

THE CHURCH'S GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:18-20

INTRO: Open your Bibles again this week to the first book of the New Testament, the Book of Matthew. Today we will look at the last 3 verses of the last chapter. Matthew chapter 28, beginning in verse 18.

I want to preach for just a few minutes on THE CHURCH'S GREAT COMMISSION.

A "commission" is "an authoritative command; a directive" When Jesus spoke these words directly to His disciples, and indirectly to us, He was giving the church her marching orders. He was telling exactly what He expected us to do in His physical absence. The disciples took the Lord's command seriously. They went into the world and shared the Gospel of Jesus and thousands upon thousands were saved by the grace of God. Their message was so powerful and their witness so effective that their critics accused them of "turning the world upside down", Acts 17:6.

That was then, and this is now! What was given as The Great Commission has turned into what some have labeled The Great Omission. When something is "omitted", it is "left out, undone, neglected". Instead of taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth as the Lord commanded, the modern church won't even take the Gospel to the end of the street. Consider the following: 95% of all Christians have never won a soul to Christ. 80% of all Christians do not consistently witness for Christ. Less than 2% are involved in the ministry of evangelism. 71% do not give toward the financing of The Great Commission.

These statistics are sad because they reveal the true state of the modern church. We are satisfied to be saved, but we are not motivated to see others come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We are a long ways from what God intended for His church. READ WITH ME...

Matthew 28:18-20 *"Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

I want to take a fresh look at The Great Commission today. I want to share four facts from these verses that give us much needed insight into The Great Commission, Notice...

I) WE HAVE A DIVINE MANDATE: **v 19** *"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations..."* The mandate of The Great Commission is to "Go". This is a word of action! We cannot "go" if we are sitting still. We cannot "go" if we stay where we are. We cannot "go" if we do not make a move. This verb literally means "as you go". As we pass through this world we are to carry the Gospel message with us, sharing it with everyone we meet along the way. There are two ways we can do this.

A) With our Lifestyle: **Matthew 5: 13-16** *"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its savor, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. 14 You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they set it on a stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

I) WE HAVE A DIVINE MANDATE: v 19

A) With our Lifestyle: Matthew 5: 13-16 Like salt, our life should create a thirst in people for the Lord. Our joy, our peace, our differences from the world should cause them to want to know why we are like we are. Our lives should be like a great spotlight which directs its beam toward Jesus. If He is the focus of our lives, men will see Him lived out through our lives day by day!

B) With Our Lips: v 19 “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations...” We are told to “make disciples” or to instruct. We are to live the right kind of life, but we are also told to share our faith. We are to tell a lost world what Jesus did for us when He saved us and what He can do for them, if they will trust Him as we did. It is not enough to just show it, we must also say it!

Mark 16:15 “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” The word “preach” comes from a world that means “to herald”. Like a king’s herald, we are to pass through the highways and byways of life lifting our voices to declare the Gospel of grace!

The word “preach” is a present tense, active voice, imperative mood verb. The imperative means that it is a command. The active voice means that you are to be involved in carrying out this command. The present tense means that it is something we are supposed to be doing all the time.

We have a DIVINE MANDATE! Notice...

II) WE HAVE A DIVINE MESSAGE: v 20

“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.” Our message is a simple message. It is a message of hope to those hurting; of life to the dead; of peace to the tormented. Our message is called The Gospel and “it is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16) It is a message that every person in the world needs to hear. It is a message that is universal in its application. It is a message that has the potential to change every life and every eternity that falls under its power, John 1:11-12.

Our message is this: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”

Sharing this Gospel message is as easy as telling lost people what Jesus did for you and what He can do for them.

III) WE HAVE A DIVINE MISSION: v 19

He tells us that we are to “go and make disciples of all the nations”. In Mark 16:15, He says, “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” In Acts 1:8, He says, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

He us telling very clearly that our mission is to every person in the world. And that our mission field is the entire world. He may call someone from this faith family to leave this country and reach a certain people group in a different part of the world. Your mission field may be the subdivision you live in. Or He may just ask us to send our money to support those whom He has called to reach those in the world. Irregardless of what He calls us individually to do, make no mistake, ALL OF US are on Mission!

- I) WE HAVE A DIVINE MANDATE: v 19
- II) WE HAVE A DIVINE MESSAGE: v 20
- III) WE HAVE A DIVINE MISSION: v 19

Notice lastly...

IV) WE HAVE A DIVINE MENTOR: v 20 *“Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* Jesus doesn't send us into this world without any resources. He doesn't expect us to accomplish this Great Commission in our own power. Notice...

A) We Are Promised His Presence: v 20 *“And be sure of this: I am with you always...”* When you are standing there sharing the Gospel with your friend, or that family member, even a total stranger, the Lord Himself is right there with you. He will help you; enable you; embolden you and use you if you will simply obey Him and share the Gospel with others. You will never share the Gospel alone if you are a child of God!

He will help you say what you need to say when the witnessing opportunity presents itself. **Matthew 10:19-20** *“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall say: for it shall be given to you in that same moment what you speak. For it's not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks through you”*

B) We are Promised His Power: v 18 *“Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority (and power) in heaven and on earth.” He also says, Acts 1:8 “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me...”* When we are faithful to share His Gospel message, we can be confident God will use His message for His glory. He will take our feeble words and He will attach power to them. The Spirit of God will take our efforts and He will use the words we share to convict the hearts of the lost.

CONCLUSION: