



## Lesson #1

# The Great Commission

Think about a great athlete, especially an Olympic contender. What is their focus in life?

Today, we will talk about the focus of our ministry, the Great Commission! After Jesus' Resurrection, He spent forty days with His disciples. At the end of that time, he returned to His Father in Heaven. Before He left them, Jesus commissioned His disciples. He reminded them of the great task that lay before them. (Also see Acts 1:1-11)

**Read Matthew 28:16-20**

Who went to the mountain and why?

What did this demonstrate?

What did these men do when they saw Jesus?

(ALL)

(Some)

Review v.18. What is authority?

How much authority does Jesus have?

What does this mean in practical terms?

Look up these other places where the same Greek word is used about Jesus' authority. What authority does Jesus have?

**Matthew 9:6**

**Luke 12:5**

**John 1:12-13**

**Matthew 10:1**

**John 10:17-18**

**John 17:2**

**Romans 9:21-24**

**Revelation 16:9**

**II Corinthians 2:10 (to Paul)**

**Back to Matthew 28:16-20**

What are the four commands Jesus gives next?

Why does Jesus use the word ‘therefore’ in verse 19?

**Read Luke 10:1-4 and 17-24**

Summarize verses 1-4.

What did Jesus give the disciples?

Should our joy come from the authority He’s given us?      Why not?

What is our joy?

### **Back to Matthew 28:16-20**

What is our confidence to obey verse 19?

The four commands are actually only one command with three parts. The main clause in the Greek is “**Make disciples**” while the other three phrases clarify the main point. It is as if Jesus is saying: Make disciples by going, baptizing and teaching. Explain each aspect of the command to make disciples.

**Go** (The Greek word here means to travel, depart, take a journey or walk):

**Baptizing** (The Greek word here means to immerse, plunge, drench):

**Teaching them to obey everything Jesus has commanded:**

With this in mind, what does Jesus mean by **Make disciples**?



## The Great Commission

It is the final command given by the Risen Lord Jesus before He returns to His Father in Heaven. It is what Jesus gave His life to while He lived on earth. It is what He modeled for us.

When I was a freshman in college I read a book called **The Master Plan of Evangelism** by Robert Coleman. He clearly defined making disciples as Jesus' goal for our lives as followers of Christ. Jesus' command involved evangelism but the goal was to make mature disciples which is why we are to "teach them everything that I have commanded you."

This book changed my life. Now the purpose and goal of my life is to Love Jesus and make disciples. I even look at raising my children as nurturing them into disciples who love Jesus and make disciples!

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To **Go** implies action and aggressive motion. We don't sit still and wait for people to come to us. We believe Jesus that the "fields are ready for harvest" and we go out into them. As we are going our goal is NOT: to convince people that we are right, to make converts, or to grow the church. Our goal IS: to see people come to Jesus and follow Him with all their hearts and lives forever. This changes our message drastically. We don't try to sugar coat the Gospel. We don't try to water down hard truths about sin and hell.

To **Go** puts us into planning and executing mode. We make specific plans to spend time with unbelievers relationally; talk to them about both the Gospel and the Bible; and call them to radical discipleship. Jesus called His disciples by telling them to leave everything and follow Him. He called them to be "fishers of men." He called them to a life of purpose. As I share the Gospel with people who are not yet saved, I paint a picture for them of their life under the Lordship of Christ.

To **Go** requires us to seek out the lost and share the Gospel fully and clearly with them.

To **Baptize** implies a public declaration of faith as well as being added to the local church. There is a point of dedication, a prayer of salvation, and a place where unbelievers cross from death to life. Once the Gospel has been responded to, young Christians need to tell people that they belong to Jesus now. Their lives will never be the same. Baptism does not save us, but it is an outward symbol of our salvation. It is also an act of obedience. Baptism paints a picture of our sins being washed away by the blood of Jesus and us rising up to new life with Him.

To **Baptize** implies addition to a local church. There is a point of joining a family of believers. (I Corinthians 12:13) Not like a club, but entering into warm, loving relationships, the new Christian is like a newborn baby that is eagerly welcomed by a household that will care, feed, and nurture him/her. Once someone comes to Christ, there should be a desire to learn, grow, and be accountable to other believers. There is safety and protection in the Body of Christ.

To **Teach everything I have commanded you** implies that beyond learning all there is to learn (a truckload!), there is a life of obedience as he/she builds her life upon the rock rather than the sand. A foundation of basic Biblical truth is laid with application. Sins are turned from, strongholds are broken, bad habits are discarded. New disciplines are engrafted into the young believer's life of prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship, tithing, and evangelism. EVERYTHING is under the LORDSHIP of JESUS!

**Go! Go!**

**Baptize! Baptize!**

**Teach! Teach!**

Jesus is God. His Word, the Bible is true. We do not have to soft-pedal the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He is to be obeyed. Period. Many Christians have different viewpoints on things such as baptism, worship music style, or what names they give to church leadership. There is however a core of beliefs that define “Orthodox Christianity.” All that simply means is sticking to the Biblical viewpoints of the essentials of the faith. Here is a list of beliefs that Christians adhere to. Do not compromise on these truths.

1. There is only one God eternally existent in the triune Godhead: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
2. Jesus Christ is God, the only begotten Son of the Father, eternally co-existing with Him from and beyond eternity. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born of the virgin Mary, was crucified, died, was buried, and rose again on the third day. He ascended in bodily form into Heaven where He awaits us, is seated at the right hand of the Father and is interceding for us.
3. That God created the world and all that is in it. He has ownership rights over all people.
4. All people have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death and eternity in hell.
5. Jesus Christ died on the cross as a substitute, receiving the punishment we deserve (propitiation). Forgiveness of sin (salvation), new life (redemption) and a right relationship with God (justification) are all available to people because of the cross. These gifts are received by faith in Jesus Christ.
6. The Holy Spirit sets us apart (sanctification) to be holy and He fills us and empowers us to live godly lives and take the Gospel to the ends of the earth.
7. There will be a resurrection of the dead and a day of judgment. All people will acknowledge that Jesus is Lord. Those who believe will experience eternal life with Jesus forever. Those who rejected Jesus will spend eternity in hell.
8. The Holy Bible is the only inspired and authoritative word of God.

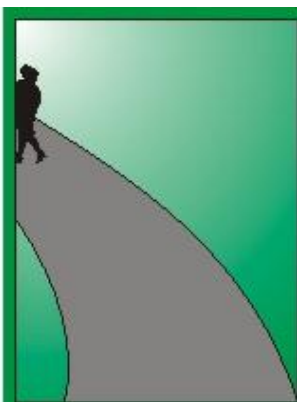
The Bible speaks to all of life: the church, the family, the government, economics, history, and relationships.

However as we equip people to obey ALL His commands, remember that this teaching is not a “classroom kind” of information downloading. We teach the way Jesus taught: loving so much that we share not only God’s truth but our lives as well. More is “caught” than “taught”. We teach by example. We teach using situations as they arise. We teach by digging into the Word of God and using IT and not our opinions as our resource.

What an exciting privilege to make disciples! I love the church that Jesus is building. She is beautiful. My life is dedicated to helping her grow up into maturity in any way I can. The first step is to constantly be walking with the Lord in purity and love. I always see myself as a growing disciple which means I am always in the process of growing up in my salvation. I have not arrived. But as I grow, I can help others grow too.

May you be envisioned in the following pages to join the Great Adventure of making disciples!

### **Please memorize:**



**Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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.”**

**Matthew 28:18-20**