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Series: [The Great Commission](#)

The Great Commission (1)

Pastor Eddie Idefonso

[Matthew 28:16-20](#)

(New Series)

The Making Disciples of All Nations, Part 1

I want to encourage you at this time, if you will, to take your Bible and open it to the [twenty-eighth chapter of Matthew](#). We come to the last section of this great Gospel. But I want you to understand something, this is not just the end, this is the climax. This is where Matthew has been going. This is where Christ has been moving through all of His life, to this point. This message is so important that I can say to you in all honesty that if you understand all there is about the rest of the gospel of Matthew and you don't understand this, you have missed the point. This is the climax of the gospel of Matthew. It ends on a very, very dramatic note. Everything, in a sense, has been foundational to this particular encounter with the truth of Christ that we find in [verses 16 to 20](#).

I want you to look at your Bible as I read that passage to you. Now, as I just said, this is the purpose articulated for which all of Matthew is written and for which Jesus Christ came. It is a passage that we must understand. And deep down in my heart, I only wish that every person in our church fellowship and every person in the church around the world could hear the truth of this passage that I want to share with you this Lord's day, and next. Not because I have so much to say, but because our Lord has so much to say and because I feel that so many people do not apparently understand the mission of the church. And when I say that, I mean people who are in the church. For many of the people who don't understand the mission of the church, there isn't even a thought along that line. They don't even give a consideration to what the mission of the church might be. They seemingly show up whenever it is convenient or even frequently to enjoy all that is provided for them, to take whatever they feel like taking, to leave whatever they feel like leaving. They seem to want to be involved in the church to the degree that it serves or meets particular needs in their own lives. And it somehow escapes both their understanding and even their curiosity as to what the mission of the church really is...much less are they wholeheartedly dedicated to the fulfillment of that mission.

Now if we were to survey people in the church, even in our church, and ask them what they felt the primary purpose of the church was, we might get some answers like this: Some might suggest to us that the purpose of the church is **fellowship**. That the church is a place to make friends with good people, honest people, godly people who strengthen your life. It's a place to provide activity for the family, enjoyable activity, meaningful activity. It's a place to enjoy music, the best of music, recreation, to cultivate relationships. It's sort of a place to hang out at until the Rapture. It's a place where love is cultivated and shared.

And all of that is certainly important because Jesus Himself said if we have love; all men will know that we are His disciples. But one step higher than that attitude would be the attitude of those who suggest that the mission of the church is **teaching**, that the

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primary objective of the church is to put out doctrine, to strengthen believers, to articulate theology, to give principles for practical Christian living, to train people for various responsibilities in the church, to instruct children and young people in obedience to the law of God with an objective of bringing them to maturity in Christ. And that certainly is a very important part of the church's ministry because those who are given to the church are given for the perfecting of the saints which occurs through the Word.

But even a step higher than that would be those people who suggest to us that the real purpose of the church is **praise to God**. That the church is really a praising community, a community of people who exalt God for who He is and what He has done. And obviously they suggest to us that this is the central activity of heaven and that is praise and adoration and honor and reverence and awe and homage being given eternally by all the saints redeemed and all the angels who are holy forever and ever and ever. Therefore if that's the primary responsibility of those in heaven, it certainly must be the primary responsibility of those on earth. In **Revelation 4** and **5**, we find that heaven is occupied with praise.

Now the fact is that fellowship is an absolute essential in the church. And teaching is equally essential and so is praise. But none of them and not all of them in combination are the mission of the church or the purpose of the church or the goal of the church or the objective of the church. None of them is why we are here. None of them.

You say, "**Well then, what is the mission of the church?**" Well, we have to start, first of all, with what is the motive of the church...what is our motive? The answer to that is very simple. We are what we are and we are to be what we are **to be for the glory of God**, is that not true? We have articulated that through the years that the primary greatest single unified motive of the church is the glory of God.

In **Ephesians 1:6**, "**All of this is to the praise of the glory of His grace.**"

Ephesians 1:6 (NASB)

⁶ **to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.**

In **Ephesians 1:12**, "**That we should be to the praise of His glory.**"

Ephesians 1:12 (NASB)

¹² **to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.**

In **Ephesians 1:14**, "**Unto the praise of His glory.**"

Ephesians 1:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ **who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.**

And over in **Ephesians 3:21**, "**By Him is to be glory in the church.**"

Ephesians 3:21 (NASB)

²¹ **to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.**