

Matthew 28:16-20 - The Great Commission

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[0 : 00] Today's subject is the Great Commission. And although it's the last few verses of Matthew's Gospel, Matthew says very little about it, in fact.

And so we need to do some jumping around the other Gospels and other bits of the Bible to complete the subject. And that's why I'm concerned that I might run out of time.

So we've done about two weeks' worth of study on the resurrection, and we've been left with these last five verses. Matthew only describes a few of the events that happen after Jesus was raised. There's a lot more happens than he decides to record. And we've said all along that this Gospel was written by a Jew to believing Jews. So the message in this latter part of the Gospel is primarily to believing Jews.

But we can't limit it to the Jews. We can extrapolate this commission to the church because of some of the statements made in other Gospels and also in other parts of the New Testament.

[1 : 13] It was never intended to be restricted to Jews only, but we will come back to that later on. For the context of this particular message, Matthew was saying to the Jews, go and do what you were told to do.

And to understand it all, we have to conflate all four Gospels. But we must realize, just before we start on Matthew, if you turn to Isaiah 49 and verse 6, you'll see that there is a prophecy there. And you'll find the same promise and the same prophecy in chapter 42, verse 6, and in 52, verse 10, and in 60, verse 3.

But we'll take the one from 49, verse 6, where he says to the Jews at that point, Is it too small a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel?

I will also make you, the Jews, right? I will also make you a light to the nations or of the nations, depending on which translation you have.

[2 : 26] I will also make you a light of the nations so that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth. So it was God who was going to make the Jews a light to the nations.

It was God that was going to empower them to effectively preach the Gospel. And what we see at this point in time is abject failure to achieve that.

They've never, up to this point, they've never nationally been a light to the Gentiles. They've not taken the oracles of God and shared them. In fact, they hated the Gentiles.

So they've done the opposite up to this point. And I think what we need to take account of here is that it was God himself who was going to raise them up to be evangelists.

It was God who was going to raise them up. It wasn't something they were going to achieve. And this is a very important part of this morning. It wasn't something they were going to achieve simply by kicking the backsides of their congregation and saying, go out there and preach.

[3 : 32] They weren't going to achieve it by the effort of man. But God was somehow going to achieve this through his people. And it had always been their mandate.

And of course, what we see happen historically immediately after this in the coming years is the whole of the church was entirely or almost entirely Jewish.

God raised up the Jews to get this thing off the ground. And we must also keep in mind that if we think of scriptures like Isaiah 31, verse 31, his covenant to change people by taking the word off the printed page and printing it on the human heart is still with the Jews primarily.

But none of this is saying that Gentiles shouldn't do it. What it's saying is this is how God chose to kick it off. So let's read first before I wrap it on too long.

Matthew 28. Matthew 28. The last five verses, starting at verse 16. But the 11 disciples proceeded to Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had designated.

[4 : 51] When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some were doubtful. And Jesus came up and spoke to them saying, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.

And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Now, coming back to the principle of the preaching of the gospel, and I've kind of covered briefly the fact that this was a principle that was given to these Jews, but was later on established in the church, and is still something we should be doing today.

We should first note that this commission in some way is expressed in the gospel of Mark, in chapter 16 and verse 15, in Luke, in chapter 24, verse 47, and in John 20, verses 21 to 23.

In all of those cases, there is a mandate to preach. Believers should share the good news that they have received. And in Acts 1 and verse 8, the mandate to preach was carried on, and the power to achieve it through the Holy Spirit was promised.

And this is a really important aspect of preaching. It didn't happen just because a man decided to go and do it. In Acts chapter 1 and verse 8, in fact, let's turn to Acts, because we're going to spend a little time in the beginning of Acts.

[6 : 32] So Acts chapter 1. Acts chapter 1, verse 8. You've got to remember the context of this.

They've all been hiding. They're waiting for Pentecost. They're afraid of persecution. So they're not in a great place.

And at that point, Jesus says to them, But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, even to the remotest parts of the earth.

So there was going to be an impartation of power to do this. It wasn't going to be because of the efforts of a human, although it involved the efforts of a human, but the thing that achieves the impact of the gospel, the impact is achieved because God empowered it.

God said, I'm going to put my hand on it. I'm going to fill you with power to do it. You will be clothed with power from on high, is what it says at the end of, I think, Luke's gospel.

[7 : 46] What we then see in Romans, if you just flip over to the next book to the right, in Romans chapter 1, and verse 6, we'll start with verse 5.

Actually, even that's in the middle of a sentence. Might as well just read the whole book. So it's talking of, in verse 4, start with verse 4, who was declared the Son of God.

So it's talking about Jesus, who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for his namesake, among whom you also are the cord of Jesus Christ.

So this calling was being passed on to a Gentile church. The Roman church had a lot of Jews in it, actually, but it was fundamentally a Gentile church. So this mandate to preach is being carried on for the Gentiles as well.

And then if we go to chapter 10 of Romans, and verses 14 and 15, what we see is, this is an exhortation to the Roman church.

[9 : 10] How then will they call upon him whom they have not believed? How will they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

And how will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things. So as it progresses through from the Jews to the church, there is this mandate to preach, but it does seem to be a qualified mandate, as in, first you need to get saved.

But once you're saved, you need to enable people to hear a message. Something that Malcolm has often said, as some of you will have heard him say it, where he will say, I can't save anyone.

I can only make sure they hear about it. I can only tell them about Jesus. Only Jesus can save them. And it's not something we achieve because we're so vibrant, or so charismatic, or so verbose, or so simple in our language, or whatever.

It's not because of the qualities of us. It's because the Holy Spirit convicts the person who's on the receiving end of what we're saying. Otherwise, men would get glorified.

[10 : 29] Men would be put up on pedestals. Look how many souls. He got saved. He didn't get a single one of them saved. He enabled their hearing.

That's all he did. He's a messenger. More about that a little bit later. We also see in 2 Timothy 2, verses 4, sorry, 2 Timothy 2, chapter 4, verse 2, Paul's exhortation to Timothy is preach the word in season and out.

In other words, you never stop preaching the word. You just... And before you say to yourself, I'm not a preacher, you have to kind of qualify what preaching is because we think of it as the man on Hyde Park Corner standing on his soapbox preaching.

And yes, that is preaching. But you know, when you sit down with your neighbor who's going through a troubled time and you share the gospel with them one-on-one, that too is preaching. Preaching, as we'll see, has more than one face. And so you don't have to be the person who's fearless on the streets to preach the gospel. You can...

[11:37] We call it sharing because that's a nice word. You can share the gospel. But when you're sharing the gospel, you're preaching. You're showing someone the goodness and the grace of God.

And the commission to preach the gospel was made to all with references made... I mean, you'll find in the scriptures if you want to look them up.

The Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians 5 verse 20. The Ephesians church in Ephesians 3 verse 8.

The churches of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia in 1 Peter 2 verse 9.

And there are more. So it's the collective responsibility of all believers to preach at all times. And the reason I'm going through this is there is no one here who's born again who can't preach.

Now that said, and I'm going to get out of kilter with my own notes. That's just because... That's just because the notes I've just realized are in a silly order. That said, yes, we can all do it and should all do it.

[12:44] But if you've ever been in a church or known of a church where somebody says, right, everyone, we're out on the streets next Sunday or next Saturday or whenever it is, we're out on the streets handing out tracts and preaching on the streets.

Be there. The chances of everybody that's there doing this because they're gifted and doing it because they have the power from on high to do it is very, very slim.

They're probably, most of them, far more effective sharing the gospel with a friend or a family member on a one-to-one basis over a cup of coffee, often in response to some personal circumstances that's opened their hearts to the possibility of responding to the gospel.

This is not something we do because we are made to do it. Now that said, those who want to and feel led to have the courage to go out on the streets and preach publicly all power to their elbow.

We should pray for those people. In Ephesians 4, I think it's verse 4, it's referred to as the ministry of the evangelist.

[13:58] Not everybody's called to that ministry just like not everybody's called to speak in tongues or heal the sick or raise the dead or anything else. Some people are called to do that. So we need to pray for them and we're going to this morning at the end of this sermon before we move on to whatever's next because we have someone in our midst who preaches the gospel on the streets.

You may notice that he has never ever put anybody's arm up their back to go with him and if he did, they'd probably be an encumbrance to him unless they are fired with the same vision and the same heart because the Holy Spirit has come upon them.

As we go through the gospels, we read, let's just quickly turn there. So let's go to Mark's gospel, chapter 16.

And what I'm trying to do with this morning is to encourage people not to be defeated at the start. I know that I don't lack self-confidence.

If I can go out onto the streets and preach, I do so without fear. I also do it without fruit. It's not where I'm made to be fruitful.

[15:13] And if that changes, I will do more on the streets and less like this. So those who are called to it will be fruitful doing it. So Mark, chapter 16, verses 12 to 20.

These are some of the things that Matthew didn't record. And he says this, he appeared in a different form to two of them while they were walking along the road. They went away and reported it to the others, but they did not believe them either.

Afterwards, he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at table and he reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart because they had not believed in those who he had seen after he had risen.

And he said to them, go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. I must admit, I haven't preached much to the dog, but hey, the thing is, it's the creation that is groaning for Christ to come again.

He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved, but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. These signs will accompany those who have believed. In my name, they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them, and they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover.

[16:37] So, a sign of the preaching of the gospel in new territory certainly is signs and wonders. And in my own life, I can testify to the fact that the only time I have ever seen miraculous signs of any kind have been when I've been preaching to the unsaved.

And I've not seen a lot of it, but I have seen some of it. But there's an expectation, what we've just read of is an expectation there that when you preach, number one, there's protection.

If you drink any deadly thing, it won't harm you. You're going to be protected by God when you preach the gospel. And the second thing is, you're going to be gifted.

They'll speak with new tongues. They'll pick up serpents. Casting out of demons, etc. Healing the sick. And I would say as we go on through, what we'll realize also is that they are fruitful.

Now you have to understand that fruitful doesn't necessarily mean that thousands will come to Christ. It means you're touching lives. And fruitful means that some will come and some won't.

There were always those who didn't believe.

[17:45] In the early days, immediately after the crucifixion and resurrection, when that was what's the modern phrase? *De rigueur*. Everybody knew about it. It kind of happened and everybody knew.

And they used the fact that it had happened to preach the gospel. Then there was a massive flood of people into the kingdom. Right now, I would put us at the other end of things.

And people would disagree with me on this, but I put us, we're nearing the end. And so we're in the days that the Bible tells us are going to be like it was in the days of Noah.

And in the days of Noah, people were not rushing to turn to Christ. They were marrying and giving in marriage. They were all going out and having picnics and doing stuff, completely oblivious that the flood was brewing.

And I think we're in that time and therefore salvation is likely to be sparse, unspotted, but the people on the streets who have the courage and the ministry to go there will be putting tracks into the hands of people.

[18:53] They'll be sharing the word of God with people. They'll be challenging their views that they've held on to for decades. And they'll go away with a seed planted and the kingdom of God, as we read in the gospels, is as if a man planted a seed and he goes to bed and gets up and he doesn't know how it grows, but it does grow.

And there is a harvest to be had. So it's a crazy thing. I was about to say horses for courses. There are some people who have that as their mission and their ministry and their calling.

And the rest of us are still called to gossip the gospel to our friends, to our families, to our work colleagues. The person we happen to finish up sat next to in the park. Any opportunity that is God given, there are at least two occasions when Paul was on his journeys where he was told, don't go into that place, move on.

And there are times when trying to ram the gospel down some poor unsuspecting soul's throat is the wrong choice. It says, do not cast your pearl before swine.

It just gets trampled in the mud. So there's an element of discernment to preaching, always being open to it, always availing ourselves of the opportunity to do it, but not blundering in there with seven league boots on and crushing them in your stampede to get them to understand it because they might just not be ready for it.

[20:17] And this is, we must always think of what we're doing is fruit and fruit does not hang there on the branch. The apple that's hanging there doesn't go, I've got to be nourishing and I've got to get ripe.

The fruit just hangs there and does what apples do. And that's what we need to be like putty in the hands of God. We need to be ready to speak whenever he gives us the nudge.

Verse 45 of what we've just read. No, we want Luke's gospel. Luke 24. Luke 24.

Now in Luke 24 what we have is a bit of clarity because he fleshes out the account of the two on the road and tells us that they're on the road to Emmaus.

But we also read this account that Jesus appeared in the midst of them when they were in the room. So we're going to read Luke 24, 36. While they were telling these things he himself stood in their midst and said to them peace be to you but they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit.

[21 : 27] Now just to put that in context I think I've said this before but the Jews had this belief that just before you died you would see spirits or a spirit.

So because they knew that Jesus had died when he appeared in the room with them they thought they were seeing a spirit. So they all thought they were about to die. So no wonder they were terrified.

And he says don't be afraid. He said to them why are you troubled? Why do doubts arise in your hearts? See my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for a spirit doesn't have flesh and bones as you see that I have.

Notice it says flesh and bones not flesh and blood. His blood was poured out. He had flesh and bones. But the crazy thing is he came through the wall or came through the door without opening it or whatever.

So this body that he was in was a resurrection body that had different properties. And one has to ask why is he going through all of this? Well because these disciples that he's about to launch on the world need to have their faith rock solid.

[22 : 38] And when they've just seen Jesus himself appear in the room next to them that's going to have a very positive effect on your faith. And they still don't believe it so he says look touch feel.

Give me some fish. I'll eat some fish. Give me a drink. And I know this is a crazy thing to think of but when he left the room presumably by the same route what happened to the fish?

I mean there wasn't a fishy splat on the wall is he? I don't know. It's just the way my brain works. Whatever his body did with the fish must have rendered it just as able to pass through walls and doors give that to a scientist to puzzle out but verse 45 of what we've been reading says this then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures so they'd been with him for three and a half years they'd been with John the Baptist for three and a half years before that and yet at this point him having raised from the dead they still don't understand the scriptures and the point of that is you will not understand the scriptures until you are born again it is God's enlightenment that causes us to understand the scriptures so once again it's not something we do in our own strength it's something we do because God empowers us to do it he opens our minds to understand the scriptures many of you will have that testimony that before I got born again it was just a boring book and I could never make head and tail of it and then I got born again and suddenly

I started to understand it but what does he say finally here and this is important reading on from verse 45 verse 46 thus it is written that Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day that repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all the nations beginning from Jerusalem you are witnesses of these things and this is so vital and behold I am sending forth the promise of my father upon you but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high do not do this unless you are clothed with power from on high it didn't say until you've clothed with that degree from a theological college or until you've done the course or any of those things when God has touched you then go do it how do you identify when God has touched you because you have become filled with his spirit the day you got born again God touched you and put his spirit in you and you knew that you were different and if you don't know that you're different don't go and do this but I think there's only one in the room I don't know that well but I think everybody that I do know I know you've been transformed by the spirit of God you've been touched I've only got to spend five minutes in prayer with you and I know I'm with someone who is full of the Holy Spirit so you've got to do it under his power not under your own power so I've said enough about this it's something we do because we've been empowered to do it God doesn't hold that back from anyone it's there for everyone some people are empowered to do it to football stadia and in big cinemas and big event all of us are empowered to do it to our friends and relatives every one of us is capable of sharing the gospel with friends and family or individuals who

[26 : 34] God places in our path the public preaching of the gospel is I believe the Ephesians 4 it's verse 11 not 4 Ephesians 4 verse 11 the gift of evangelism some of us have it some of us don't so let's just return to this bit in Matthew's gospel the very last bit we read was go and make disciples this is an important distinction because a lot of evangelistic campaigns concentrate only on getting

souls saved and a saved soul is not necessarily a disciple a disciple is someone who continues to follow and lives the life of following Christ those are the disciples and so I can identify at least two forms of preaching in the Bible there's evangelion which is the evangelistic preaching of the good news the unsaved you haven't heard it get to hear it and then there's something which I've heard called kerygma which is if you like rightly dividing the word of truth usually expressed in scripture by the Greek word didasko instead of evangelion didasko means to teach or to facilitate learning and that's what every church should do to feed the flock and to feed anyone who will listen it's taking the scripture apart and putting it in a manner that can be understood comprehended in the way that the Lord wanted it comprehended and unfortunately an awful lot of scholarly Christians as to quote my sister over there they get educated out of their intelligence they come up with all sorts of reasons why wonky doctrine is okay but actually the doctrine of scripture is very straightforward very rarely and unfortunately we're going to have to deal with one example in a minute where it all went a bit awry but in the main you can read it and think well that's obvious what that means and always be aware of people go oh no no no that's not what it means it means this right I hesitate to say it but if you're in a Calvinist church they'll tell you that the word all doesn't mean all you know I draw all men unto myself doesn't mean all it just means the elect no no no the scripture's plain it means all he draws all men but not all men come it's very straightforward so people mess with the scriptures to deceive you to set the to set the the church off on the wrong track and the more people they can take with them the happier they are they being satan and his minions and I'm living in the midst of that at the moment at home where my son has been taken off the rails by his church and it's sad to see

I'm not going to go into any detail other than to say when you see it happening it makes your heart sad because they're missing the greatest thing the freedom in Christ that we should experience they're missing so in Matthew 7 16 what we read is it's by their fruit you shall know them not by what you force them to do to come back to the apple that's trying to be a good fruit doesn't work but once they've developed as a fruit you know what they are and it's by their fruit that you know them you don't know them by what some rigorous pastor has said right I want you all out on the streets doing your stuff on Saturday morning I would not want to discourage any man from being out on the street if God has moved them to do that neither would I want to be the man who forced a member of this congregation to engage in this ministry when they are not empowered by God to do it not called by God to do it

God empowers individuals to be fruitful in the environment in which he places them in my estimation now I don't know how I'm doing for time but I want to get into something that is nothing to do with Matthew but it is to do with the Great Commission turn to John 20 and I just want to clear up many of you may well already know what I'm about to say but unfortunately lots of people are at best confused by this and at times completely led astray by it so in John 20 verse 23 which is again it's the disciples on the brink of going out to do the Great Commission and so in verse 22 he breathes on them and he says to them receive the Holy Spirit and then he says if you forgive the sins of any their sins have been forgiven and if you retain the sins of any they shall be retained now that gives us on the face of it an irreconcilable conflict in scripture we could turn to Matthew 9 verse 1 or Mark 2 verse 1 or Luke 5 turn to Luke 5 verse 21 let's at least have one working example that we've looked at and when you get the notes you can look at the other examples Luke chapter 5 and verse 21 start in verse 20 seeing their faith he said friends your sins are forgiven you the scribes and Pharisees began to reason saying who is this man who speaks blasphemies who can forgive sins but God alone it's always been understood that the only one that can forgive sins is God himself so for it to be true that we can forgive sins that contradicts this so what's the answer to this apparent conundrum because this is the word of God and it doesn't have irreconcilable conflicts in it and the answer is it's a mistranslation and we look at why there's a mistranslation a bit further on but it is a mistranslation we think about other exhortations in the scripture what he said in

[33 : 10] John 17 particularly verse 18 he says the father has sent me into the world sorry as the father has sent me into the world I am sending you this is a completion of the prayer he prayed in John 17 and he's now bringing it to fruition when he's speaking to the disciples so he's saying as the father sent me into the world I'm sending you back in John 17 in his prayer he said I'm sending them into the world in the same way you've sent me so he was set why was he sent I'm sending you into the world to do what I was sent to do is the commission isn't it so what was he sent to do

well in Luke 19 he was Luke 19 verse 10 he was sent to seek and save the lost or in Matthew 1 verse 21 he was sent to save his people from their sins so this was not something that they were going to do by conveying their own message if they were going to do what he did they were going to be conveying his message so go to 2nd

Corinthians 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 describes Christians as follows this is the apostle Paul therefore we are ambassadors for Christ as though Christ were making an appeal through us we beg you on behalf of Christ to be reconciled to God he made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in him so our role is not to forgive or to refuse to forgive our role is to be ambassadors and if you think of what an ambassador does an ambassador is the senior figure in a foreign nation representing the government so if you're the British ambassador to Ghana or something like that you are the senior British figure in Ghana to represent the desires of the British government in that country we are ambassadors for Christ because in any given situation we are the senior representatives to represent God's will to them so what we do is a ministry of representation which enables us to declare if you give your life to Christ you will be forgiven we can also declare and if you don't you'll go to hell but we're not doing the forgiving and we're not withholding the forgiveness we're carrying a message of the ambassador if you like we carry the invitation of the king we've already touched on it this morning but in 1 John 1 verse 9 he tells us he will forgive us he will forgive us John didn't say if you think you have no sin you're a liar but if you repent I will forgive you he said he will forgive you he's the one who will forgive you John speaks as his ambassador and says if you repent you'll be forgiven so what is this translational error well it's a tense thing tense in more ways than one it's written in something called the passive perfect tense and the passive perfect tense has been described as two tenses in one because it reflects a past action that has an ongoing completion it's a bit the same as when the bible talks about salvation and it says you have been saved but it's in the present perfect tense which means you have been saved but you continue to be saved so this should not read you can forgive sins what it should read is you can declare sins are forgiven and in the opposite case where people reject Christ you can declare your sins are not forgiven until such time as you give your life to

Christ it's very simple but you see this mistranslation has led to an awful lot of wrong doctrine which we need to steer clear of the word of faith movement will tell you that we've all become little gods and we can forgive sins the Roman Catholic church will say you can go to confession and be forgiven by a man and you can be forgiven even faster and even more if you pay him some money and that's where the corruption creeps in so this is part of the great commission in that we need to get our message straight I forgive no one I can't save anyone and I can't forgive anyone and I can't declare someone unforgiving what I can say and I can declare it in a very loud voice you will be forgiven the day you give your life to Christ very important distinction now when you think about what's happened so all of the doctrine about purgatory and indulgences all of that is wrapped up in this where you have a man who says well you're indulgence will cost you five grand but you can buy your way out of purgatory or whatever it's so wrong and it's leading people astray and telling them they're forgiven when they're not if I'm rich enough I can sin pay a bit sin some more pay a bit sin some more it's wrong it elevates certain men and the other thing it does is it elevates ministers ministers please don't ever elevate me onto any platform because when God comes along and kicks it out from under me it's gonna hurt right anybody that ministers should not be on a pedestal we are first among equals we have a job to do and that's it we're not special in that sense but all of these things put a man in a seat in which he does not belong it elevates a man to a position of superiority well I can forgive you another another outworking of it is when there are churches going around with a so-called ministry of impartation where they will say well if you if you invite me to your church and into your congregation we will give you an impartation of the Holy Spirit we don't need you to do that now why why why why why why did it ever get going well simply this I'm going to leave that for time's sake because it's in the notes if you're interested when the Great Commission was first given this huge change that took place was first and foremost the Levitical priesthood becoming obsolete we don't need priests anymore and in 1 Peter 2 verse 9 we read that we are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for God's own possession so all of us are now priests in the sense that we are there to serve we are there to stand in the gap and act as a go between between people and God until such time as they get saved and as soon as they get saved they become priests alongside us there is no special priest anymore we don't need

to put funny robes on and swing incense and or even just be put upon a pedestal by our congregation someone who says I got the anointing no you don't we are all priests now this reliance on a priest as a go-between to speak to God for someone is known the the intellectual word for is sacerdotalism and it's sacerdotal simply means you need a priest to go before you

[41 : 29] Jesus abolished that it was the case up until he cried out it is finished after that that need went but during the first three centuries all of these priests some in pagan religions some Jewish priests had suddenly lost their clout and an awful lot of their income because they could no longer rip off God's people and so there was a big pressure to restore the priesthood and if you take that through to the time of the emperor Constantine he was one of the ones who wanted to introduce or reintroduce sacerdotalism priest based stuff and he wanted priests to take charge of churches and he wanted people to kowtow to priests well then when it came to writing these bibles the English translations of the bibles a lot of the people behind the translations were seeing an advantage in preserving this obsolete priesthood so you if I need you to get free from my sin then I've reestablished a priesthood that

God rendered obsolete and so it was a doctrine that was prevalent in Roman Catholic Church and it dates back to the time of emperor Constantine but it was already being done before that it's just that Constantine made it official and he made all the pagan priests into Christian priests at the same time so you're now running to a Christian priest to get your sins forgiven sorry a pagan priest to get your sins forgiven I'd just like you to turn to Psalm 51 Psalm 51 oh have I gone on too long I better finish then we'll finish with this and I might I might do a proper finish next time I talk Psalm 51 verse 4 and you will know those of you who have studied this before this is a psalm that David wrote when he was in abject repentance and fear because of his sin with Bathsheba and in verse 4 he says this against you you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight so that you are justified when you speak and blameless when you judge it's the position of

God and only God to forgive summary and application very quickly we're all corporately responsible for sharing and preaching the gospel at any time that God provides the opportunity and the power to do so second it is pointless doing it as a work of the flesh it will just lead to frustration and demoralization third it's important to remember that Evangelion and Didasco these two different kinds of preaching are both needed we don't just go out there and make converts but we bring them into the household of God and we work with them to turn them into disciples we produce long lasting fruit we must rightly divide the word of truth and not go out based on doctrines such as sacerdotalism you just have to make sure your doctrine is right that you're spooning out to people and the last thing for today and I'm sorry if I've gone on a long time always keep in mind that we are here to elevate and enthrone

Jesus and not ourselves and not any earthly priest our job is to lift him father thank you for this word I do hope this has taken root in our hearts and it makes me even more grateful for Sharon and her stopwatch but thank you lord for this fantastic encouragement to know that you will empower us to do what we need to do in Jesus name amen