

Global Engagement

Contents:

- Sermon Synopsis
- Sermon Highlights
- Scripture Verses
- Quotes from this episode
- 1 Bible Study – for personal or group study
- 3 Daily Devotions for further reflection

Sermon Synopsis

On the campus of Oral Roberts University, in front of a sweeping XR screen that brings the globe into vivid view, Dr. Billy Wilson delivers a call to intentional global engagement. He insists that this generation must echo John Wesley's declaration, "The world is my parish." Dr. Wilson presents ORU not merely as a place of study but as a training ground for kingdom leadership, preparing graduates to serve in Singapore or Sandusky with equal fervor and readiness. The program stitches student voices and testimonies from nations across the world into a single testimony: multicultural friendships, shared meals, language learning, and campus traditions like Culture Fest testify that ORU is already a global university.

Grounding global engagement in Scripture, Dr. Wilson draws listeners to God's promise that the nations will be blessed through Abraham: "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him" (Genesis 18:18, NIV). He presses the Psalms and the prophets into service—"Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance" (Psalm 2:8, NIV); "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10, NIV); "The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations" (Isaiah 52:10, NIV)—to declare that God's heart is global. Acts is called upon to remind the audience that from the one origin God made all nations (Acts 17:26, NIV), underscoring the unity of humanity even amid cultural differences. Dr. Wilson shares striking campus statistics—hundreds of nations represented in recent years—and student stories that reveal how encountering other cultures reshapes perspective, widens compassion, and forges lifelong bonds.

Practical rules of engagement rise from the sermon: first, understand unity—every person shares a common origin and common longings; second, delight in diversity—differences are to be celebrated not feared; third, learn languages—be prepared to communicate the gospel across tongues. He contrasts global norms—where European students often learn foreign languages early—with the U.S. lag, urging that serious global citizens prepare linguistically, illustrated by

the testimony of his daughter Sarah whose lifetime of language study equipped her for ministry in Latin America. Dr. Wilson presses the Great Commission as nonnegotiable: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19–20, NIV) and points to Luke's declaration that repentance and forgiveness must be preached "to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47, NIV). He gives a simple evangelistic tool—the ABCs: Ask, Believe, Confess—so ordinary believers can lead souls to Christ now.

This message culminates in the eternal vision of Revelation, where the preacher invites listeners to imagine John's great multitude: "from every nation, tribe, people and language" standing before the throne (Revelation 7:9–12, NIV). Dr. Wilson frames global engagement as participation in eternal history—bringing people into heaven's harvest. He issues a direct, pastoral summons: open your heart to the world, live as a Great Commission Christian, and join initiatives like Empowered 21's Everyone Initiative and the book *The Power of One* to help reach every person for Christ. For those who have not yet asked Jesus into their lives, he offers immediate help through worldimpact.tv and invites every believer to become a global instrument for Christ, confident that as Genesis foretold, the obedience of the nations will be his (Genesis 49:10, NIV).

Sermon Highlights

- Answer God's command to reach the nations: the Great Commission is a command to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV — Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age).
- Embrace our unity in Christ: all people share a common origin and purpose, so we must live together in unity (Acts 17:26 NIV — From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands).
- Delight in diversity and celebrate cultures: differences do not divide the body of Christ — celebrate cultural uniqueness (ORU's Culture Fest and a student body from 130+ nations model how to honor and learn from one another).
- Prepare practically for global engagement: learn languages and pursue cultural immersion so you can serve effectively worldwide (Sarah's disciplined Spanish training enabled life-changing missionary and legal advocacy work in Paraguay).
- Share faith with urgency and hope: use simple, faithful methods (the ABCs — Ask, Believe, Confess) because Revelation 7:9 NIV shows the eternal fruit — a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne.

Scripture Verses

Genesis 18:18

Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.

Psalm 2:8

Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

Psalm 46:10

He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'

Psalm 99:1-2

The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; he is enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake. Great is the LORD in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations.

Isaiah 52:10

The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

Acts 17:26

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Luke 24:47

and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Revelation 7:9-12

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: 'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'

Genesis 49:10

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

Quotes

- "This generation must see themselves as global citizens ... they need to join John Wesley in seeing the world as their parish and touch people literally all over the globe." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "We are a global university and because of that we've had to learn a lot about how to engage with one another, how to love one another in this environment in a small college campus, and find peace with one another and also unity." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "I wanna say to you, if you're serious about becoming a global citizen, if you're serious about the world being our parish, you need to learn languages." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "We are called to reach the nations for Jesus. When we do so, we are participating in eternal history. In fact, we're making history forever when we lead someone to Jesus Christ." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "I believe God calls us to engage our world to become global citizens, to see the world as our parish and to share our faith with people to make a real difference." - Dr. Billy Wilson

Bible Study

Objectives

- Recognize God's heart for all nations and our call to global engagement (Genesis 18:18; Isaiah 52:10, NIV).
- Understand unity in creation and the dignity of every person (Acts 17:26, NIV).
- Celebrate and delight in cultural diversity as a reflection of God's manifold wisdom (Revelation 7:9-12, NIV).
- Equip believers with practical steps for cross-cultural witness and evangelism (Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:47, NIV).
- Commit to at least one concrete action this week toward becoming a global citizen (language, relationship, prayer, or mission).

Reading and Reflections

- Genesis 18:18 (NIV): "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him." — Meditate on God's plan to bless the nations through Abraham's seed.
- Acts 17:26 (NIV): "From one man he made all the nations..." — Reflect on common origin and shared human needs.
- Psalm 2:8 (NIV): "Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance..." — Pray for God to enlarge your heart toward the nations.
- Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV): "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations..." — Consider practical obedience: where are you sent today?
- Revelation 7:9-12 (NIV): Read and visualize the great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language standing before the throne.

Key Observations

- God's redemptive plan is global: Scripture repeatedly points to salvation coming to the nations (Genesis 18:18; Isaiah 52:10, NIV).
- Unity is foundational: every person shares common needs, longings, and the image of God (Acts 17:26, NIV).
- Diversity is a gift: heaven's worship includes every language, tribe, and nation (Revelation 7:9-12, NIV).
- Language and cultural knowledge remove barriers to gospel access and deepen relationship (real-life evidence from ORU students and Sarah's ministry).
- The Great Commission is both a command and a present opportunity — spiritual training for evangelism is urgently needed (Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 24:47, NIV).

Personal Reflections

- I am moved by the vision of a heaven filled with every nation; that compels me to action today (Revelation 7:9, NIV).
- Hearing Sarah's story reminds me that deliberate preparation (learning language, cultural training) opens doors for compassion and justice.
- Meeting students from 130+ nations at ORU shows me how ordinary friendships become eternal investments.
- I am humbled that God uses ordinary people — students learning languages, interns in South Africa, campus hosts — to advance the Kingdom.
- I must do more than admire diversity: I will practice hospitality, listen deeply, and learn practical skills to reach people for Christ.

Lessons for Daily Life

- See people first as image-bearers, not problems to fix; dignity precedes persuasion.
- Small efforts matter: learning greetings in another tongue communicates respect and opens hearts.
- Delight in others' traditions — shared meals, music, and stories are Gospel opportunities.
- Evangelism is relational: testimony, clear steps to faith, and personal invitation remain powerful (use the ABC approach: Ask, Believe, Confess).
- Global engagement grows local ministry: being kingdom-minded at the workplace, school, and neighborhood reflects the Great Commission.

Practical Applications

- Adopt the ABC method in everyday conversation: Ask (invite Jesus in), Believe (trust Christ's resurrection), Confess (declare Jesus as Lord) — be ready to lead someone in prayer.
- Follow Sarah's example: if God has called you to a people group, take concrete training — language classes, legal or cultural studies if needed for ministry effectiveness.
- Host or attend a Culture Fest or international potluck — practice listening, asking questions, and building friendship bridges.
- Join or support a six-week immersion, internship, or local refugee ministry (like Lionheart South Africa model) to learn humility and partnership.
- Start a simple language goal: learn greetings and 50 common phrases in a language spoken in your community or a people you hope to reach.
- Pray daily for a specific nation and for neighborly opportunities to share the gospel; record names and answers to grow in faithfulness.

Challenges for the Week

- Learn and use three greetings in another language when you meet someone new (hello, thank you, goodbye).
- Invite one person from a different cultural background to share a meal and ask about their story with genuine curiosity.
- Share the ABC gospel with at least one person — if they respond, walk them through a simple prayer of salvation.
- Pray five minutes daily for one unreached nation and one international student or immigrant in your city.
- Identify one practical skill (language app, cultural book, legal terminology) and take the first step: install the app or order the book.

Further Study

- Acts 1:8 (NIV) — meditate on the Spirit's power to send witnesses to the ends of the earth.
- Romans 10:14-15 (NIV) — reflect on the necessity of sending and preaching for people to hear the gospel.
- Isaiah 49:6 (NIV) — read God's call to be a light to the nations and consider how you fit that mission.
- Study real-life models: ORU's globalization task force, Lionheart South Africa immersion, and missionary biographies (for example, workers who prepared linguistically and culturally).
- Read the resource mentioned on the program: The Power of One — use it to plan one step you can take toward Great Commission engagement.

Closing Prayer

Father God, you are Lord of every nation and every tongue. We thank you that from one man you made all the nations and that your salvation will be seen among the ends of the earth (Acts 17:26; Isaiah 52:10, NIV). Give us hearts like John Wesley who saw the world as his parish. Fill us with bold compassion, teach us humility to learn from others, and empower us by your Spirit to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV). Send us to the neighbor, the student from another land, the person who speaks another language. Help us to learn, to listen, to love, and to speak the name of Jesus clearly. Use our small, faithful steps to populate heaven with a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language (Revelation 7:9, NIV). Lord, give us courage this week to act on at least one challenge we have named. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Daily Devotionals

Day 1

Scripture Verse

Genesis 18:18 (NIV): "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him."

Acts 17:26 (NIV): "From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands."

Genesis 49:10 (NIV): "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his."

Reflection

Hear me: God made the whole world with deliberate purpose and united design. When Scripture declares that through Abraham all nations will be blessed, and then traces humanity back to one origin, it is calling you to a posture of unity that is not optional for the follower of Jesus. This is not a sentimental unity; this is gospel-rooted truth that changes how you see your neighbor, your coworker, the student from another country, the refugee on your street, and the family you pass each Sunday in church. Acts 17:26 lands like a proclamation: from one man God made all the nations. That truth answers the lie of division before it ever gets a foothold in your heart.

Think about the last time you met someone whose customs puzzled you. Maybe you heard a complaint in your mind: "They are so different; we could never relate." The Word calls you to a higher vision. Unity does not erase difference; it places every difference within the scope of God's intentional design. Everyone wants love, dignity, purpose, and hope. When you live with that conviction, every person becomes an opportunity for blessing, not an obstacle.

I want you to picture a simple scene: Lunchtime at work, a new international hire is making ramen. The room smells unfamiliar because a spice from another country is being used. Rather than recoiling, you step in to ask questions. Conversation starts as small as, "Where are you from?" and within minutes you are explaining why you attend church. That small exchange is the beginning of blessing across cultures—the very outworking of Genesis 18 and Acts 17:26. The obedience of the nations will be his. This is not distant prophecy; it is present work.

Unity requires humility. It asks you to acknowledge you are not the most important reference point in the room. It requires that you listen and learn. It also demands courage: to reach beyond comfort and speak the name of Jesus. When Abraham's seed becomes a

blessing to nations, it is both promise and commission. The blessing flows outward. You are called to be a conduit. Practical steps follow from that call: open the door when someone knocks; ask questions before giving answers; show patience when jokes or expressions don't land; allow your faith to be gentle and clear; invite the stranger to a shared meal or a campus event. When the church acts like this, it models the God who made the nations to himself.

I will say plainly to you: if you carry a posture of suspicion, you will shrink the gospel to a small group. If you carry a posture of unity rooted in Scripture, you will expand the gospel of blessing to every nation you meet. In the everyday moments—classrooms, workplace lunches, buses, grocery lines—you are either narrowing God's family with fear or widening it with grace. The Lord's design is to gather. Pray for eyes to see people as God sees them: made in his image, created to be part of his family, and ready to receive the blessing of Abraham when you speak Christ plainly and lovingly. This is a summons to obedience. Stand firm in the unity the Lord has given you in Christ. Celebrate the truth that the nations are not accidents; they are part of God's redemptive plan. Let your life be an instrument of blessing—beginning with the person you meet today.

Prayer

Lord, open my eyes to see every person as made in Your image; give me courage to live and speak as an instrument of Your blessing to the nations. Amen.

Day 2

Scripture Verse

Psalm 46:10 (NIV): "He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'"

Psalm 99:1-2 (NIV): "The LORD reigns, let the nations tremble; he is enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake. Great is the LORD in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations."

Revelation 7:9-12 (NIV): "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: 'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'"

Reflection

God is exalted among the nations. This truth should settle your heart and set your feet moving. When Psalm 46 calls you to be still and know God, it is not a call to passivity but a call to worship that fuels action. From stillness you learn that the Lord reigns and that the vision John saw in Revelation is not fanciful wishful thinking—it is certain. The picture

in Revelation 7 is astonishing: a vast, uncountable company from every nation, tribe, people and language worshipping the Lamb. That reality rewrites every small prejudice in your mind. Delight in diversity is not passive tolerance; it is active joy.

At Oral Roberts University, Culture Fest is not a church parade—it is a foretaste of the throne room. When students bring their national dishes, sing in their languages, teach a dance, or simply tell a story of their childhood, heaven's diversity is rehearsed on earth. You know the face of a brother or sister when you have broken bread with them. I want you to remember the story of Annette from Honduras—who longed for a camera and came all the way to ORU, trusting God through hardship; she found belonging and a stage to grow her gifts. Her story is not merely a campus vignette; it is an example of how cultural exchange becomes kingdom work when people find a place to belong and serve.

You will be tempted to reduce others to stereotypes: “They all think like that” or “They all do that.” Scripture counters that temptation with the vision of the throne. Every label that shrinks a person is a small kingdom of darkness that must fall before the majesty of Jesus. When you encounter a different language, a different customs, or a different style of worship, do not fear. Listen. Ask about the story behind the custom.

The saints in Revelation stand in white robes because they have been washed by the Lamb; their unity is forged in redemption, not conformity. Your calling is to welcome that redemptive unity.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, make my heart a place of welcome; let my praise for You overflow into acts of love that celebrate every nation, tribe, people and language. Amen.

Day 3

Scripture Verse

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV): "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Luke 24:47 (NIV): "and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Isaiah 52:10 (NIV): "The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God."

Reflection

The Great Commission is not a suggestion; it is a direct command from the risen Lord. Jesus sent his disciples not to a comfortable subset of humanity but to all nations. Read Matthew 28 as if he is saying your name: 'Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.'

That charge changes how you plan your career, how you build friendships, and how you pray. It reshapes every vocation into a platform for gospel witness.

Consider Sarah's story. At five she gave her life to Christ; by twelve she knew God was calling her to Latin America. Sarah learned Spanish diligently. She did not wait until she was on a plane to begin preparing. She took Spanish classes, majored in teaching English as a second language, earned a master's in translation, and then stepped into courtrooms in Paraguay to defend abandoned children. Her life teaches an essential lesson: global engagement requires preparation, sacrifice, and skill. Language was not an optional accessory for her mission—language became the very instrument by which she could contend for justice and extend Jesus' mercy.

You might not become a missionary in another continent. You might be called to stay where you are. The Great Commission still applies. 'All nations' includes the foreign student in your city, the immigrant two doors down, the truck driver who stops at your church's soup kitchen. To obey Christ is to be intentional. Learn a phrase in your neighbor's tongue. Enroll in a language course. Invite a person from another culture to tell you their story and listen until you understand the hurts and hopes that shape them.

And tell your testimony plainly: powerful testimony opens doors because it is honest and vulnerable. But do not reduce the task to techniques. The power of the Holy Spirit is the decisive factor. Isaiah 52:10 proclaims that the Lord will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations. The Holy Spirit works through your obedience. You prepare; he empowers. You study a language; he opens hearts. You serve the poor; he draws them to the Savior.

Ask yourself today: what is one practical step you will take to be globally engaged this year? The point is not the size of the action but your obedience. Jesus promised, 'I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' That promise frees you from fear and fills you with purpose. You do not go alone. The Lord goes before you and stands; he establishes the words and seals them with his presence. Finally, remember eternity. Revelation's vision of every tongue worshiping together is the consummation of the Great Commission. Every person you welcome, every language you learn, every faithful conversation you have participates in that future throne room. You are not merely doing good deeds or fulfilling civic duties; you are taking part in history eternal.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, send me out with Your Spirit; give me the skills, the words, and the boldness to make disciples among the nations right where I am. Amen.

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