

The Great Commission Personalized

By Daniel Mark

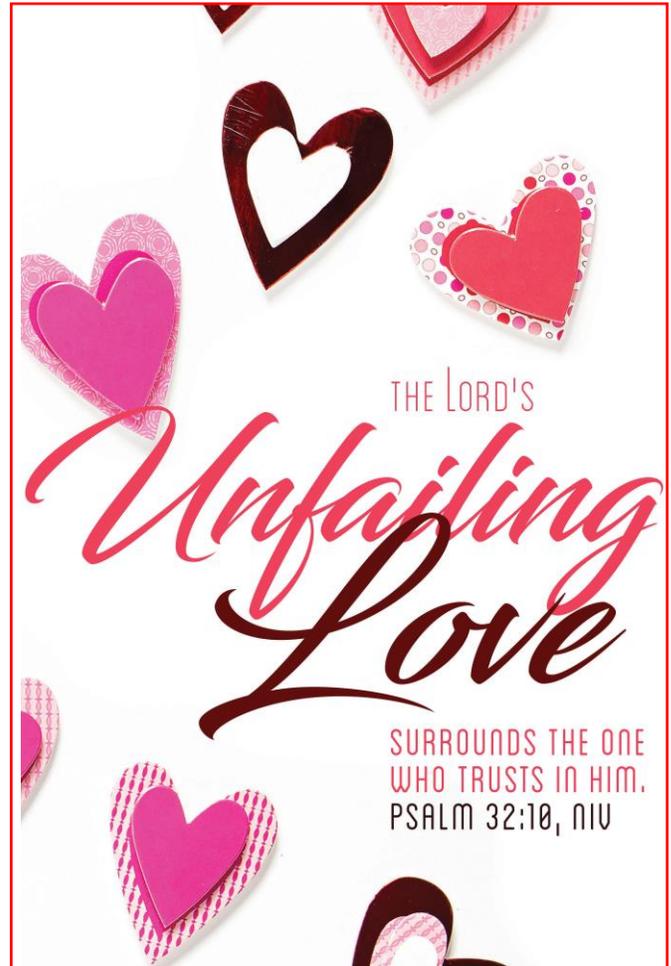
“He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” Mark 16:15

Just prior to His ascent into heaven, our Lord issued the command to the disciples to wait in Jerusalem and be endued with power to take this incredibly good news to the entire globe. The Great Commission was the greatest reason for the apostles congregating in the Upper Room in anticipation of the descent of the Holy Spirit. It was a command that individual men and women had to obey and not necessarily as a church or some other organized body. It then becomes binding and incumbent on all believers irrespective of denominational affiliations or labels to be obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ.

In my decades of learning to walk with the Lord, I have had to talk to many about the Christ as God’s only and singular remedy for sin and its consequence of death. It’s extremely heartbreaking to see people reject this marvelous demonstration of God’s amazing grace. But it’s also enormously thrilling to see a person opt to fully embrace eternal salvation via faith and repentance through Jesus Christ.

Yet, if we’re honest we must admit to the frustration of seeing people failing to appreciate the free gift of eternal life because the exercise of communicating the Gospel isn’t always a pleasant and fulfilling one. We need to find an effective mechanism for conveying the Good News.

I believe with a few foundational facts laid, we could go on to become zealous witnesses for our Lord. The word, witness, is excellent for capturing the essence of what we do in telling



the salvation story to the lost. A witness does something very personal and private by simply recounting what he/she knows, sees or hears. The witness always functions in the capacity of having first-hand knowledge or experience.

Of all the vital tools and preparation necessary for an effective communication of the Gospel, none is more essential than an absolute assurance or certainty of one’s own salvation. A personal encounter with the triune Godhead in the salvation process would be an unperturbable reservoir of strength in combating all that our three-fold enemy of the world, the flesh and the devil would throw at us in attempting to foil the message of the Kingdom of God. It takes only common sense to believe that one’s experience with the Lord

Continued on page 2...

“The Great Commission... “continued...

Jesus cannot be debated or gainsaid by others. A genuine testimony is impossible to undermine or disprove.

The second tool in our arsenal of weapons would be conviction rooted in the certitude of being right with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The story of Peter and John as recorded in the Book of Acts provides an excellent example of a bold and confident conviction given by the Holy Spirit. As the apostles walked to the temple for prayer, a crippled beggar supplicated them for money. Peter, ever the spokesman for the disciples, denied the request, explaining that they lacked silver and gold. The apostles, however uttered words of such sterling conviction and faith that they have furnished me with much inspiration. Just read these words with a little meditation: *“Then Peter said, “silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk.”* (Acts 3:6) Granted, these were the apostles who had been granted special anointing, but we too can take heart because, all the same, God has graciously gifted us with the same Holy Spirit! The Spirit empowers us with such grace and conviction of heart and soul! Hallelujah!

Thirdly and finally, are we wholeheartedly convinced and persuaded of Jesus’ unique and exclusive centrality to God’s saving and reconciling the human race unto Himself? Would we truly want to trade places with the unredeemed and regenerated? If we knew the absolute best this life offers, would we not strive with a vengeance to obtain that for ourselves and others, particularly if the said thing was also free for the asking? God has placed this glorious salvation on a platter and handed it to the human race! Yet, most of humanity reject and spurn it out of hand! If only they knew what an incredible glorious future they’re forfeiting! And, most solemnly, if only they realized what horrors of hell they’re headed for by clinging to sin and unbelief.

The fact of our ransom and redemption with our names in the Lamb’s Book of Life— Revelation 13:8; Revelation 21:7; Revelation 20:5—ought to make us seek out others to join us on this difficult but marvelous narrow way to the new creation being prepared by God and the Lamb of God. (John 14; Hebrews 11:10; Revelation 21-22) Besides the glory of God, there can be no more energizing incentive!



Pastor Azhar Alam, far right, with two men from his congregation, recently prepared to do evangelism in the area. Pastor Alam leads the Pakistan/Indian fellowship which meets at Windsor Chapel every second Sunday of the month.

Perisseia

Our women's growth group began an 8-week series in January on the concept of Free Will, and how to apply biblical truth to the way we think and make choices. We meet Thursdays from 7:00 - 8:30 pm, via Zoom.

If you haven't been involved in Perisseia recently and would like the Zoom link, please contact Cindy Bills at cynthialbills@gmail.com.

Elders' Corner

By Pastor Andy Straubel

"Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities, and in all our dangers and necessities, stretch forth thy hand to help and defend us, through Christ our Lord." This prayer is taken from a 16th century prayer after the Black Plague devastated Europe. It is a prayer for God to look and help. While we would want God to look at our strengths, this prayer comes from a place of weakness. It reminds me that God meets us in our place of need.

In Matthew 8:1-13, a Leper and social outcast came to Jesus and knelt before Him saying, "Lord if you will, you can make me clean." In one sentence the deepest longings of the leper's heart are spoken. And the Lord meets him at his place of need. "And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him saying, 'I will, be clean!'" We might not be lepers, but we are people in need. Some needs are more visible than others. But we all have them.

We are told to come boldly before the throne of Grace that we might find help in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16). We are not exempt from sickness, dangers, or necessities, but I trust we can take them all to the Lord in prayer. He is where we go for help and defense. Our elders pray together each week. If there is a need, please let us know. It is our honor and privilege to pray for our church family.

Some Windsor Chapel News

1) Special thanks to Elder Tom Taylor who has served so faithfully. Tom goes off the board for a year as required by our constitution and by-laws.

2) Please join us for a baptism on February 13, at Windsor Chapel.

3) Our Sunday morning series in the book of Numbers has begun. The theme is, "With God in the Wilderness."

4) Services continue both in-person and on-line via YouTube, Boxcast, or at our website, www.windsorchapel.org.

5) The 11th Hour Sunday School is on hold for now. We will keep everyone posted as to when we can begin.

I close with the blessing of Aaron found in Numbers 6. It is my prayer for all of us in 2022:

"The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."
(Numbers 6:22-24)



Happy Birthday!

Blessings to all who celebrate a birthday this month. May you feel the love, joy and presence of the Lord as we all celebrate your special day with prayers and warmest wishes.

Helen Cull	February 3
Amy Kasternakis	February 12
Tom Taylor	February 16
Sandy Ober	February 17
Ella Bernheisel	February 21
George Hill	February 24

Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

The Glorious Irony of God-Love

If you were challenged to identify the single most dominant theme in the Bible—both Old and New Testaments—you would be hard-pressed to make a better choice than love. The Old Testament describes for us a loving God faithfully looking after His wayward people. King David proclaims the Lord's faithfulness over and over in his Psalms. And then in the New Testament, Jesus teaches us about the love between the Father and the Son, exhorts His disciples to love one another as He has loved them, and demonstrates God's love by dying for fallen mankind. The Apostle John exhorts believers time and again to love one another.

Most Christians have heard sermons teaching and preaching about the *agape* love of God: a love that is unmerited, unconditional, faithful, and long-suffering. *Agape* love is a sacrificial love that seeks the best for another: "*Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends*" (John 15:13).

The month of February inevitably brings the topic of love to our minds, and it is a good thing to be reminded that we are invited into a personal relationship with the loving Creator and Lord of the universe and exhorted to love others as He loves us. And with this comes the wonderful irony of God-love: even as it is intrinsically self-sacrificing and other-serving, practicing *agape* love is the most selfish thing we can do: it is as good for us as it is for those we love!

In my counseling practice, I often remind clients of God's economy: He does not endorse the good of one at the expense of another; rather, the Lord has ordered His creation as an expression and manifestation of His nature: desiring good for all, at all times. And so it is entirely consistent that Love Himself would create us to be blessed as we love. As science has begun to look at the links between spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being, we have discovered that being "in love" boosts our immune systems; loving acts of kindness increase our "feel-good" hormones; spiritual connection with God and others provides a sense of connectedness and security as well as boosting our immune system. But above and beyond this, exercising our God-love muscles enables us to partake in the very nature of our Lord and participate in His eternal kingdom's work.

To be sure, attempting to exercise *agape* love for self-serving reasons would miss the point and the benefits of exercising such love. But as we consider the reminder to love, may we also remember that our Lord calls us to love others, because He loves us as much as He loves others.

Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or cynthialbills@gmail.com to continue the dialogue...

Financial Update

(Through December 31, 2021)

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$256,924	\$220,000
Other income (PPP loan)	\$29,458	
Total Income	\$286,382	
Expense	\$256,467	\$220,010

Windsor Chapel has sent \$43,824 to our missionary partners this year. That is 17% of your giving!

Church On-line

By Bob Seiboth

March 2022 will mark two years that we have been providing either recorded or live streamed worship services online for our Windsor Chapel family! While we initially provided pre-recorded sermons when the Church closed because of Covid-19, we delivered uninterrupted weekly real-time live broadcasts for the entire service starting in September 2020. Over that two-year period, we have gathered almost 3800 total Worship Service views and are steadily growing our weekly online audience.

Box Cast is a great way to watch the service. It is a cloud-based service provider we collaborate with to provide the best quality broadcast we can using our limited resources. Over 90% of their business comes from churches just like Windsor Chapel so they understand our needs. It is because of BoxCast that we can have our worship service live streamed directly to our website, have accurate closed captioning, have detailed analytics delivered to us in real time, plus the ability to provide viewers several options on how to watch the live stream each week.

The BoxCast player is a video player that highlights the most current content, but also provides a full year's worth of prior Windsor Chapel broadcasts which are listed by date. It also offers search capabilities if you are looking for a specific sermon. This is a web-based video player, so it can be viewed on any device with an internet connection, and unlike YouTube, the link is the same every week. Simply bookmark it and bring it up Sunday morning or anytime you want to watch. There is no advertising, and it will work on anything from a smartphone, iPad, desktop, or laptop computer. This link will soon be added to the weekly Worship Service email.

BoxCast also has players available for Apple TV, Roku, and Amazon Fire TV devices if you would prefer to watch on a large screen. Simply go to the devices App store and download the free BoxCast app. Once you start it, search for Windsor Chapel and you will see the most recent broadcast as well as the prior years' worth of worship services available on the internet player. If you need detailed instructions on how to add the players to each supported system, just email your request to Bob Seiboth at bob@writability.com.

We will continue to simulcast to YouTube each week as that is our best way of reaching new viewers and those searching online for a church. We may expand to providing our live stream on Facebook as well to expand our media outreach.

Power

By Janet Berrill

One fall day I began with the patio to clean up the leaves in my yard. The patio is outside my kitchen sliding door and has walls on three sides. When I cleared out the leaves from this area, I used the low power setting on the leaf blower, otherwise the leaves would have blown uncontrollably all over the place. When I finished cleaning the patio, I moved on to the side yard and then to the backyard. I worked for quite a while as we had a lot of leaves on the lawn. When I was nearly finished, I realized that I had never increased the power setting on the leaf blower. The whole time I was working I was operating the leaf blower in the low-power mode! Ugh! I'm sure it took me a lot longer than it would have had I been using the high-power mode.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we try to live a good life and do the right thing. Too often, I think, we try to do that in our own power. We can have some success, but we tend to fail when it becomes too much of an effort.

For instance, imagine that at the grocery store, among other things, you buy three boxes of crackers. As you are putting the groceries in your car, you realize that they only charged you for two. You know the right thing to do is to go back and pay for the third box or give the third box back to the store. You want to be honest, so you go back to the store and pay for the third box. Back at your car, you realize that they gave you the wrong change. You know the right thing to do is to go back to the store and return the extra money, but you already went back once. Now the shopping trip is taking longer than you had planned, and it's only a little bit, and you have someplace else to be, etc., so you decide to just forget about it

Continued on page 6...

“Power,” continued...

and go on your way. It is too much of an effort to do the right thing.

Or imagine you're working on something, and someone interrupts you and asks for help. You know the right thing to do is to show love to the person, so you happily stop what you are doing and help. Shortly after, the person interrupts you again with a request for help. Feeling a little frustration, you nonetheless stop what you are doing and help. A third time you are interrupted when the same person asks for help again. This time it's too much. You let the person know you are trying to get something done and will help them when you are finished; you also ask them not to interrupt you again. Helping them became too much of an inconvenience for you.

We can do the right thing in our own power, but that power is limited. Inconvenience, financial considerations, lost opportunities, etc. are all reasons we might give to ourselves for not doing the right thing. It's like using the leaf blower on low power mode. It works, but not nearly as well as it could. We can make decisions in our own power, but it falls far short of the power that God makes available to us. In Ephesians 1:18-20, Paul writes, *“I pray...that you may know... His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength He exerted when he raised Christ from the dead...”* When we tap into God's power, it's like living in high-power mode!

How does God's power help us? It enables us to persevere in doing the right thing, regardless of what it may cost us. Through His power you can patiently go back to the store over and over again until you've paid the right price for all the items you bought. Through His power you can say “yes” to the person who needs help, regardless of how many times you are asked. God gives us the power we need to do

the right thing no matter what situation we find ourselves in.

On the leaf blower, the higher power setting was always there, ready for me to use. I just didn't think to switch to it, so I remained in the low-power mode. God's power is also always there ready for us to use, but too often we don't think to tap into it; we make decisions and act in our own power. Can we be effective in our own power? Yes, we can. But how much more effective could we be if we used the power God gives us?! God's power can enable us to love others more effectively, be patient with others, be at peace, show kindness, exhibit self-control, etc. Remember, His power is always there, we just need to use what He has already given us.

Baptism

A Believers Baptism will be held on February 13, at Windsor Chapel, during the worship service. Through baptism we identify with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Anyone desiring to follow the Lord in a Believers Baptism can contact Pastor Andy at andrew.straubel@gmail.com or speak with one of the elders.

If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:

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Contributing photographer:

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