

Mission statement sermon
Fall of 22

1. Preamble

- a. Promo new books in bookstore...
 - i. Family Worship Bible Guide
 - ii. How men should lead their families by Beeke
 - iii. Be thou my vision (A liturgy for daily worship)

- b. Etc...

2. Introduction

- a. Fall is just around the corner...

- i. If you love the fall raise your hand! If you don't love the fall—we can't be friends!!!
- ii. There are a lot of reasons to love the fall. For instance-

- 1. The arrival of fall means leaves turn orange, red, and yellow.
- 2. The arrival of fall means cooler weather- no sweating and no frostbite.
- 3. Fall means crisp fresh air (the August smoke is gone).
- 4. Fall means that hunting season is just around the corner
- 5. Fall means jumping into a huge pile of leaves
- 6. Fall means the smell of chimney smoke
- 7. Fall means picking apples at Green Bluff.
- 8. Fall means sweaters and flannels
- 9. Fall means football!
- 10. Fall means those pumpkin donuts at Green Bluff!

- iii. Most importantly the fall means that several key ministries swing back into action.

- 1. Specifically, the arrival of fall means the return of D-groups, C-groups, and Christian Education.
- 2. This morning I would like to describe these ministries in detail-
 - a. This morning's sermon is not a normal sermon...
 - b. Explain expository preaching/consecutive exposition...
 - c. Yet, every once in a while, it is prudent to preach a topical sermon...
- 3. Why do we do D-Groups, C-Groups, and Christian Education? Two reasons...

- a. *The great commission*
- b. *The great commandment*

1. The great commission.

- a. **Matthew 28:18–19 (ESV) — 18** And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

- i. This passage is commonly referred to as the great commission.
- ii. This passage contains the final marching orders of Jesus Christ to his church before he ascends into heaven.
- iii. In other words, these words are very important.
- iv. In order to understand the great commission, I’m going to ask several questions...

b. *What is the great commission? Make disciples!*

- i. The central thrust and the only imperative in these verses is the command to make disciples. It is not the word go.... The word go is a subordinate verb (known as a circumstantial participle) which modifies the imperative verb which is translated “make disciples.” It should be translated “as you go” make disciples.
- ii. Often discussions of the great commission focus exclusively on evangelism. But Jesus does not say “evangelize the nations.” He says, “make disciples of the nations, which must include evangelism.” But it is so much more than evangelism.

c. *What is a disciple? A disciple is a follower!*

i. Mark Dever writes,

1. “To be a Christian means to be a disciple. There are no Christians who are not disciples. And to be a disciple of Jesus means to follow Jesus.”
2. If you are a Christian, you are a disciple of Jesus.
3. It is unbiblical to call mature Christians (i.e., the varsity Christians) disciples and call immature Christians, just Christians.
4. This way of thinking is totally foreign to the NT. All Christians are disciples. Which leads to the next question...

d. *How does one become a disciple?*

- i. You admit that your sins separate you from God.
- ii. Then you turn away from your sins and you ask Jesus to forgive you for your sins, etc....
- iii. Preach gospel here....
- iv. This leads to the next question.

e. *Who is supposed to make disciples? All Christians!*

- i. **Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV) — 18** And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

- ii. Jesus, speaking to the disciples, tells them that he will be with them until the end of the age. When does this present evil age end? This age will end when Christ returns. This means that this commission is not only for the twelve disciples (the original audience). It is for all disciples who live in the present evil age. It is for us!

f. What was Jesus' strategy for making disciples? He invested in a few!

- i. Jesus could have held massive worldwide crusades complete with healing and exorcisms...
 1. He could have opened a seminary and trained thousands...
 2. He could have taken control of the government...
 3. He could have written a best-selling book...
 4. He could have written something about himself in the stars...
- ii. Instead, he chose to invest in a few uneducated men.
 1. He focused on these twelve men for three years.
 2. From the twelve he spent the most time with Peter, James, and John.
- iii. Decades later, Paul did the same thing with his men (Acts 16:3).
 1. Then, he told his disciple, Timothy, to do the same thing (2 Tim. 2:2)
 - a. **2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV) — 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.**
 2. This represents four generations of Christians...
 - a. Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others...
 3. Paul wanted spiritual great grandchildren, so should we!!!
- iv. Jesus's plan and Paul's plan was spiritual multiplication.
 1. ***This is the heart of discipleship.***
 2. David Platt writes,
 - a. **"From the start, God's design has been for every single disciple of Jesus to make disciples who make disciples who make disciples until the gospel spreads to all peoples."**
 3. Discipleship is investing your life in the lives of a few other Christians to help them follow Jesus.
 4. A few years later, you encourage your disciples to do the same thing.
 - a. Imagine investing in 3 friends for 3 years.
 - b. After three years, each friend invests in three more people.

- c. Then those 9 each invest in three more people. . . .
- d. If this keeps up, every three years, after 15 years you will have indirectly impacted 243 people.
- e. After 21 years, the number would be 2,187 people, that you indirectly impacted... what a legacy.

g. What is GCF's strategy for making disciples?

- i. In one sense it is multifaceted. . . .
 - 1. Discipleship happens in the counseling ministry.
 - 2. Discipleship happens in our community groups.
 - 3. Discipleship happens at our youth ministry
 - 4. Discipleship happens through Christian Education.
 - 5. Discipleship happens through preaching (hopefully).
 - 6. Discipleship happens through family worship. . . .
- ii. With that said, Jesus's strategy was investing in a few people over a period of three years.
 - 1. *This seems to be the most effective way to make disciples—unless Jesus was mistaken...*
 - 2. *We want to help you invest in a few. To that end we have created D-Groups.*
 - 3. These have been around since day one of GCF—although they have changed over the years. . . .
 - 4. Which is why discipleship is in our mission statement. . . .
- iii. Details
 - 1. This fall we will have approximately 25 D-groups at GCF north.
 - 2. The group leader invests in 3-5 people for three years, but each person commits to one year at a time. When the three years are up each member of the group is challenged to find 3-5 new people to invest in.
 - 3. We want to create a culture of investing in a few, who are willing to invest in a few more, who in turn will invest in a few more.
 - 4. That is how we obey the great commission!!!

h. Illustration:

- i. "Sir Ernest Shackleton left London in 1914 with the goal of hiking across Antarctica. A month after setting out, Shackleton's ship, the Endurance, was trapped by the Antarctic ice pack. Ten months later, the ice crushed the ship. Twenty-nine crew men endured howling gales in temperatures of -50 degrees Fahrenheit, living on ship rations, penguins, and seals.
- ii. They had to do something, so they hiked to the edge of the ice pack and launched three twenty-foot lifeboats into the coldest, wildest ocean on earth, as cold waves drenched them again and again. The three crews rowed one hundred miles to a rocky island. . . .
- iii. After repairing one of the lifeboats, Shackleton and five others set out again for a whaling station island over eight hundred miles away.

- iv. Beset with storms, and often drenched by icy water, they finally landed on the island. Three of the six men were too exhausted to continue, but Shackleton and two others set out to cross the island equipped with nothing but a compass and ninety feet of rope. They marched for thirty-six hours straight, crossed glaciers, scaled 5000-foot peaks, and traversed cliffs... When they finally arrived at the whaling station, no one recognized them.” (Doriani, 524-525)
- v. This true story has all the ingredients of greatness. These men traveled great distances, over great mountains, through great seas and winds, in great cold, with great amounts of ice and snow. Their adventure included great hunger, great courage, and great leadership. Finally, the story had a great ending. They all survived.
- vi. I think all of us, deep down, want to be part of something great. Don't we??? Some great adventure, some great accomplishment, or some great discovery. We can be part of something great. It is called the great commission.

i. Application

- i. What God has called us to is far greater than traversing Antarctica, climbing mount Everest, or flying to the moon.
- ii. It is far greater than making tons of money, retiring at age 50, and having a 430-foot yacht parked at your own exotic island.
- iii. It is far greater than...
 - 1. Climbing the corporate ladder
 - 2. Having a nice house
 - 3. Having nice stuff.
 - 4. Being the envy of all your friends on social media
 - 5. We have been invited by the risen Christ to take part in the great commission.
- iv. Maybe you are thinking...
 - 1. I'm not gifted enough to make disciples!
 - 2. I'm not smart enough to make disciples!
 - 3. I'm way too busy to make disciples!
 - 4. Don't forget that Christ commissioned uneducated blue-collar workers, who had families and vocations.
 - a. They were the plumbers, truckers, and street sweepers of the day.
 - b. Yet these very ordinary men changed the world.
 - c. How? By imperfectly making disciples who make disciples.
- v. How do I join a D-group?
 - 1. Sign up online this week...
 - 2. The deadline is this Friday...

j. *Not only are we passionate about the great commission. We are passionate about the great commandment. Which brings us to our second point.*

i. *First, the great commission...*

2. The great commandment!

a. *What is the great commandment?*

i. **Matthew 22:36–39 (ESV) — 36** “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” **37** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

ii. We are commanded to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and we are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves.

b. *The great commandment has two aspects*

i. *Loving God!*

ii. *Loving neighbor!*

iii. *I want to look at both...*

c. *How does GCF plan on helping you love God with all your mind? Christian Education!*

i. This is where Christian Education comes in...

ii. We are a church committed to consecutive exposition (explain).

iii. In light of this, we are not going to cover everything that needs to be covered from the pulpit...

iv. In order to cover more topics, we revamped our Christian Education program this fall.

v. What is our specific plan to educate you and your children?

vi. For the adults-

1. Three 12-week quarters
2. Three classes a quarter...
3. Nine classes a year...
4. A variety of subjects
 - a. Practical
 - b. Theological
 - c. Biblical
 - d. Historical

5. Have each teacher get up and promote his class...

vii. For the children-

1. Youth ministry... on Wed nights....

2. Have Terry promote Children's SS...

d. How does GCF plan on helping you love your neighbor? Community Groups!

i. Back to the great commandment.

1. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves. A very tall and impossible command.
2. What does it mean to love our neighbor as ourselves??? Does this mean that we need to be "nice" to everyone?
3. The NT fills out this love in detail with what are often called the "Love one another" commands...
4. I want to read some of those commands.

ii. "Be at peace with each other (Mk 9:50), Love one another (Jn 13:34), Be Joined to one another (Ro 12:5), honor one another (Rom 12:10), Rejoice with one another (Rom 12:15), Weep with one another (Rom 12:15), Live in harmony with one another (Ro 12:16), Accept one another (Rom 15:17), Counsel one another (Rom 15:14), Greet one another (Rom 16:16), Agree with each other (1 Co 1:10), Wait for one another (1 Co 11:33), Care for one another (1 Co 12:25), serve one another (Gal 5:13), carry one another's burdens (Gal 6:2), Be kind to one another (Eph 4:32), Forgive one another (Eph 4:32), Submit to one another (Eph 5:21), Bear with one another (Col 3:13), Teach, admonish each other (Col 3:16), Encourage one another (1 Th 5:11), Build up one another (1 Th 5:11), Spur one another on (Heb 10:24), Offer hospitality to one another (1 Pe 4:9), Minister with your gifts to one another (1 Pe 4:10), Be humble toward one another (1 Pe 5:5), confess your sins to one another (Ja 5:16), Pray for one another (Ja 5:16), Fellowship with one another (1 Jn 1:7)."

iii. Application:

1. The church is more than a place to come and hear inspiring thoughts to get you through the week. The church of Jesus Christ is a living and thriving community of people called to love one another.
2. Here is the thing... these commands can only be obeyed if you live in close knit community.
 - a. Let me ask you a personal question—if you are not involved in a community group or discipleship group, how are you obeying these commands?
 - b. What saints are you loving like this???
 - c. Just showing up to church, even when you are on time, makes it difficult to obey these commands.
3. To really obey these commands requires focus.
 - a. In other words, you need to focus on a few people (maybe 8-12 people).
 - b. This is where community groups come in... They make obedience to these commands manageable.

- c. People sometimes say to me, “you can’t prove from the Bible that one needs to be involved in a community group.”
 - d. I say to these people, “your right, I can’t.”
 - e. But I can prove to you that you need to love the saints extravagantly and community groups make this much easier.
 - f. In a church this size...
4. Getting personal...
- a. Here is why I love community groups.
 - b. In a church this size, I simply can’t love everyone the same way...
 - c. But if someone in my community group has needs, our little group can meet them.
 - d. My community group helps me focus on loving a few people well.
5. Christian community is not...
- a. like cable television
 - b. A club membership
 - c. Or some new fall clothing...
 - d. Those sound nice, but I can live without them.
6. Christian community is more like water, air, and food...
- a. It is necessary for spiritual survival.
7. This raises the question—how are Community Groups and D-Groups different.

a. Show the Ven Diagram...

- e. Why in the world should we love our neighbor as ourselves?
 - i. Illustration from “The case for Grace”
- f. We love others because God in Christ has loved us...
 - i. He loved us with action.
 - ii. We must love others with action.
 - iii. His love was costly.
 - iv. Our love for others must be costly....

3. Conclusion

- a. Back to the fall...
 - i. The fall is a great season for so many reasons.
 - 1. The fall means Football
 - 2. Hunting
 - 3. Pumpkin spice lattes
 - 4. Sweaters and flannels...
 - ii. The fall is great at GCF. Why?

- iii. We can help each other
 - 1. Obey the great commission.
 - 2. Obey the great commandment.

- iv. Why not throw yourself into the life of GCF this fall?

b. Let's pray...