



“What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others.”

- 2 Timothy 2:2

Book 3:

Church Planting & Book of Acts

**“Reproducing and Multiplying Healthy Leaders and
Churches, Evangelism, and Discipleship”**

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Chapter 1

The Great Commission

Introduction

If you ask Christians to turn in their Bibles to *The Great Commission*, most of them will locate *Matthew 28:18-20*. However, that is only one of at least five times Jesus gave His disciples the command to go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel. Let's begin by taking a fresh look at the Great Commission in all five passages.²

Assignment:

Read the following Great Commission references and make notes about what is unique and different in each passage. *John 20:21*; *Mark 16:15*; *Matthew 28:18-20*; *Luke 24:44-49*; *Acts 1:8*

What is a Commission? A mission is a task we have been given to accomplish. A co-mission is a task we have been given to accomplish in partnership with someone else as a partner. Jesus is our partner in the *Great Commission*.

Ephesians 3:10 tells us that God's plan is that His manifold wisdom might be made known through the church. How will the world know of His manifold wisdom? By you and me obeying the Great Commission and going into the entire world preaching the Gospel.

Let's take a look at each of these commands and note how they interrelate to form a unique, whole message.

1. We Are Sent – *John 20:21*

- A. *John 20:21* emphasizes the fact that we are sent into the world.
- B. We serve the God who sends His people to all cultures in the world.

- C. With God, there are no locked doors. He opens the doors so the Gospel may be proclaimed everywhere.
- D. There are many different cultures in the world. We are sent to all of them. Therefore, we must not only know God, but also to understand the culture(s) to which He is sending us.
- E. Church planting is the key to spreading the Gospel.
- F. The Great Commission is always accompanied by the presence of the Holy Spirit or the promise of His presence with us.

2. To Everyone Everywhere – *Mark 16:15*

- A. *Mark 16:15* emphasizes the fact that we are sent to reach every man, woman and child in the world.
- B. However, we all have circles of influence in our lives made up of people we know, people we live nearby, our family and friends, and people we work with.
- C. Churches also have circles of influence – and they are accountable to reach the people in those circles.
- D. In Paul’s ministry, he said *imitate me!* What did Paul do? He preached the Gospel everywhere he went.
- E. In the book of *Acts*, Paul demonstrated many unique approaches to reach unique people groups. In Paul’s ministry, there were different beginning points. But he always ended up at the same ending point – preaching the death and resurrection of Christ.

3. With A Strategy – *Matthew 28:18-20*

- A. In *Matthew 28:18-20*, Jesus gives us a strategy by which we can accomplish the Great Commission.
- B. This is the longest, most familiar, and most extensive statement about the Great Commission.
- C. Jesus said He has all authority in heaven and earth
- D. He commanded us to make disciples. *Make disciples* is the main verb in the Great Commission in *Matthew 28*, indicating that its action is the major focus of the command. There are three words that qualify how we are to make disciples:³
 - *Going* – this speaks of evangelism and telling others how they can know Jesus personally.

- *Baptizing* – baptism is how people become a part of a local church. They are now relationally connected to others who can help them grow as a follower of Jesus.
- *Teaching* – this is the educational aspect of the Great Commission. We are to teach new believers all that Jesus commanded us. As a result, they will become personally equipped and will begin to mature as a disciple.

4. **Telling a Message – *Luke 24:44-49***

- A. *Luke 22:44-49* describes the message we are to proclaim. We are to tell others the Gospel – which involves repentance from sin and faith in Jesus.
- B. There is no other message in heaven and on earth by which men can be saved – *Acts 4:12*.
- C. *2 Corinthians 5:18-20* tells us that we are ambassadors representing God to the world and we are to proclaim the message of reconciliation.

5. **Empowered for the Task – *Acts 1:8***

- A. *Acts 1:8* answers the question, how are believers equipped for this mission? The power of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary. The Holy Spirit is the One who makes our witnessing effective.
- B. We must be focused on the right things. *Acts 1:5-7* tells us that *the right thing* to be preoccupied with is not prophecy and knowing when Jesus will return. Rather, it is the fulfillment of the Great Commission He has given us. We must trust the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of new believers, new pastors, and new churches as they carry on the legacy of ministry and mission Jesus established.
- C. We must be focused on the right places. Jesus talks about Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. There is a logical progression and strategy involved here.

Conclusion

The summary of this chapter is: *We are sent ... to everyone everywhere ... with a strategy ... telling a message ... empowered for the task.*

Assignment:

Memorize the summary statement written above.

List three new insights you learned about The Great Commission.
Why are these important to you?