



**(global collective)  
"Set Up Camp"**



**Exploration Essentials  
Values of the Atlantic District  
of The Wesleyan Church**

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## **"Set Up Camp"**

**The global church is a destination we call home**

We are inspired to engage Christ's missional mandate to the ends of the earth. Our tents move in collaboration with the global church as we pray, give, and go alongside our home away from home, the basecamp of the International Wesleyan Church.

## **(global collective)**

**"Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."** (Mark 16:15, NLT)

Jesus' last words to His Apostles, the group that would become his Church, are recorded in the three synoptic Gospels and the book of Acts. And when we put them together we get something like this:

But then after 40 days of miracles, and teaching Jesus has this to say to His followers: *"And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven. But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere – in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. These signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick and heal them. With my authority, take this message of repentance to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who turn to me.' You are witnesses of all these things. Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone, everywhere. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, & Acts)

We believe this co-mission is great. We believe it calls us to the very ends of the earth. We intentionally **"set up camp"** alongside the international Wesleyan Church as our part in the global collective to fulfill His mission. These leaders and their churches are our "home away from home." These words of Jesus both define and bind together the mission of the global church and the mission of each local church in the Atlantic District.

And as we build the meaning this has for us today we begin with, what is supposed to be done. There has to be a reason why the Church is here and why the Lord has chosen to leave us in the world after we get saved. So, why are we here and not in heaven? In John 20:21 Jesus, tells His disciples why they are being sent out, *"As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."*

So, we are being sent by Christ in the same way that Christ was sent by the Father, and why was that? To depopulate hell. After all we are told in John 3:16, *"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."*

Winning the lost is the bottom line. That's why we are here and that ought to be the mission statement of every Christian and every Christian Church – to reach the lost. It was Charles Spurgeon who wrote, "If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for." Sounds like Spurgeon was committed to keeping people out of hell.



Jesus reminds us it is about more than eternal destiny in John 10:10, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* So how do we not only help people experience an eternal reward when this life is over, but also make the life on this side of eternity a full and abundant one?

Jesus offered a couple of suggestions in his teachings when he told the disciples in Matthew 5:13, *"You are the salt of the earth."* Christ calls us to be an influence in the world, both by preserving it and flavouring it as spiritual salt. Jesus adds in the next verse, *"You are the light of the world."* We are to light the way for others to find their way to Him and brighten the world as ambassadors of The Light.

As we continue to build on the meaning this has for us today we move from the what to the where it's supposed to be done. Jesus told his Apostles in Acts 1:8, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* Today that might sound something like this, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in your local communities, throughout the Atlantic District, across Canada, and to the ends of the earth."*

Basically, that means everywhere. Too often we qualify the word "missions" by adding either foreign or home to the beginning of it. But the church only has one mission and that is to make disciples of *all* nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything that Christ commanded.

We are compelled to reach people wherever there are people. Of course, the temptation 2000 years ago was the same as it is today, and that is to only go where it is near and where it is easy. But Jesus didn't tell the Apostles that they would just be His witnesses in Jerusalem. And 2000 years later He doesn't just tell us to be witnesses in our local community or even to just the more than three million people living in Maine and the Atlantic Provinces.

We have an obligation to reach our next-door neighbour, to reach the guy across the street, to reach the lady on the other side of town, those in Quebec and Vancouver as well as those in Haiti and Ghana and Egypt and Cambodia. And it needs to be intentional. It won't just happen.

On the Atlantic District having a global collective has been a core value for 115+ years, ever since H. C. Sanders and his family sailed for South Africa, not just in our Jerusalem, but also in our Judea, our Samaria and to the very ends of the earth. And early on we realized that we wouldn't be able to fulfill all of that mission by ourselves.

As we continue to build on the meaning this has for us today we move from the where to the who is supposed to be doing it. If we were to look at who was there on the day of the ascension we would discover the eleven remaining Apostles, but we know the Great Commission was meant to be a mission statement for all Christians. We have a common mission and that is, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything that Christ commanded.

The day we stop making disciples and stop baptizing people is the day the church will begin to die, and it will die within one generation. But the Great Commission has to go beyond simply the idea of being for all of Christianity, it needs to be a burning passion for every leader of the Atlantic District. Without the desire to win souls to Jesus Christ our denomination will become just another empty shell in the ecclesiastical wastelands of our continent.

Without the desire to win souls to Jesus Christ our church will become just another service club like the Lions or the Rotary. Not that there's anything wrong with either of those organizations, it's just that they are not the Body of Christ and we are, or at least that's what we are supposed to be. It would be so much easier to convince people of the value of evangelism if the Bible said that the only way that you could get into heaven is if you brought somebody with you, but it doesn't.

However, listen to the words of Christ in John 14:21, *"Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."* And so, we are a people committed to express our love for Christ by embracing our part in the global collective He has called



us to fulfill through the Great Commission.

As we build the final layer of meaning this has for us today we move from the *who* to the *how it's supposed to be done*. The power of the Holy Spirit is the means; the method is not defined. Deng Xiaoping said, "It doesn't matter if a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice." When we allow the Holy Spirit to take control of our lives, God begins to unfold His plan through us.

Jesus said in Mark 16:17-18, "These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed."

Now some people get really caught up in those particular things, but they are simply indications of the power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who minister. It is a promise of enablement and protection.

When new missionaries arrive in their host culture they are going to have to learn to speak in a new tongue. When medical missionaries are serving in hospitals and clinics around the world aren't they placing their hands on sick people to heal them? And around the world we have missionaries in dangerous situations where extremists and terrorists have replaced snakes and poison.

Sometimes we get so caught up in "how we should do it" that we never actually do anything. It was Thomas Jefferson who said, "In matters of style, swim with the current - in matters of principle, stand like a rock."

Listen again to the promise of Christ in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses..." We will be telling people about Christ everywhere—on the Atlantic District, throughout Canada, and to the ends of the earth. There are two things that happen when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives - we receive power **and** we will tell people about Jesus. He never said "stay" or "wait" - except to be equipped (Luke 24:49) and empowered (Acts 1:4). And once we have experienced these, He always says GO!

As far as evangelism on a personal level that is all of our responsibility, you can no more shirk that than you can walk past a drowning man and not throw him a rope. But on a broader spectrum there are those whom God has called to reach people where you cannot go. And that's why we have partners.

Because even the largest of our churches are stronger when we come together. And we unashamedly prioritize partnership with the home team - our brothers and sisters leading the international Wesleyan Church. Not to the exclusion of all others, but our best in partnership is first offered to and through our global collective in the Body of Christ.

There are hundreds if not thousands of sending agencies and relief agencies out there - all playing an important part in fulfilling the Great Commission. But Global Partners and World Hope International are the home team. We seek to set up basecamp alongside the global collective of our Wesleyan tribe as the point of the spear in how we affect eternity in the ends of the earth. So, let's keep going as we continue to make disciples of all nations for His glory!