

Mission Possible

Opening Text: Mark 16:15-20

'Every nation', 'every creature', 'everywhere'! – No one is to be left unreached and nowhere untouched, by the gospel. That is how Jesus defined the message, the scope, and the mission of the church.

V.19 says that Jesus 'sat down' but verse 20 says that the church 'went out'

1. Nations have always been in the mind of God.

Psalms 2:7-8 - *"I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

This is a Messianic psalm. Part of this psalm is a conversation between Father God and His Son, Jesus. What are they talking about? Nations! God had nations in mind when He sent Jesus.

Acts 10:34-35 - *Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in **every nation** whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.*

The Apostle John saw into the future, a time when the Kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and Messiah (**Revelation 11:15**).

This is the bottom line of what the Kingdom of God and the church is all about: that every nation, every creature and everywhere this gospel may be proclaimed, and people may come to Jesus! **Is that mission impossible?** No. Because the Lord will work with us just like He worked with the early church, confirming the Word with accompanying signs!

2. God had nations in mind right from the beginning of time.

Despite the words of Jesus (that we have just read in Mark 16), some in the early church had the perception that the gospel was just to be preached to the Jews. In Acts 11 Peter had to explain to the elders and the other Apostles why he shared the gospel with Cornelius (a Gentile).

In fact, for 36 years after the ascension of Jesus, the church stayed confined to Jerusalem. It took the persecution that started after Stephen's death, for the church to finally get out there and fulfill the commission.

God always had nations in mind:

- a) The very first book of the Bible records how God raised a man called Abraham, 4000 years before Jesus, with the purpose that in him all the nations of the earth might be blessed.

Genesis 12:1-3 - *Now the Lord had said to Abram: “get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. ² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*

Galatians 3 says that we are here today because of this promise. The plan of God for salvation has reached all the gentile nations because of that statement in Genesis 12.

b) ‘Nations’ were in the first book of the Bible and they are the last book also:

In the vision of John in Revelation, he heard a beautiful song about people who were saved out of every nation.

Revelation 5:9-10 - *⁹ And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”*

John then had a vision of this:

Revelation 7:9-10 - *After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”*

Have you noticed that about our church here in Rowville, how we are a church of so many nations?

The nations of the world were not an afterthought: nations were there in the mind of God before there was time (between the Father and His Son Jesus), at the beginning of time (with Abraham) and in the fulness of time, when He sent Jesus!

Jesus demonstrated God’s love for people of different nations when He ministered to people like,

1. The Syrophenician woman whose young daughter was demon possessed (Mark 7)
2. The Samaritan woman by the well. In John 4:4, we read, “*He needed to go through Samaria*”. This was not an accidental visit. He intentionally went out of His way to reach out to this woman. “*He needed*” – The church needs to be mindful of what Jesus needs.
3. The demonised man in Gadara. He crossed a lake, faced a cold night and a storm, to come to the most unkosher place for a Jewish person to be in a place where they farmed pigs, and minister to a demonised man. Jesus then commissioned this man to go and tell others *how the Lord had compassion on him*. The man ended up sharing about Jesus in Decapolis, which means *ten cities*. These were all gentile cities full of pagan worship.
4. The Greeks in John 12. These were all non-Jews.

Every nation, every creature, everywhere!

Matthew 28:19-20 - *¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.*

God only has one plan from the beginning to the end of the age!

Before there was time,

at the **beginning** of time,

in the **fulness** of time, and

until **the end** of time,

God wants nations to come to Jesus!

Conclusion

Once they asked Jesus in **Luke 13:23**, “*Are there few who are saved?*”

In **verse 29**, Jesus replied: “*They will come from the East and the West, from the North and South and sit down in the Kingdom of God*”

Notice two things:

- a) One day, in the future, *they will sit down*. Now is not yet the time sit down but to GO!
- b) They will come into the Kingdom from everywhere. God’s mission is global. It is not limited to a certain people group, race, or language. Everyone is included. Everyone is included in the blessing, and everyone is included in the mission!

No one is excluded, no one is excused. All of us are called by Jesus to get involved:

- Some can go,
- Some can send,
- Some can pray,
- Some can provide!

Mark 16:20 - *And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.*