative to include political activism for the purpose of theocratic nation building. In other words, going into all the nations for the making of disciples should not be limited to evangelizing lost individuals. It must also include infiltrating and conquering the governments under which these people live. According to Dominionist dogma, we must not only evangelize the lost, but also Christianize their nations by means of our militant political influence.

No such implication can be derived from the language of the command given to His disciples by our Lord in Matthew 28:18-20. No support for this perspective exists within the teaching of the New Testament, or from its application by the first century church. Christ called these early disciples to be “fishers of men,” not radicalized political insurrectionists (Matthew 4:19). In His post-resurrection appearance on the road to Emmaus, we read the following in Luke 24:45-47 –

**“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.’”**

Throughout the book of Acts, did any of the apostles pursue a strategy of theocratic nation building by means of political activism? Of course not! Do we read in any of their epistles an admonition for infiltrating governments in addition to planting churches? Not once! During the Jerusalem Council, James states that this evangelistic outreach was always a part of God’s plan (Acts 15:13-18). In Paul’s testimony before King Agrippa (Acts 26:1-23), there are three separate instances (vv18, 20, 23), where the apostle states the purpose of his calling; none of which can be construed as the pursuit of political activism. In addition, that purpose never required him to become the mayor of the city in which he ministered, in order for the people to participate in God’s plan of salvation through faith in Christ.

The building of Christ’s Church has always taken place by means of evangelistic outreach to lost individuals, successfully resulting in the establishment of local churches for the purpose of a continued proclamation of the gospel. When nations have been “infiltrated” with that in mind, the work has been accomplished by missionaries and pastors, not politicians. The emphasis of the Great Commission has always been, and must continue to be, overwhelmingly spiritual, not political.