

“The Great Commission” Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.**
Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV)

A small church pastor teaching about evangelism is a lot like Abram at 97 years old teaching about having LOTS of children, promised children ...

Yet, despite his temporary low level of childbearing, Abram was God’s man –

¹⁷ And the LORD said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.” Genesis 18:17–19 (NKJV)

I. Authority in Jesus’ hands –

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Matthew 28:18**

1. *At this point Jesus had already died and resurrected. What He is saying here was among the last words He said while still on earth –*
 - A. *He claims “authority” in Heaven and earth – ἐξουσία -exousia, authority, power!*
 - B. *He says this “authority” was given to Him –*
We see the “giving” of that “authority” in Revelation 5 -

⁵ And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Revelation 5:1–7 (NKJV)

2. *He states this authority because He is calling His followers to a Great Task –*
make disciples of all the nations :19

3. *By this authority, Christ’s followers receive power with the Holy Spirit -*
⁸ **But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”**
Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

4. *When Jesus says, :20 and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. I believe He is saying He is with us even NOW! Most teachers of Scripture would agree!*

II. King Jesus’ first order “Go” –

¹⁹ **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,..**

Let us examine the parts of this order from Jesus Christ –

1. *“Go” – one of the names I contributed to our list of possible names for our church, before we picked, “Word of Life Church” was “Go Church” it was based on this verse –*

*A song I remember - Go ye therefore and teach all nations, go, go, go Go ye therefore and teach all nations, go, go, go Baptizing them in the Name of the Father The Son and Holy Ghost, go, go, go
Leon Patillo*

2. *Go is why the church had apostles, why it still has evangelists and missionaries.*
3. *It is also part of the work of pastors –*

⁵ **But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV)**

4. *To one degree or another this is the work of every true believer, women are not pastors, but they have a ministry, at the very least to their families –*
³ **the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—⁴ that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Titus 2:3–5 (NKJV)**

Consider how Hannah prayed for and received a son, Samuel, whom she gave to the Lord’s service –

¹¹ **Then she made a vow and said, “O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.” 1 Samuel 1:11 (NKJV)**

III. This leads naturally to Jesus’ next order to make Disciples ...

... and make disciples of all the nations, ...

1. *“Make disciples” something we can do, a disciple is a learner.*
2. *Just being a disciple does not mean a person is “born again” –*

⁶⁶ **From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. John 6:66 (NKJV)**

3. *What we as human beings do, and what God does are clarified in Scripture –*

⁵ **Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. ⁷ So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. 1 Corinthians 3:5–7 (NKJV)**

4. *Disciple making can start before a baby is born – Luke 1:15 & 1:41-44*

5. *We make disciples, but God gives the increase, it is the Holy Spirit that brings about the new birth –*

³ Jesus answered and said to him, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”** ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”** John 3:3–8 (NKJV)

IV. *This is why we baptize our babies, not because we know or believe they are saved or born again, but because we know they need the Savior Jesus Christ – (and we are already making them disciples when we teach them about Jesus)*

Baptism is our THIRD order here from Jesus Christ baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, :19

1. *We baptize in the Name of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit because we look up to God for salvation –*

²² **“Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other. Isaiah 45:22 (NKJV)**

2. *Both children and adults are baptized as disciples, but baptism neither saves nor proves salvation, those who are baptized still need to make their call and election sure –*

⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; ¹¹ for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5–11 (NKJV)

3. *This is a process that continues after baptism and is why we see what we do in the Book of Acts –*

³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” ⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:38–47 (NKJV)

Notice two things: (1) A profound difference (2) A continuing in learning ...

V. *These things fit with our last order from Jesus 'teach ALL His commands'*
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;... :20

1. *This is where Jesus differs from many modern American evangelists and pastors who believe a shortened or watered down presentation of the Gospel is all that is needed – a Four Spiritual Laws, the Romans Road or even a shorter tract –*
2. *I believe these are fine if they are just starting places, but Jesus says ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you;... :20*
3. *This opens the door to the question, "what are all things that Jesus commanded?"*

I think the Sermon on the Mount gives us some good answers to that question:

¹⁷ **"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees*, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:17-20**

Reading Matthew 5:17-20 show us Jesus did not throw away Old Testament Law or Commands. He kept the Law Himself, fulfilling its righteous commands. When we trust in Jesus His righteousness is imputed to us – GRACE! We are redeemed by Jesus from the curse of the law, but we have not been released from its commands.

Matthew 5:21-30 deal with "murder" and "adultery" and Jesus' standard is stricter than the Old Testament because He speaks to the heart, to anger and lust being sins. He calls us to extremes in keeping God's law, to righteousness that exceeds that of the Scribes and the Pharisees!

4. *We really need to teach the entire Bible if we want to be certain people are saved, they need to know as much as possible to make their call and election SURE –*

¹⁶ **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)**

- A. *The Good News "Gospel" is not only that we have been saved from Hell, but Jesus saves us from our sins – Matthew 1:21.*
- B. *Our salvation includes a calling, a commission, not only evangelists, missionaries and pastors, but every Christian has a part in this.*
- C. *We are all responsible for our own salvation – Philippians 2:12*
- D. *If we do that, we will also shine as lights in a dark world – Philippians 2:14*

VI. *Jesus is with us in all these things – Matthew 28:20 B and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

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