THE GREAT COMMISSION IS ALL ABOUT THE CHURCH

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Category: Bible & Mission

I love this quote from Mike Goheen (emphasis mine):

> *With the crucifixion and resurrection accomplished, the work of the Messiah to gather and purify a people to carry out its calling to be a light to the nations is just about complete. All that remains is to give his people their new identity in a concluding commission and equip them with the promised power of the Holy Spirit. Then the eschatological gathering can begin. All the Gospels end with the risen Jesus commissioning his disciple community to take the good news to all nations (Matt. 28:16â€“20; Mark 16:9â€“20; Luke 24:44â€“49; cf. John 20:19â€“23; Acts 1:8). Unfortunately, these mandates have often been disconnected from both the overarching biblical story and the literary structures of the various books in which they are found. Though Jesus was actually sending a community into the world, his words in the Great Commission often have been used as the rationale by which churches send individuals into cross-cultural settings. Though cross-cultural missions are part of the churchâ€™s mandate, that is not the focus of Jesusâ€™s final commission to his peopleâ€”not what these texts are about. In fact, these commissions that end the Gospels establish the very identity and role of the new covenant community. As GÃ¼nther Bornkamm puts it, â€œMatthew 28:18ff. bears primarily on the life of the church itself, and not on the practice of mission.â€*

FromÂ A Light to the Nations: The Missional Church and the Biblical Story

For my money, Goheen is one of the best writers around on the issues of the Bible, culture and mission.