

**Sermon Topic: Becoming A World-Class Christian**

**Sermon Text: Matthew 9: 35-38**

**AIM:** To understand that Jesus' mission is world redemption, that is, to reach every ethnic people; and He has commissioned the Church to embrace and execute His mission. However, to accomplish this mission, one needs a world-visionary and world-missionary mindset.

**INTRODUCTION**

Imagine you were to live at the bottom of a deep dark well. What kind of world would you see?

Let me share with you a story about a frog that lives at the bottom of a dark shallow well. He has found himself a wet, secluded crack where he comfortably hides and never bothers to come out of his isolated world.

One day, he meets a turtle that happens to accidentally fall into the well and it has been some time since he has spoken to another creature. He prides himself and speaks in high spirits about his residence.

*"My life in the well is really a joy! I am comfortable to live in the crack inside this well. I swim around and nobody disturbs me. Really nobody cares, so do I! Hmm...the well water level is just right. I play in the mud and I just love burying my feet into it. Now, to think about it...hmm...look at the cockles, crabs, and toads around me—who lives as happily as I do? Furthermore, this well is my own territory, for my own enjoyment. What a wonderful life this is. Why don't you come in to see for yourself?"*

The turtle is amused by the frog's ignorance of the larger world, and he starts to share with the frog about the sea.

*"Do you know how big the sea is? Even a thousand miles would not describe its breadth; ten thousand feet would not describe its depth. During the time of the Great Emperor Yu (of Xia Dynasty), there were nine years of heavy rainfall out of ten, and flood ravaged all over the land, but the sea level did not seem to rise. During the time of Emperor Tang (of Shang Dynasty),*

*there were seven years of drought out of eight, and the land surface cracked, but the seashore did not seem to recede.”*

Hearing about the vastness of the sea, the frog is shocked. It starts to sense the smallness of its own life in the well.

## **TRANSITION**

Friends, there is a vast difference between having a “tunnel vision” and a “world vision”. Jesus’ mission is world redemption, that is, to reach every ethnic people; and He has commissioned the Church to embrace and execute His mission. However, to accomplish this mission one needs a world-visionary and world-missionary mindset. What is your life worldview like? Is it microscopic or macroscopic?

Our Lord Jesus Christ has the world in his heart. Matthew 9:35-38 says: **“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.”**”

And in Acts 1:7-8, Jesus commands his disciples with the following instruction: **“It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

Today, our Lord Jesus has commissioned the church to share the Good News worldwide. We are called to be “World-Class Christians!”

What is your perspective in regard to the purpose of God’s mission? Remember this: **You were made for a mission. And you have the Great Commission responsibility.**

## OUTLINE

How do you and I live to become a World-class Christian? We need to change our mindset in the **four** aspects:

### 1. **Shift from self-centred mindset to other-centred thinking**

I Corinthians 14:20 (NIV) says: **“Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil, be infants, but in your thinking be adults.”**

This is the first step to becoming a World-class Christians. Children by nature think only for themselves, but healthy matured adults think of others. God commands, **“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”** (Philippians 2:4, NIV)

Many of us will find this mindset shift difficult because we are naturally self-absorbed. The only way we can make this paradigm switch is by a *moment by moment dependence on God*. We are reminded in I Corinthians 2: 12 (NIV): **“We have not received the spirit of this world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”**

Let me suggest one way we can shift from self-centredness to other-centredness.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you think of the spiritual needs of unbelievers whenever you talk to them.
- Pray silent prayers for those you encounter. For example, pray: “Father, help me to understand what is keeping this person from knowing you.”

Your goal is to figure out where others are in their spiritual journey and then, do whatever will bring them a step closer to knowing Christ. Paul exhorts us to this mindset: **“I don’t think about what would be good for me but about what would be good for many people so that they might be saved.”** (1 Corinthians 10:33, GWT)

## 2. Shift from local thinking to global thinking

Our God is a global God! Our God is a missionary God! He has always cared about the entire world. John 3:16 (NIV) says, **“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.”**

Today, modern man is already thinking globally. The world has moved from a tribal village to a global village. Modern transportation has made it possible for one to travel across the oceans to other nations in a matter of hours. Through advanced technology, such as the internet, we can communicate and receive world news right at our finger tips. We are more connected worldwide than we realize. The barriers of distance and communication have been taken down. So what’s stopping us from going and sharing the Good news? **It’s the change of our mindset and attitude towards missions.**

Can you guess what percentage of world population is Christian? 2.1 billion out of 6.5 billion, that is about 35% of the population. There are more Christians now than there were in the past. We are living in exciting times in world evangelism. Paul reminds us, **“The same good news that came to you is going out all over the world. It is changing lives everywhere, just as it changed ours.”** (Colossians 1:6, NLT)

How do we think globally?

- a. Pray for specific countries. The Bible says, **“If you ask me, I will give you the nations; all the people on earth will be yours.”** (Psalm 2:2)
- b. Pray for opportunities to witness, for courage to speak up, for those who will believe, for the rapid spread of the message and for more workers.
- c. Pray for missionaries and everyone else involved in global harvest. The Bible says, **“You are also joining to help us when you pray for us.”** (2 Corinthians 1:11, GWT)  
Let us take a moment to pray for our BMC missionaries.

- d. Read and watch current news with “Great Commission eyes.” People seem most receptive to God when they are under tension or in transition. Because of the rate of change increasing in our world, more people are open to hearing the good news now than ever before.
  
- e. Go on a short-term mission trip to another country! There’s no substitute for hands-on, real life experience in another culture. In Acts 1:8 (CEV), Jesus gives us a pattern for involvement: **“You will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria and everywhere in the world.”** You know that his disciples were to reach out to their own community (Jerusalem); to their country (Judea); to other cultures (Samaria), and to other nations (everywhere in the world). While not everyone has the missionary gift, every Christian is called to be on a mission to all four groups in some way.

**Are you an “Acts 1:8” Christian?** Do you know what a short missions exposure trip will do to you? It will enlarge your heart, expand your vision, stretch your faith, deepen your compassion, and fill you with a kind of joy you have never experienced. It can be a turning point in your life.

### 3. **Shift from “here and now” thinking to eternal thinking**

To effectively and wisely spend your life span, you need an eternal perspective. In doing so, you will be able to discern between major and minor issues, and to distinguish between what is urgent and ultimate. Paul says, **“We fix our eyes not on what’s seen but on what’s unseen. For what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal.”** (2 Corinthians 4:18, NIV)

Many people have wasted their energy on trivial things; on things that do not matter in life. They trade their precious life for temporal things. Jesus warns: **“Anyone lets himself be distracted from the work I plan for him is not fit for the kingdom of God.”** (Luke 9: 62, LB). Paul says, **“Deal as sparingly as possible with the things in the world thrusts on you. This world as you see it is on its way out.”** (1 Corinthians 7: 31, Message)

Let me ask you a question. What are you allowing to stand in the way of your mission? What’s keeping you from being a World-class Christian?

Whatever it is, let it go. **“Let us strip off anything that slow us down or holds us back.”** (Hebrews 12:1, LB). Jesus teaches us **“to store up your treasure in heaven.”** (Matthew 6: 20, NIV).

#### **4. Change from thinking of excuses to thinking of creative ways to fulfill your Great Commission**

If you are willing, there is always a way to do it, and there are agencies that will help you.

However, here are some of the common excuses:

- a. “I only speak English.”
- b. “I don’t have anything to offer.”
- c. “I’m too old (or too young).”

Sarah claimed she was too old. Jeremiah claimed that he was too young. God rejected their excuses. Maybe you believe that you need a special “call” from God or are waiting for a supernatural feeling. But God has already stated his call repeatedly. We are called to fulfill God’s five purposes for our lives. God doesn’t want to use just some of his people; he wants to use all of his people. We are called to be on mission with God. He wants his whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.

Have you missed God’s plan for your lives because you have never asked God if he wanted you to serve as a missionary somewhere?

If you want to be like Jesus, you must have a heart for the whole world. You can’t be satisfied with just your family and friends coming to Christ. There are over 6.5 billion people on earth, and Jesus wants all his lost children found. Jesus said, **“Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good news will ever know what it means to really live.”** (Mark 8:35)

The Great Commission is your commission and doing your part is the secret to living a life of significance.

## CONCLUSION

John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism, is known for this famous statement: “The world in my parish.” It came from one of his sermons, where he made this point:

**“I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation. This is the work which I know God has called me to; and sure I am that His blessing attends it. Great encouragement have I, therefore, to be faithful in fulfilling the work He hath given me to do. His servant I am, and, as such, am employed according to the plain direction of His Word, ‘As I have opportunity, doing good unto all men’; and His providence clearly concurs with his Word; which as disengaged me from all things else, that I might singly attend on this very thing, ‘and go about doing good.’”**

Are you willing to be a World-class Christian?

Then, you need a mental shift on the four aspects of your life’s perspective:

- a. Shift from self-centred to other-centred thinking
- b. Shift from local thinking to global thinking
- c. Shift from “here and now” thinking to eternal thinking
- d. Shift from thinking of excuses to thinking of creative ways to fulfill the Great Commission

Reference: *The Purpose-Driven Life* by Rick Warren (Campaign Edition, 2005)