

Make Disciples; Matthew 28:16-20

I. Commission

- A. We call this set of Scripture “The Great Commission” — it might even be written above verse 16 in your Bible
 - 1. An authorization or command to act in a prescribed manner or to perform prescribed acts: charge
 - 2. Authority to act for, in behalf of, or in place of another
 - 3. A task or matter entrusted to one as an agent for another ¹
- B. Verse 16 tells us that Jesus was giving this charge to the eleven “disciples”
- C. But the commands in the subsequent verses can easily be ours as well

II. Go

- A. I think we sometimes get stuck on a particular meaning or understanding for this word
- B. We have many mission works all over the world
- C. We have Paul’s example of his mission trips all over the known world
- D. Acts 13:1–3 (ESV); ¹ Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.
- E. But what about the Apostles — Jesus gave them this command, “go”
 - 1. Acts 8:1 (ESV); ¹ And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
 - 2. I don’t think for a minute that the Apostles disobeyed Jesus’ command
 - 3. If you delve into the Greek, you find that the verb ‘go’ is actually a participle, used to describe the next verb, ‘make disciples’
 - 4. A better understanding of this sentence would be, “as you are going, make disciples...”
- F. We get so caught up in mission work and missionaries that we forget where the mission field really is — right in our own backyard; just as Jerusalem was the Apostles’ mission field!
 - 1. It makes no difference if you are in Botswana or Plainview — we are to make disciples
 - 2. This verb is the imperative, the authoritative command from Jesus
- G. Disciple — one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another ²
 - 1. A follower or student of a teacher, leader, or philosopher (Jesus)
 - 2. Everywhere we go we are to make disciples, turn them into followers of Jesus spreading His doctrine (the Gospel)
- H. How do we make disciples?

III. Baptize

- A. Wash ceremonially for purpose of purification; to use water in a rite for purpose of renewing or establishing a relationship with God, plunge, dip, wash ³
- B. To really understand baptism, we have to look at Israel under the Mosaic law

¹ Inc Merriam-Webster, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

² Ibid

³ William Arndt et al., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 164.

1. Exodus 19:10–11 (ESV); ¹⁰ the Lord said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments ¹¹ and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.
 2. Leviticus 8:6 (ESV); And Moses brought Aaron and his sons and washed them with water.
 3. Rabbinical oral tradition (law) says, "As your forefathers entered into the Covenant only by circumcision, immersion and the sprinkling of the blood, so shall they [the proselytes] enter the Covenant only by circumcision, immersion and the sprinkling of the blood" The Soncino Talmud, Keritot 9a
 4. We see this idea played out with Naaman
 5. Luke 4:27 (ESV); And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”
- C. Every Israelite who heard Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost completely understood him
 - D. Acts 2:37–39 (ESV); ³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”
 - E. Paul, in an effort to keep the church in Rome from falling into false teaching, reminds them of their own baptism (crucifixion and resurrection)
 - F. Peter clearly lays out the saving power of immersion
 - G. 1 Peter 3:21 (ESV); Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
 - H. “John’s baptism was designed to implement repentance as a necessary stage for the reception of Jesus; with the arrival of Jesus the next stage was the receipt of the Holy Spirit in connection with apostolic baptism in the name of Jesus, who was no longer the ‘coming one’, but the arrived ‘Lord’)” ⁴
 - I. How do you become a disciple? Through baptism
- IV. Teach
- A. To tell someone what to do, tell, instruct (The guards at the tomb “did as they were directed” in Matthew 28:15)
 - B. To provide instruction in a formal or informal setting, teach ⁵
 - C. Observe — to retain in custody, keep watch over, guard; to persist in obedience, keep, observe, fulfill, pay attention to ⁶
 - D. Acts 2:42 (ESV); And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
 - E. Just as the apostles were devoted to Jesus’ teachings, and just as they taught them to others, we are also supposed to do the same
 1. 2 Timothy 2:1–2 (ESV); ¹ You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
 2. But we must take care of what we are teaching
 3. 2 Timothy 1:13 (ESV); Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

⁴ Ibid, 164.

⁵ Ibid, 241.

⁶ Ibid, 1002.

4. 2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV); Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.
- F. Not only are we to hold on to, guard, and persist in obedience — we are also to teach others to do the same
- V. Make Disciples
 - A. Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV); ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
 - B. Wherever we are, we are making disciples — baptizing and teaching them
 - C. Remember, Jesus is with you — “to the end of the age”