

# “Creation, Creativity, and the Silk Road”

Business with A Purpose Conference

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# Today's Thoughts

1. "Creation Mandate"
2. Creativity and the Spirit
3. Syriac Christians along the Silk Road: Entrepreneurs with a Purpose

# 1. “Creation Mandate”

a) God made humans to have something essential of His: “Image” and “breath”

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground” (Gen 1:26)

Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Gen 2:7)



## b) God Gave Them a Mandate (Creation Mandate)

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Gen 1:28)

- To Flourish
- To Multiply
- To “Rule over” or more accurately “Care” on behalf of God

## 2. “Creativity”

a) Originated from the Creator in His Image and Breath We are Made.

“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light” (Gen 1:2-3).

“[He] breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (Gen 2:7).

## b) We are Created to work towards the flourishing of life

- Work is important part of human role “Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground” (Gen 2:5)
- Increase is part of the creation mandate: Blessed, fill, multiply (creation of wealth)
- Enjoyment of his blessing is also important: precious metals and stones (to be processed) (Gen 2:11-12), variety of fruits (2:9), a garden (2:15), and a companion (2:18, 21-15).



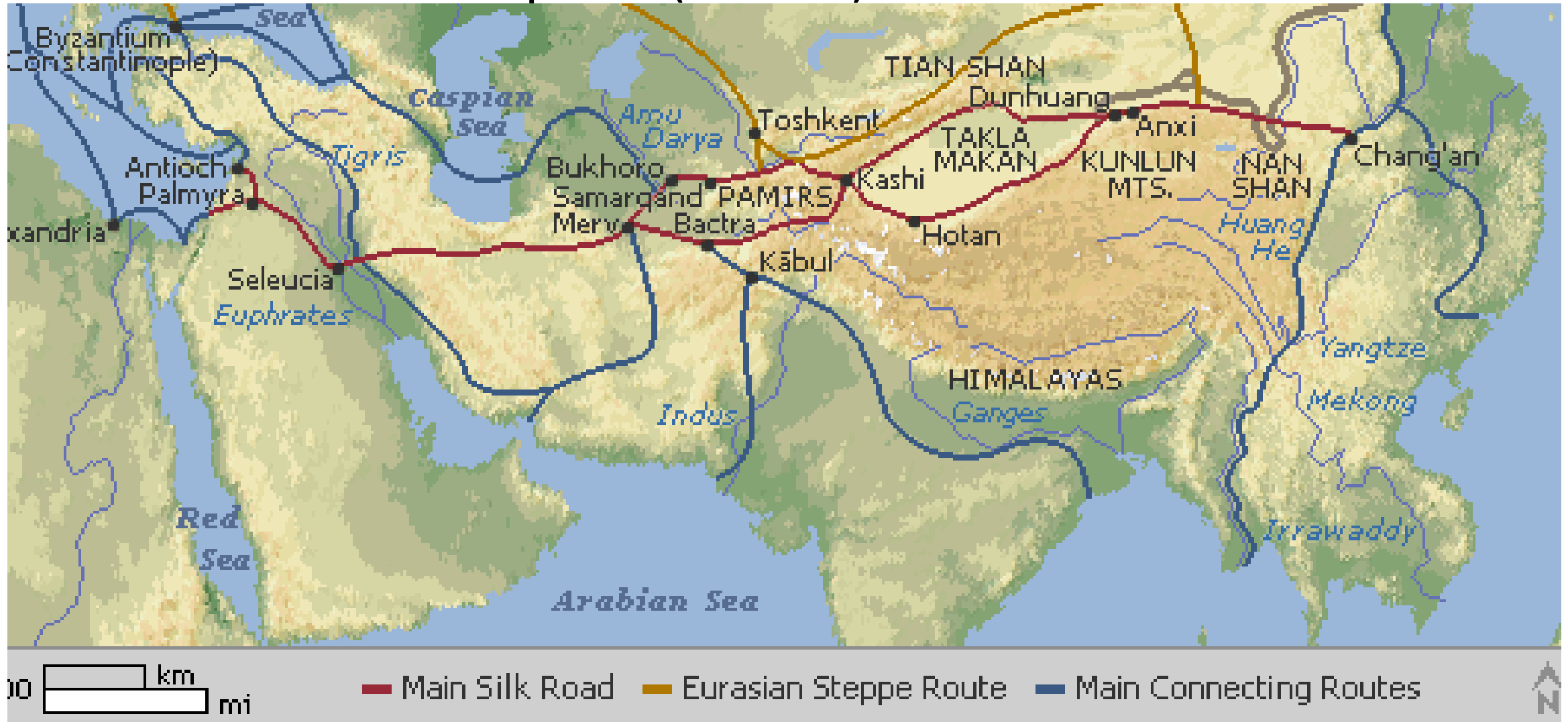
# Marks of Godly Creativity

1. Before going anywhere, your business is already part of God's Creation mandate: creating wealth and blessing families!
2. Draw the motivation for one's creativity from the Creator's life-giving and flourishing intention--Intentionality.
3. The same Holy Spirit is now in Us—the Spirit of Creativity!
4. Therefore, align your business to the mandate of the Creator!
5. Execute in God-given authority in the serving spirit of Christ.
6. In the Spirit, there is nothing like “business as usual”!
7. The Holy Spirit loves to surprise us to go beyond our imagination.

### 3. Gospel through the “Silk Road”

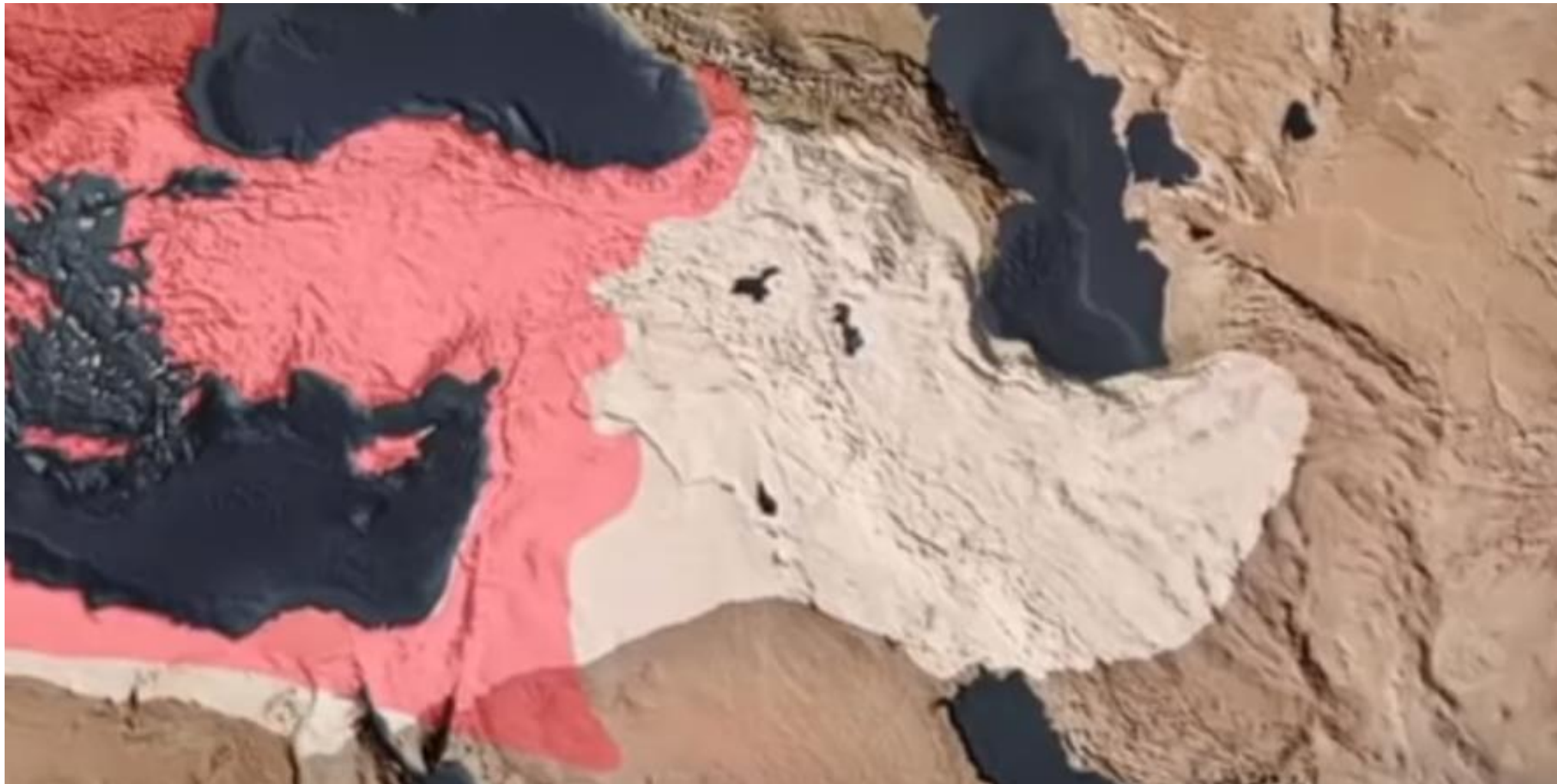
- The Silk Road began in Antioch and ended in Xian, China (Tang Dynasty)
- Through the Silk Road, spices and silk from the East reached the West

# Silk Road: Ancient trade route linking the East and Roman Empire (West)

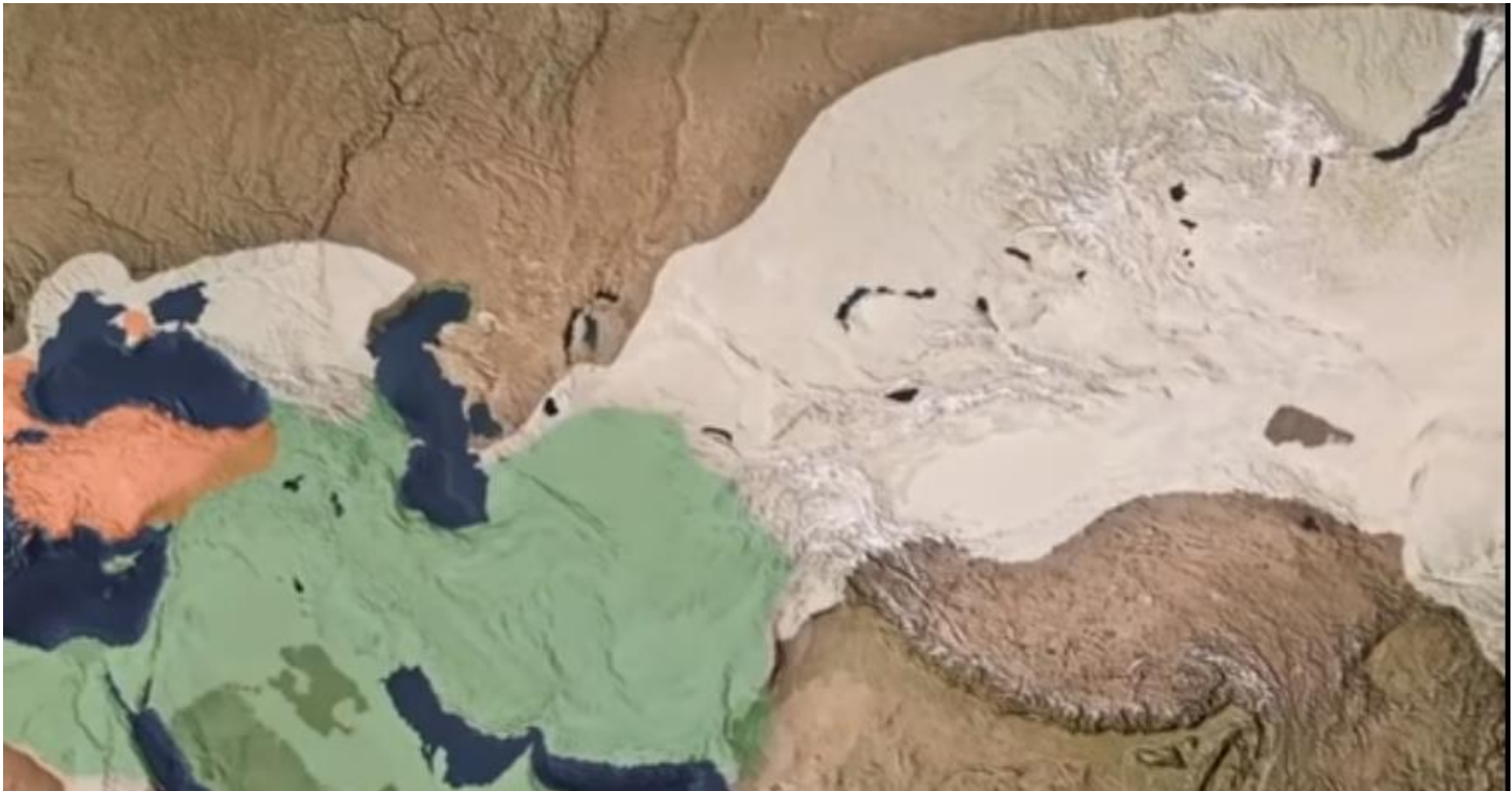


- Syriac Christian merchants began to spread the Gospel as they travelled the Silk Road.
- When a post was established, doctors, teachers, and preachers formed a community.

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1812: This is today's Central Asia where Christianity has very little presence.





# Who were the major players in God's mission? Everyone!

1. Merchants risked everything for a successful caravan;
2. Now Christian merchants were vanguards of the Gospel with their creativity, strategic thinking, and risk-taking;
3. When a post was established, other pioneering team arrived: teachers, doctors, and preachers;
4. They evangelized and transformed the area, while the merchants advanced toward the East;
5. This is how China was reached by the Gospel in the 7<sup>th</sup> century; and
6. By this time, the whole Central Asia was reached by the Gospel!

# Summary

1. We are Created as God's special partner;
2. In his Spirit, we have been entrusted with His creativity;
3. To flourish/bless his creation and fellow humans;
4. Christ is our model is sacrificial serving to bring life to us all.
5. The Holy Spirit is life-giving creative God who is in us.
6. The world is broken and we are sent to this broken world
7. To serve in our life, words, and deeds.
8. Your entrepreneurial work is God's gift to you and to the world, which now becomes your gift to God and to the world!
9. For this, the Holy Spirit empowers you to bring the good news of new life to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)