

Sunday, September 16, 2012—Mark Dispensationally Considered—Mark 16:15-16: Is the Great Commission Our Commission, Part 2

Introduction/Review

- Last Sunday we began studying the text of Mark 16:15-18. Unfortunately we did not finish our exposition of verse 15 and 16. Therefore before we proceed further a bit of review is in order.
- Last week we observed the following points regarding verses 15 and 16:
 - Mark 16:14-15—Jesus is addressing “the eleven” i.e., the 12 Apostles minus Judas.
 - Matthew 10:1-10—this is not the first time that Jesus commissioned the Apostles. Before his death, burial, and resurrection Jesus originally commanded them 1) not to go to the gentiles or any city of the Samaritans (v. 5), 2) go only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (v. 6), 3) preach the gospel of the kingdom i.e., that the kingdom of heaven was at hand (v. 7), 4) heal the sick, raise the dead, and cast out devils (v. 10).
 - Mark 16:15—after his resurrection, Jesus commands “the eleven” to go into the entire world. This command, however, cannot be read in isolation. Luke 24:47, in the same context as Mark 16, states that in preaching the name of Jesus among all nations, they needed to begin or start at Jerusalem. As of Mark 16/Luke 24 Israel was still first in the plan and program of God (Acts 1:8, Eph. 2:11-12).
 - Mark 16:16—the gospel that “the eleven” are to be preaching in all the world beginning at Jerusalem in verse 15 is recorded in verse 16. This gospel included water baptism as requirement for the remission of sins. We saw how John the Baptist was preaching the “baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:14, Luke 3:3). We studying how those who submitted to John’s water ceremony justified God, while the Pharisees and lawyers that did not, rejected the counsel of god against themselves (Luke 7:29-31). Water baptism drew a line in the sand within Israel separating the believing remnant from the generation of vipers (Matt. 3:7-11/untoward generation (Acts 2:40).

Mark 16:15-16, Cont.

- Matthew 3:13-17—in order to help us understand why water baptism was essential for the remission of sins in Israel’s program we need to consider some things about the baptism of Christ. According to Matthew 3:15, Jesus Christ is baptized so that he can fulfill all righteousness. After Jesus Christ is washed with water the Spirit of God descends upon him.
- Exodus 29:1-4—in order to function in the office of a priest the law required that the priest be washed with water and anointed with oil. Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. We know from the book of Hebrews that Jesus Christ is a high priest. Jesus Christ was baptized with water to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law for those who would function in the office of a priest. All

of this helps to explain why water baptism is required in the preaching of John the Baptist and the 12 Apostles.

- Exodus 19:6—the entire nation of Israel was to be a kingdom of priest and holy nation.
- Isaiah 61:5-6
- I Peter 2:9—Peter and the 12 are commissioned to preach a gospel that included water baptism because they were involved in separating the chosen generation, i.e., true believing Israel from apostate Israel.
- Luke 12:32—this believing remnant that was to function as the priest of the Lord is called the Little Flock.
- Acts 1:26-2:4—when the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, he only empowered those who had previously been water baptized. According to Acts 2:38 there was a divine order that matches the baptism of Christ. These people here in Acts 2 received the gift of the Holy Ghost after they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.
- Acts 10:23-48—after the salvation of Saul in Acts 9 the baptismal pattern begin to change. The Holy Spirit is received before the baptism with water.
- Matthew 28:19—the 12 are sent forth to teach and baptize all nations.
 - I Corinthians 1:15-17—if Paul was not sent to baptize but to preach the gospel is there any way he could have been functioning under the same commission as Peter? Paul was functioning under a different commission that did not include water baptism. Paul's commission and message do include a baptism; however, it has nothing to do with water.
 - I Corinthians 12:12-13—our baptism today is spiritual baptism into the Church the Body of Christ.
 - Colossians 2:11-12—our baptism today is not made with hands rather it is spiritual process performed by God the Holy Sprit the moment we trust Christ and believe the gospel we are identified with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection.
 - Ephesians 4:4-6—how many baptisms do you have?
- Matthew 28:20—most people totally overlook the fact that law keeping is also a requirement of the so-called great commission. What is that the gentile nations are supposed to be taught? All things that Christ commanded the Apostles.
 - Matthew 23:1-3—Christ taught his followers to keep the law. There is no indication in Matthew 28 that Jesus told the Apostles that his death and resurrection freed them from observance of the Mosaic Law.

- Acts 3:1—they took part in the temple worship and were careful not to start a new sect separate from Judaism. Law keeping was part of this commission.
- Romans 6:14—Paul teaches that we are not under the law but under grace.

Further Thoughts on Water Baptism

- Water baptism is the most divisive doctrine the Christian Church has ever embraced this single issue has resulted in more aberrant, barbaric, vicious behavior among “believers” than anyone could image. Some of the most despicable chapters in the annals of Church History is where we read of one group of professing Christians who maimed and killed other who were followers of Christ, simply because of their differing, highly polarized views on the doctrine of water baptism.
- Donald Bridge and Dave Phypers, coauthored *The Water That Divides*, in which they state the following regarding water baptism.
 - “One of our Lord’s last recorded commands to his followers was to, “go. . . and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19). That his followers have, in general, obeyed his command is beyond question. With the rare exception of groups like the Quakers and the Salvation Army, Christians of all traditions and denominations, and persuasions have baptized, and have regarded baptism as a means of entry into the church. Yet despite this, perhaps no command of Christ has occasioned so much controversy, division, bitterness, and mistrust as this one. Indeed as we shall show later, at times it has caused Christians to destroy each other with a ferocity cruelty, and hatred strangely at variance with him who constantly exhorted his disciples to “love one another.””
- Christian argue about the following issues regarding baptism:
 - *Who should be baptized?*—the prevailing position is that infants should be baptized and that baptism saved the soul of the newly baptized infant and give to it eternal life.
 - *When should a person be baptized?*—infant or adult who has made a profession of faith?
 - *Why should a person be baptized?*
 - Sacramental Grace—observance of the sacraments is necessary for salvation
 - Believers Baptism—any kind of baptism before one’s personal conversion to Christ is invalid, and that person, who is now a believer, must be baptized (in or with water) again.
 - Infant Baptism—saved the soul of the child
 - Baptismal Regeneration—the sinner is saved the moment they are water baptized. This is the predominant view within Christendom. This folks have the most Scriptural support for what they teach, however, their teaching is not dispensational.
 - *How should a person be baptized?*—sprinkling or emersion?

- Ephesians 2:8-9—we are saved by grace through faith apart from works. Today during the dispensation of Grace there is only one baptism that matters. The baptism of the Holy Spirit into the church the body of Christ the moment one places saving faith in Jesus Christ.
- Colossians 2:10—we are already complete in Jesus Christ. All of the confusion regarding baptism stems from a failure to rightly divide the word of Truth. It is not enough to be Scriptural we need to be dispensational.
- Galatians 5:1—we need to take our stand in the liberty that we have in Christ. Let's not place ourselves back under a yoke of bondage.