

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

WHAT IS THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Great Commission is Jesus' final instructions to the church before he left earth, it is the expression of his heart, what he wants the church to do and be.

The Great Commission is found at Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8.

MATTHEW 28:18-20

Authority for Commission

Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18)

Commission contains command to

Go "as you are going" "as we go about our everyday lives" (Matt 28:19)

Make disciples - one who personally knows Christ and does his will (Matt 28:19)

How - By baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19)

- By teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you (Matt 28:20)

Where was this to take place?

All nations, all people, all tribes (Matt 28:19)

What other promises are included

Jesus will be with us to the end of the age (Matt 28:20)

MARK 16:15-18

Commission contains command to

Go (Mark 16:15)

Proclaim the Gospel (Mark 16:15)

What Gospel - The Gospel of God (Mark 1:14)

Which is - "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15)

Where into all the world, to the whole creation (Mark 16:15)

Response of those who hear - **Whoever believes will be saved (Mark 16:16)**

The following signs shall accompany those who believe

In the name of Jesus they will cast out demons (Mark 16:17)

They will speak in new tongues (Mark 16:17)

They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover (Mark 16:18)

They will not be harmed by serpents and deadly poison (Mark 16:18) – this is a promise of divine protection

Luke 24:47-49

Command to

Proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name (Luke 24:47)

Where

All nations, beginning from Jerusalem (where you are) (Luke 24:47)

How

You are my witnesses (Luke 24:48)

Through the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49)

Clothed with power from on High (Luke 24:49)

John 20:21-23

Authority for commission

Received peace (John 20:21)

Jesus had sent them in the same way as he had been sent by Father (John 20:21)

Received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22)

Command to

Forgive others of sin (John 20:22)

ACTS 1:8

An intentional strategy – “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

Jesus told his disciples to make disciples.

A Disciple is someone who knows Jesus and does his will.

Why can we make Disciples?

Jesus has been given all authority (Matt 28:18)
Jesus has sent us (John 20:21)
We have received peace from God (John 20:21)
Our sins have been forgiven (John 20:22)
We have received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22)

Where are we to make disciples?

As we go about our everyday lives (Matt 28:19, Mark 16:15)
Everywhere – All nations, all peoples, all tribes (Matt 28:19)
All the world, all creation (Mark 16:15)
All nations, beginning from Jerusalem (where you are) (Luke 24:47)
An intentional strategy – Jerusalem, Samaria, Judea, ends of the earth (Acts 1:8)

How are we to make disciples?

By baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19)
Teaching them to observe all Jesus had commanded (Matt 28:20)
Proclaiming the Gospel (Mark 16:15)
Proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name (Luke 24:47, John 20:22)

What is the content of our message?

The Gospel of God (Mark 1:14)
Which is - “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1:15)

How are we to make disciples?

You are my witnesses (Luke 24:48)
Through the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49)
Clothed with power from on High (Luke 24:49)

What is the response of those who hear the message?

They will believe for salvation (Mark 16:16)

Assurances

Jesus will be with us as we make disciples to the end of the age (Matt 28:20)
In the name of Jesus we will cast out demons (Mark 16:17)
We will speak in new tongues (Mark 16:17)
We will lay hands on the sick and they will recover (Mark 16:18)
We will not be harmed by serpents and deadly poison (Mark 16:18) – this is a promise of divine protection

Basis of Discipleship in the Old Testament

Deut 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (ESV)

Principles

There is one God and Lord

The Israelites were to love Him with all their heart, soul and might.

These words shall be in your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children,

How - By talking of them when you sit in your house

By talking of them when you walk by the way

By talking of them when you lie down

By talking of them when you rise.

In order to be continually talking of them required the Israelites to continually focus on them

Joshua was told – The Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth

You shall meditate on it day and night

So that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it

For then you will make yourself prosperous,

And then you will have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

The Psalmist Said Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.

(Psalm 1:1-3)

In order that the Israelites might meditate on the commands of God they were told to bind them on their hands, so that they could be a frontlet for their eyes. They were also told to write them on the doorposts of their houses and on their gates.

Deut 10:12

“And now Israel what does the Lord require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord which I am commanding you today for your good.

The Lord required of Israel five things

- To Fear the Lord
- To walk in all His ways

- To love Him
- To serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul
- To keep the statutes and commandments of the Lord.

THE HEART OF NEW TESTAMENT DISCIPLESHIP

A scribe approached Jesus asking which is the greatest command of all? Jesus answered the man by stating

“The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
(Mark 12:29-31, Luke 10: 27)

The heart of New Testament discipleship is love of God, others and oneself.

The Apostle Paul’s method of discipleship was to encourage his disciples to imitate him as he imitated Christ. To imitate is to mimic.

He commanded the Corinthians to imitate him (1 Cor 4:16) as he imitated Christ (1 Cor 11:1). He encouraged the Ephesians to be imitators of God (Eph 5:1), as beloved Children, this meant that they were to walk in love, even as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us (Eph 5:2) He urged the Philippians to join in imitating him, by keeping their eyes on those who walk according to the example he had set (Phil 3:17). He commended the Thessalonians for becoming imitators of Paul, Silvanus and Timothy and of the Lord (1 Thes 1:6). The key to them being able to do this was that they had received the word in much affliction and with joy in the Holy Spirit (1 Thes 1:7). In his second letter to the Thessalonians he urges them to imitate him by not being idle, paying their own way, and being willing to toil day and night that they might not be a burden to anyone (2 Thess 3:7-9)

Similarly the writer of the letter to the Hebrews urges his readers to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises (Heb 6:12). They were to consider the way in which their leaders lived and imitate their faith (Heb 13:7). While the Apostle John urged his readers to imitate good (3 John 11)

