

# An examining of the great commission religion essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

“ God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, day after day, right up to the end of the age.” (Matt 28: 18-20 The Message)

“ 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. “(Matt 28: 18-20 KJV)

## Introduction

The Gospel of Matthew ends Jesus meeting with His apostles in Galilee. This was a special meeting and would change the course of world history in many ways.

The meeting was foretold by Jesus in Matthew 26: 31-32 :

“ 31 Then Jesus said to them, “ You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘ I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ 32 But after I am raised up, he will go before you to Galilee.”

This meeting was announced both by an angel (Matt 28: 78) and Jesus Himself (Matt28: 10).

It was a meeting filled with mixed emotions. Some had run away and others had denied Him before His death. Now He stood before them, alive. Their reaction was to bow down in worship (Matt 28: 16-17)

I was a meeting in which Jesus gave His disciples a command that we now refer to as the great commission. Someone once said that this was seen by many Christians as the great suggestion, but it is a command that lies at the heart of the Church and from which she operates. The command ends with the beautiful promise that He would always be with them. This is not something to be ignored, but to be a constant part of the Church's functioning as well as that of every believer.

I will be looking at what makes this commission so GREAT.

## **I Great in its Authority**

To Jesus was given all authority. As the creator, He is the One who has the original right to do all things:

“ For by<sup>1</sup> him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-all things were created through him and for him. And is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1: 16-1)

What higher authority than the creator Himself to issue such a command. As our Redeemer, this authority is even more pronounced:

“ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”(Philippians2: 6-11)

Jesus has all authority both in heaven and on earth(1 Pet 1: 1-5, Eph 1: 20-23). This is the authority with which He speaks and this is the authority to which we must react. Nobody has a higher authority. No government or organization can in any way cancel His authority. There is no political system or philosophy that is above His authority. The Bible; e says that He is above all the kings of the earth (Rev 1: 5, Psa 2: 1-12; 110: 1-6)

Jesus certainly deserves our obedience to Him. He is speaking with an authority that is above this world.

While humans can be fallible, Jesus can and will deliver on His promises.

Even His promises comes with the highest authority (2 Pet 1: 2-5)

It is on the basis of such great authority that Jesus give the great commission. Not only great in authority, but also great in mission.

## **II Great in Mission**

The mission is the focus, the direction in which we must travel. It is the mission that guides our walk through life in obedience to Jesus.

We are to make disciples. The word used here is the Greek word ‘*Matheteuo*’ which is defined as to become a pupil; to disciple, i. e. enrol as scholar:–be disciple, instruct, teach. We are to make learners, adherents and imitators of Jesus Christ.

Even during His ministry on earth, Jesus was continually inviting people to become His disciples (Matt 4: 18-22; 11: 28-30). When inviting them, He expected them to become like Him :

“ A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6: 40)

Jesus tells us how to go about making disciples. He gives us not only a command, but also the way to obey that command.

Firstly by baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Baptism for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2: 38; 22: 16)

Baptism in water (Acts 8: 35-38; 10: 47-48)

A burial of the old (Rom 6: 3-6; Col 2: 11-12)

Secondly by teaching them to observe the things He taught and commanded. Baptism is only the beginning. Teaching must continue afterwards. This was the case with the early disciples (Acts 2: 41-42). Jesus

<https://assignbuster.com/an-examining-of-the-great-commission-religion-essay/>

said that both baptism and ongoing teaching is what is essential to true discipleship.

Not only great in authority, and great in mission, the great commission was also great in scope.

### **III Great in Scope**

The command was FOR ALL NATIONS. They were to go into all the world and preach to everyone (Mark 16: 15). They were to be witnesses to the utmost parts of the earth (Acts 1: 8). They were to leave no stone unturned so to speak. This was not limited to only Israel as we find in Matthew 10, but to every nation under the sun. While Israel had been the focus of God's salvation plan up to that point, now, with the work of Jesus on the cross, all nations, Jews and non Jews could become fellow heirs to the Kingdom of God (Ephesians 2: 11-22).

Jesus wants us to think globally, not just locally. While we should not ignore our local community, we should also think of those outside our own small world. As human being we have a tendency to focus on our little reality. We do not look outside of the few people we know or encounter each day, and that is where we start with the Gospel, but that is no where is should stop.

The work of salvation is available to all God's creatures. All the various nations are a part of that creation and all have the salvation work of Jesus available to them as a gift of grace.

The great commission has great authority, is great in its mission, great in its scope, and great in its promise.

## **IV Great in its Promise**

Jesus said that He will always be with us. This promise is similar to the one He made earlier to His apostles:

“ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

(Matthew 18: 20)

It is similar to a promise He made to those who follow His commandments::

“ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. k Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “ Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “ If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” (John 14: 18-2)

It is a promise similar to the one God Gave to

Moses (Exo 3: 11-12)

Joshua (Josh 1: 5)

The nation of Israel (Isa 41: 10)

It is a promise that provides comfort, especially in times of oppression (Rom 8: 31-38; Heb 13: 5-6)

This promise is also to the end of time. It extends even to when the great harvest will occur (Matt 13: 39-43).

Throughout the Christian age, Jesus will forever be with His disciples as they go into all the world making disciples. Through the Holy Spirit, we receive the necessary gifts to not only encourage each other, but also to enable us to put the great commission into action.

## **V Conclusion**

The great commission is not only limited to the apostles. It is important to note that the disciples were to 'observe all things that I commanded you'. The disciples were also to observe this command along with all the other teachings of Jesus. The command does not stop with the original disciples, but carries on until the end of time.

The great commission is a commission for the Church as well.

The question is whether we are honoring the great commission in our lives today. There are some things we can do to check if we are:

Are we submitting to the authority of Jesus?

Are we working, in whatever capacity to make disciples of Jesus?

Are we striving to make disciples in all the nations of the world?

Are we abiding in His words and thereby making sure His abiding presence is in our lives?



Shortly after Jesus gave the great commission, Jesus ascended into heaven. His earlier disciples took that commission and as a result did great things with it.

As a final word I would like to add a poem written by Greg Steir, which puts the focus of our responsibility for the great commission into focus:

## **Don't Bother Me**

Don't bother me with souls to save.

I have my own agenda.

There's work to do, sports to play,

Important things to attend to.

Don't bother me with that little girl,

The girl playing in the street.

She's much too young to understand

The Saviour she could meet

Don't bother me with my friend at work.

He's got his own religion.

I don't have time to change his mind.

He'll make his own decision.

Don't bother me with the distant sounds I hear,

The sound of people screaming.

Although I wonder who they are.

Who are these victims shrieking?

Don't bother me with who they are.

I really don't want the blame.

For it's the little girl and my friend at work

Who from hell scream out my name....

But don't bother me.