

# Gatekeepers Arise!

## Raising An Ecclesia

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### Creation

The Book of Genesis tells us that God created the heavens and the earth. The creation took place over six days. At the end of the sixth day, "God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good." (Genesis 1:31). It was what He intended it to be, glorious.

From the beginning God intended to exercise his sovereignty through his entire creation and commissioned his God-imaging creature to flesh out the purpose of God in all of life and all of creation. Man was made in God's own image and was crowned with glory. God created planet earth whole. He desires man and the earth to remain that way and to flourish. Hence, God gave Adam a mandate which we now call the Cultural Mandate

### The Cultural Mandate

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply**; fill the earth and subdue it; **rule** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Genesis 1:28

There are actually two mandates within the Cultural Mandate:

#### 1. Be fruitful and multiply

He gave Adam the first assignment - 'Be fruitful and multiply.' God wants a big family. He wants to populate the earth with people who have His nature and spirit - a glorious people imaging God.

#### 2. Rule over the earth

To ensure the earth flourishes according to His design, He gave Adam another assignment: 'Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' God did not give man ownership of the earth but an assignment to steward, manage, and govern the earth for Him. He made us regents over His colony, earth. Man is to manage it according to His ways and His Kingdom principles. He has given man His governmental authority. The governance of the earth must mirror heaven. "Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," Matthew 6:10

It is not to be by physical control or force but from the heart. "For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20

### The Fall

Sin resulting from man's disobedience came into the world and with the fall of man:

- God lost His family. Sin estranged us from Him;
- We messed up the world, and the governmental authority over the earth was usurped by Satan.

## **Redemption and Restoration**

But God loves the world and wants His family back. He wants to redeem man. He wants to restore His sovereignty, authority, and governance over the whole earth. He sent Jesus Christ. Hence: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

John 3:16, 17.

He desires to partner us in redeeming and restoring the world. So, before Jesus' ascension, He gave us the Great Commission to bring redemption and restoration to humankind.

## **The Great Commission**

The Great Commission is actually a re-commission ie a renewal of the original Cultural Mandate in the book of Genesis:

- a) Redeeming the Lost/Multiplying God's family
- b) Restoring God's sovereignty, rule and governance over the world.

Hence, there are actually two commissions.

### **i) Mark 16:15-18**

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Mark's account of the Great Commission instructed the disciples to preach the gospel (salvation/evangelism) so that none will be lost. We are to multiply the family of God ie build a 'family', hence 'Oikos' which is a Greek word used in the Bible to refer to church and which means 'family' or 'household.' This is about establishing the 'Oikos.' church

### **ii) Matthew 28:19, 20**

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, 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."

Matthew's account did not talk about preaching the gospel but focused on discipling nations and teaching His commandments. The common understanding of this verse is skewed toward discipling individuals which is important. However, the original Biblical text speaks of discipling nations. This is about governance, stewardship and management of nations in God's way ie the same way heaven is managed. God wants His people to restore His sovereignty and governance over nations. Hence, God requires His church also to be an 'Ecclesia' which is another Greek word in the Bible used to refer to church and which means 'the called out ones', 'legislature,' or a 'political assembly'. As an Ecclesia, we already have the authority to establish His Kingdom governance over the nations.

This call to disciple nations is also a re-affirmation of His Abrahamic covenant - "I will make you a great nation," (Genesis 12:2). And in the Book of Revelations, we are told that the kings of the earth will present to Jesus when He returns - the glory and honour of nations:

"And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it." (Revelation 21:24-26)

God's Kingdom authority over nations or communities is not achieved through force or physical control. It begins with the spiritual regeneration of individuals, then working its ways outwards through their hearts and minds into the culture and institutions of the family, society and the nation.

The Great Commission, therefore, requires us to, both, evangelise - get people 'saved' and expand the family of God - as well as establish His governmental authority in the world. The church has to be both an Oikos and an Ecclesia. It is not either/or. The two Greek words for church were used fairly equally, more than 100 times each, in the Bible.

### **Are we fulfilling the Great Commission?**

One of the greatest Christian revivals occurred during the global Charismatic renewal of the 1970s and 80s. Millions came to faith, there was exponential church growth and mega churches emerged. However, in the period since then, liberalism, secular humanism increasingly held sway over the culture of nations at the expense of the Judeo Christian culture which initially helped built much of the Western world. Despite explosive church growth, there has been a marked decline of God's governmental principles in nations that once embraced Judeo Christian values.

This should not come as a surprise. During this period, the church concentrated on doing Mark 16, building the Oikos - getting people saved, baptised in the Holy Spirit. Signs and wonders abounded. The church family was great. It did a wonderful job. However, the same could not be said of raising the Ecclesia. While the church focused on doing Mark 16, the devil was actively doing Matthew 28 - discipling nations and the world. There was an imbalance of the Oikos and Ecclesia roles in the church. We have to be both an Oikos and Ecclesia church. Building and strengthening the Oikos need to continue. However, the urgency today is raising an Ecclesia to be Kingdom Gatekeepers to reclaim, occupy and possess that which was lost.

Gatekeepers Arise! "Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10)

*Martin Luther King Jr.:*

*"The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."*

## Oikos & Ecclesia

The operative models of an Oikos and an Ecclesia church differ in emphasis but not in substance. The comparison below relates to emphasis only as there is a commonality of requirements in both perspectives of church purpose.

Oikos (Mark 16:15-18)	Ecclesia (Matthew 28:19,20)
Preach the Gospel of Good News	Teach Jesus' Commandments / Principles of the Kingdom
Conversion	Disciple Nations
Salvation	Lordship of Christ
Rescuing / Saving individuals	Rescuing / Saving Nations
People Centred	Cities / Nations Centred
Personal Destiny	Nation Destiny
Congregation Centred	Kingdom Centred
Birthing His Children – Born Again	Commissioning Soldiers / Legislators
Taking the Love of Christ to people	Taking God's commandments / ways to people
Shapes the soul of a person	Shapes the soul of Nations
Deliver people from demons and strongholds of sin	Deliver Nations from principalities, philosophies and dis-beliefs.
Lay hands to heal	Lay hands to commission
Heals diseases and wounds	Heals nations of poverty, hunger, injustice, violence and destruction
Serves the needs of people	Serves the purposes of God
Our rights and privileges as His children	Our responsibility as citizens of the Kingdom
Our inheritance	Our assignments
Fills people with the Holy Spirit	Fills the atmosphere with the Holy Spirit
Outpouring of Holy Spirit	Outworking of the Holy Spirit
Power of the Holy Spirit	Power of the Word
Gifts of the Holy Spirit is needed	Administration of the Holy Spirit is needed
Anointing/Power	Commissioning / Authority
Receive His life and nature	Release His life and nature
Work of the evangelist, pastor and teacher	Work of the apostle, prophet and teacher
Gathering	Sending
Priestly prayer	Incense prayer
To the throne - upwards	From the throne - downwards
Mercy and compassion	Justice
Grace	Truth
Focus on love	Focus on obeying His principles and truth
Speaking to God	Speaking for God
Protects and nurture	Demands risks and sacrifice
We are flocks of sheep	We are flight of eagles
We are heirs of God	We are partners with God
We are the bride	We are the army
We are farmers, ambassadors and priests	We are kings, regents, ministers and legislators
Jesus is Saviour, Redeemer	Jesus is Law Giver and King of kings
He is the Mediator and Advocate	He is the Judge
He is the shepherd, pastor	He is the apostle and bridegroom
He is a friend	He is the captain
Love is in His eyes	Fire is in His eyes
He is the Healer	He is the Warrior
He is the Son of Man	He is the Son of God
He is the Lamb	He is the Lion of Judah