

Mark 16:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Analysis

This verse contains Jesus' post-resurrection commission to His disciples, often called the Great Commission. The command "Go ye into all the world" (poreuthentes eis ton kosmon hapanta, πορευθέντες εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἄπαντα) employs the aorist participle poreuthentes (πορευθέντες, "having gone") indicating decisive action—the disciples must actively go, not passively wait. Kosmon hapanta (κόσμον ἄπαντα, "all the world") encompasses every geographic location and people group—the gospel isn't limited to Israel but extends to all nations. The verb "preach" (kēryssate, κηρύξατε) means to herald or proclaim as a royal messenger announces a king's decree—this is authoritative proclamation, not tentative suggestion. "The gospel" (to euangelion, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) is the good news of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection for sinners (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). "Every creature" (pasē tē ktisei, πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει) means every human being without exception—none are excluded from hearing this message. Reformed theology emphasizes that while the gospel must be proclaimed universally, God sovereignly determines who will believe (particular redemption), yet this doesn't diminish the church's missionary obligation to preach indiscriminately to all.

Historical Context

This commission appears in Mark's longer ending (16:9-20), whose authenticity has been debated due to its absence from earliest manuscripts. However, the command itself parallels Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:46-49, and Acts 1:8, demonstrating that Jesus' missionary mandate to the church is multiply attested

across Gospel traditions. This commission transformed the disciples from a Jewish sect focused on Israel into a global missionary movement. The early church took this command seriously—within decades, the gospel spread throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. Paul's missionary journeys, Peter's ministry to Gentiles (Acts 10-11), and the Jerusalem Council's decision (Acts 15) all reflect obedience to this commission. Church history records gospel expansion to Europe, Africa, Asia, and eventually the Americas and Oceania. The Protestant Reformation recovered biblical soteriology but initially neglected missions; the modern missionary movement (18th-19th centuries) recaptured Christ's commission, sending missionaries worldwide. Today's global church—with vibrant Christianity in Africa, Asia, and Latin America—demonstrates ongoing fulfillment of this command.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does understanding the gospel as authoritative proclamation (heralding) rather than optional suggestion change your approach to evangelism?
2. What practical steps can you take to participate in proclaiming the gospel to 'every creature,' whether through direct evangelism, financial support, or prayer for missionaries?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτοῖς	Πορευθέντες	εἰς	τὸν	κόσμον	ἄπαντα
And	he said	unto them		Go ye	into	G3588	the world
G2532	G2036	G846		G4198	G1519		all
						G2889	G537

κηρύξατε	τὸ	εὐαγγέλιον	πάσῃ	τῇ	κτίσει
and preach	G3588	the gospel	to every	G3588	creature
G2784		G2098	G3956		G2937

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 28:19 (Parallel theme): Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Mark 13:10 (Parallel theme): And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

Acts 1:8 (Parallel theme): But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Psalms 96:3 (Parallel theme): Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

John 15:16 (Parallel theme): Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

1 John 4:14 (Parallel theme): And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Colossians 1:23 (Parallel theme): If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Romans 16:26 (Parallel theme): But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

John 20:21 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Psalms 22:27 (Parallel theme): All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.