

## CHAPTER 10

# The Great Commission

### Why Study the Great Commission?

“This evangelistic work of declaring the Gospel is the primary ministry that the church has toward the world.”<sup>675</sup>

Can this be real? Is this statement not just hyperbole? In fact, were the final words of Jesus to His disciples a figure of speech, an overstatement to make a point?

Grudem’s generous and yet biblical viewpoint of the primacy of “declaring the Gospel” comes under continual fire from many directions. One of these directions is in the battle over the definition of the Great Commission. The ultimate or primary mission of the church is much debated and discussed.<sup>676</sup>

Perhaps the words of Peter Drucker may prove insightful here:

“A striking social phenomenon of the last 30 years in the United States, the explosive growth of the new ‘mega-churches’ (now beginning to be emulated in Europe), rests on these institutions’ dedication to a single purpose: the spiritual development of the parishioners. Just as the decline of their predecessors, the liberal Protestant churches of the early years of the 20th century, can largely be traced to their trying to accomplish too many things at the same time, above all, to their trying to be organs of social reform as well as spiritual leaders.

“The strength of the modern pluralist organization is that it is a single-purpose institution.”<sup>677</sup>

What is the churches single mission? How about Christ’s Great Commission? Is it too narrow-minded to take the advice of Peter Drucker and consider the mission that Christ gave His Church?

Note also the clarifying discussion of Mark Dever, as related to the definition of evangelism and the Great Commission:

“Evangelism is not declaring God’s political plan for the nations nor recruiting for the church—it is the declaration of the gospel to individual men and women. ...

“By far the greatest danger in apologetics is being distracted from the main message. Evangelism is not defending the virgin birth or defending the historicity of the resurrection. ...

“Evangelism is not the imposition of our ideas upon others. It is not merely personal testimony. It is not merely social action. It may not involve apologetics, and it is not the same thing as the results of evangelism. Evangelism is telling people the wonderful truth about God, the great news about Jesus Christ. When we understand this, then obedience to the call to evangelize can become certain and joyful. Understanding this increases evangelism as it moves from being a guilt-driven burden to a joyful privilege.”<sup>678</sup>

### Introduction: What’s So Great about the Great Commission?

#### or—Reasons the Great Commission Passages Communicate Christ’s Ultimate Purpose for His Church:

1. Of the place of the Great Commission in the ministry of Christ:
  - a. A commissioning is repeated in each Gospel and in Acts, after Christ’s resurrection and before His ascension
  - b. These commissionings involve the *very last words of Christ* in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and in Acts

<sup>675</sup>Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 868.

<sup>676</sup>David Bosch wrote, “The harsh realities of today compel us to re-conceive and reformulate the church’s mission, to do this boldly and imaginatively, yet also in continuity with the best of what mission has been in the past decades and centuries” (David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 8). He then spent 562 pages seeking to elucidate this subject, although he made no mention of the Medieval terms used to describe mission, as found in later in the introduction to Chapter 26. The subject is quite complex and far reaching.

<sup>677</sup>Peter Drucker, “The New Pluralism,” *Leader to Leader* (Fall 1999): 22.

<sup>678</sup>Mark Dever, *The Gospel and Personal Evangelism*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007.

- c. These commissionings involved “Christ’s resurrection proclamation”<sup>679</sup>
2. The main verbs in Matthew, “win disciples” (Matt 28:19, μαθητεύσατε),<sup>680</sup> and Mark, “preach” (Mark 16:15, κηρύξατε) are in the imperative [aorist], as is Luke’s “stay” (Luke 24:49, καθίσατε). John’s “I am sending you” (John 20:21, κάγω πέμπω ὑμᾶς) is in the present indicative active. Luke is in the aorist infinitive, literally, “to preach,” or, “shall be preached” (Luke 24:47, κηρυχθῆναι), and Acts is in the indicative future middle voice, “Ye shall be” (Acts 1:8, ἔσεσθε). All have the weight of a command of Christ.
  3. The Great Commission in Luke provides:
    - a. The climax or culmination of the Luke’s development and communication of the Evangel [e.g. my unpublished chart “A Summary Study of the Progressive Communication of the Gospel in Luke”]
    - b. The interpretation of the death and resurrection of Christ by Jesus Himself after it took place, the command for its propagation, as well as “repentance” as the preaching and the desired response to the preaching (Luke 24:46-47).
  4. The Great Commission in Acts (Acts 1:8) is the organizational theme for and focus of the book of Acts, making it the central interpretive motif for the nascent church, as well as for the church in the history of the churches.
  5. The Great Commission provides for a continuation of Jesus’ evangelism ministry in Luke: cf. Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:6 (note context, 9:18-22); 10:1ff.; 20:1 (compare verbs in Acts 5:42)
  6. The Great Commission is contained in summary statements discussing Jesus’ ministry in Acts: Acts 1:1-4; 9:15-16; 10:42; 13:31-32 (cf. Matt 10:27)
  7. Centrality of the Great Commission in the Organization of Luke-Acts: Acts 1:1-8 (English ASV):
    - v 1 Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποιησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὦ Θεοφιλε, ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν,  
In the former treatise I made [concerning all], O Theophilus, [ ] that Jesus begin both to do and to teach,
    - v 2 ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου οὓς ἐξελέξατο ἀνελήμφθη.  
until [after] the day in which [ ] **he had given commandment** through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen, [he was received up]:

ἐντειλάμενος (vramnms) is a unique form of the verb ἐντέλλομαι (cf. Acts 13:47). Note that Acts 15:24, διεστειλάμεθα (viamlpp) “to whom we gave no command” or “instruction,” uses a different prepositional prefix, δια (most versions translate this verb in the singular). Acts 18:2; 20:13; 23:31 use διατάσσω [Byz of 18:2, τάσσω], meaning command, order, give instructions, arrange.

The same term for giving commandment is used in the OT Septuagint for:

    - 1) God giving commandment to Moses as to when to speak and what to say to the people of Israel, Deut 1:3
    - 2) Moses gave commandment to the judges, Deut 1:16
    - 3) Moses gave commandment to the people concerning all that they were to do, Deut 1:18
    - 4) God gave commandment as to where to go Deut 1:19; 2:4; which Moses obeyed, Deut 1:19; and which the people obeyed, Deut 2:37

<sup>679</sup>H. N. Ridderbos, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 553; quoted in Danny Vance, A Crucial Missing Link in Local Church Evangelism in the Twenty-First Century”; D.Min. dissertation, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (2007), 26.

<sup>680</sup>I must give credit to Samuel Zwemer for preceding me in coining the term “win disciples,” which I gleaned from the following quote: “It is time that protest be made against the misuse of the word evangelism. It has only one etymological, New Testament, historical and theological connotation, namely, to tell the good news of One who came to earth to die on the cross for us: who rose again and who ever lives to intercede for those who repent and believe the Gospel. To evangelize is to win disciples, to become fishers of men, to carry the Gospel message directly to all nations” (Samuel Zwemer, *Evangelism Today: Message not Method*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. [New York: Revell, 1944], 17). It must also be noted that it is found in the NIV’s translation of Acts 14:21, “They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples.”

- 5) The people of Israel disobeyed the clear command of God, Deut 1:41
- 6) Moses commanded the people to take the land which the Lord God was giving them, Deut 3:18
- 7) Moses gave commandment to Joshua, Deut 3:21

The Greek word ἐντέλλομαι is used 86 times in Deuteronomy, 375 times in the OT LXX, 15 times in the NT, for a total of 390 times in Holy Writ.

### Comparing Translations of ἐντέλλομαι

Verses	King James Version (1611, 1769)	New American Standard Bible (1977)	New International Bible (1984)	New Jerusalem Bible (1985)	ABS' Contemporary English Version (1991)
Deut 3:18	And I commanded you at that time	Then I commanded you at that time	I commanded you at that time	I then gave you this order	At that time I told the men of Reuben, Gad, and East Mannaseh
Deut 3:21	And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying	And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying	At that time I commanded Joshua	I then gave Joshua this order	Then I told Joshua
Deut 3:28	But charge Joshua	But charge Joshua	But commission Joshua	Give Joshua your instructions	...and tell him what he must do
Acts 1:2	Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen	until the day when He was taken up, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen	until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen	until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven	until he was taken up to heaven. But before he was taken up, he gave orders to the apostles he had chosen with the help of the Holy Spirit
Acts 13:47	For so hath the Lord commanded us	For thus the Lord has commanded us	For this is what the Lord has commanded us	For this is what the Lord commanded us to do when he said	The Lord has given us this command

Regardless of the order of the phrases in Acts 1:2, Christ gave His church one clear command (commission) before He ascended into heaven, that is the “Great Commission”!

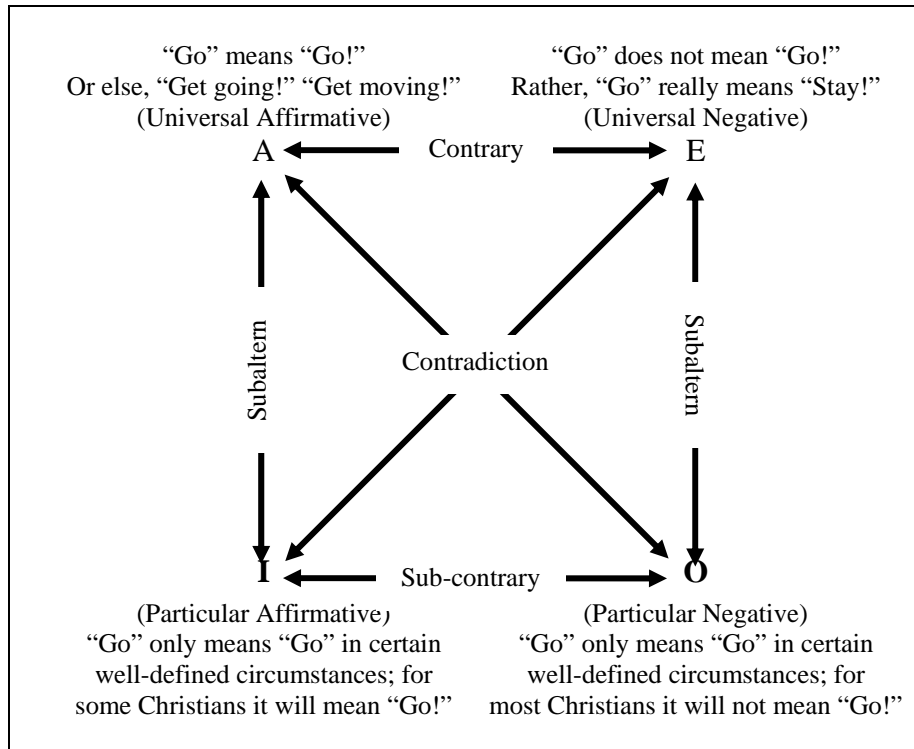
- v 3 οἷς καὶ παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις, δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα ὄπτανόμενος αὐτοῖς καὶ λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ.  
To whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God:
- v 4 καὶ συναλιζόμενος παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων μὴ χωρίζεσθαι ἀλλὰ περιμένειν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς ἣν ἠκούσατέ μου,  
and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, *said he*, ye heard from me:
- v 5 ὅτι Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὕδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἀγίῳ οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας.  
For John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.
- v 6 Οἱ μὲν οὖν συνελθόντες ἠρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες· κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ;  
They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?
- v 7 εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς· οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστὶν γινῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ,  
And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within His own authority.
- v 8 ἀλλὰ λήψεσθε δύναμιν ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ ἔσεσθέ μου μάρτυρες ἐν τῇ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ [ἐν] πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.  
But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

7. Conclusion: So what's so great about the Great Commission?
  - a. Because of its potential weight as the Central Interpretive Motif (CIM) of the New Testament church, the Great Commission forms the hermeneutical grid by which all other passages in the New Testament ought to be interpreted (!)
  - b. For example, consider the statements:
    - 1) What is more important for the Great Commission, evangelism or discipleship?
      - a) Does a certain reading of Matthew 28's Great Commission really overturn the weight of the Commissioning in Mark, Luke, and Acts?
      - b) Does the reading of Matthew 28 as "m-m-m-make disciples" really overturn the entire example of the ministry of the church as found in the Book of Acts?
      - c) In other words, do 2 of the 4 uses in the New Testament of μαθητεύω (for make of win disciples) eclipse the weight of its other two uses, as well as that of the 55 uses of the verb εὐαγγελίζω (meaning evangelize)?
    - 2) Should the main focus of the church's mission be to "seek and to save them that are lost"?
    - 3) Should not rather the main focus of the church be "teaching them to obey"?
    - 4) And is not "teaching to obey" not merely leading people to practice spiritual disciplines, of which evangelism is one of several?
    - 5) Is it not, however, human-centered to think that we ought to "reproduce ourselves in other people's lives"?
      - a) What about "Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col 1:27)?
      - b) What about "that they may know you, ... and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3)?
    - 6) Is it right to be seeking to pour ourselves into the lives of others?
      - a) Does not the Word of God transform lives (John 17:8), and does not the Word of God penetrate much more deeply than my life ever can or ever will (Heb 4:12-13)?
  - c. Yes, because the Great Commission becomes a hermeneutical grid, not only for the interpretation of the Bible and theology, but also for the formulation of local church ministry and practice, it is essential that it be understood biblically!
    - 1) A discussion of the Great Commission is not a secondary issue;
    - 2) It is the life-blood of a Great Commission church, a New Testament church;
    - 3) Whether we realize it or not, everything else flows our understanding of Christ's Great Commission given to His Church!

### **Preliminary Issues in a Study of the Great Commission:**

1. **Lifestyle or initiative?**
  - a. Does "Go" in the Great Commission really mean "Go"?
    - 1) Is not "Go" (in Matthew 28:19) a participle, which really means "Going"?
    - 2) Cannot "Going" also be translated "As you go" or "while you go"? Or...
    - 3) "As you go [on your way]" or similarly,
    - 4) "While you go [your own way]", or in other words,
    - 5) "[No need to] go out of [your own way]", therefore,
    - 6) "[No need to] go" or
    - 7) "[Why don't you just] stay [where you are and live for the Lord]"?
      - a) In other words, no need to "Go" or change anything, just do what you are already doing; and/or
      - b) No need to "Go," just do what you are already doing, but now do it "to the glory of God";

- 8) In fact, could it not be that for most disciples, Jesus did not really mean “Go” when He said “Go” in Matthew 28, He really meant “Stay!”:
- 9) In fact, is not teaching that “Go” means “Go” really misrepresenting the meaning of what Jesus was teaching?
- Is not emphasizing “Go,” therefore, unnecessarily putting guilt trips on unsuspecting Christians, to whom Jesus never meant to say “Go!”?
  - In fact, did not Jesus specifically state that the disciples were to remain “in the world”?
    - John 17:11, “And I am no more in the world; and *yet* they themselves are in the world”
    - John 17:15, “I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world”
 [By the way: these are purposeful partial quotes of verses, which omit the evangelistic context, to show how some make this point!]
- 10) In fact, proceeds this argumentation, we ascertain [from conjecture] from the Beatitudes of Jesus, the Golden Rule, and the Greatest Commandment, that Jesus never mean “Go” when He said “Go!” in the Great Commission!
- 11) Those who continue to teach “Go!” are unnecessarily literalistic, emphasizing the need for mission trips, and the initiating of evangelistic conversations, rather than interpreting the Bible through:
- Modern psychological and sociological categories
  - The categories of ancient philosophy or Greek Stoicism, or
  - The contemporary teachings of Madison Avenue and the *Harvard Business Review*!
- 12) Notice that just described is a [not so] sneaky walk around logic’s “Square of Opposition”:



- 13) Note also that this progression shows a fairly common “logical” way in which the concept “Go” can be completely reversed and made to mean “Stay”!
- However, the “sending passages” of Matt 10, Mark 6, and Luke 9 and 10 cannot be equated with an “as you go” type of interpretation
  - Thereby, those same sending passages are rarely even considered as foundational for evangelism training today!

## b. What of the example of Abraham?

Heb 11:8, “By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.”

1) Interestingly, the 1910 French Louis Segond translated the word “when he was called” as “at his vocation” (from the Latin Vulgate’s “qui vocatur”), strongly suggesting that Jerome’s Vulgate framed the concept of “go” in this verse as directed only for priests and monks, not for laity!

- a) Which, by the way, conforms with Rome’s theology of the Sacrament of Holy Orders
- b) Which is an example of view of the Great Commission forcing a translation or interpretation!

2) Cambridge’s Bible in Basic English (1949/1962) set a similar clerical-only precedent in the translation of this word, using the word “ordered”:

Heb 11:8, “By faith Abraham did as God said when he was ordered to go out into a place which was to be given to him as a heritage, and went out without knowledge of where he was going”

3) However, almost all translations translate *καλέω* in this verse as “called” which does not limit the interpretation of the verse to clergy only

## c. “Onward, Christian Soldiers!”

- 1) Does not the term “Onward” express the same thought as “Go”
- 2) “Go” seems to emphasize geographic displacement, whereas “Onward” seems to emphasize “get moving!”
- 3) The geographic aspect of the Great Commission command is obvious, and for those who are not crossing oceans and seas, they cannot be static, but must move onward to fulfill Christ’s Great Commission!

d. As noted above, has not some recent lifestyle literature in evangelism resulted in a serious downgrade of the biblical concept of “Go”?

2. **Itinerating or not?**

a. Can New Testament evangelism be accomplished within the four walls of the church alone?

b. What of the examples in the ministry of Jesus of:

- 1) His itinerant ministry?
- 2) His lack of willingness to stay in one location, even when asked?
- 3) His sending His disciples to go from “city to city”?

c. What does “going” mean in the context of 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity?

d. Are we guilty of ignoring a clear element of New Testament evangelism, that is found both in the Gospels, as well as in the Book of Acts, because it is inconvenient, or does not follow our current way of thinking? Note the words of Barrett on the term *evangelize*:

“To evangelize either individual or substantial population is not necessarily gradual, indefinite, lengthy, protracted, or interminable process: it is usually or normally a short definite accomplishment, completed over a relatively short, definite period of time.”<sup>681</sup>

e. Ought we not to regularly gauge our lives and ministries by the Bible, and reorient them as necessary?

f. What does the clear itinerating element in NT evangelism mean for what Joe Aldrich called “ambushes and forays”?<sup>682</sup>

g. What of our tendency to send people on non-evangelistic mission trips to repair churches and orphanages? Is this tendency in line with the NT mission trips in Matt 9, Mark 6, Luke 9, and Luke 10, or the examples in the Book of Acts?

<sup>681</sup>David B. Barrett, *Evangelize! A Historical Survey of the Concept* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1987), 13.

<sup>682</sup>Joseph Aldrich, *Life-Style Evangelism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1981), 79.

### 3. **Mission or Missions?**

- a. An undercurrent in this discussion is the question of the validity of use of the term “missions” (plural), rather than “mission” (singular)
- b. “Missions” (plural) has a tendency to view evangelism as a temporal task, much like when Jesus sent out his disciples in Matt 10, Mark 6, and Luke 9, 10. You go, preach, and come back.
- c. “Mission,” however, is much more broad than mere missionary trips, it implies lifestyle, a wholistic view of discipleship and both the life of the “evangelist” and those he is seeking to reach
- d. Again one’s use of these words has an important impact on one’s view and application of the Great Commission, to which this chapter is devoted!

### 4. **Do not some verses state specifically not to evangelize [as rightly or wrongly interpreted]?**

#### a. By way of principle:

- (1) Matt 6:1, “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men”
  - (a) Does this relate to evangelism? No.
  - (b) Unless we are peddling the word, 2 Cor 2:17
  - (c) Or unless we are preaching ourselves, 2 Cor 4:5
- (2) Matt 7:6, “Do not throw pearls to swine”
  - (a) Does this not relate to evangelism without shaking the dust off of our feet when the Word is rejected?
  - (b) Once the message has been rejected, via blasphemy and contradiction, then the admonition is to “move on” to someone else
- (3) Matt 13:30, “Allow both to grow together”
  - (a) An African once used this verse of Muslims: “Let them be! Don’t even try to evangelize them, God will divide the wheat and the tares at the time of harvest”
  - (b) His interpretation, however, seems unrelated to the text, as it would seem from the passage that Jesus is speaking not of Muslims, who do not call Jesus, “Lord,” but of false Christians (the tares among the wheat), similar to those who say “Lord, Lord” in Matt 7:21-23
- (4) 1 Thess 4:10b-12, “But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you; so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need”
  - (a) These verses were used by the French and German Reformers against the door-to-door begging of some of the monastic orders
  - (b) Likewise, these verses became important to Mennonite, Hutterite, and Amish groups, who value hard work, and sometimes [contemporaneously] seem to devalue evangelism
  - (c) Paul combined the two ideas (evangelism and working with his hands) in Acts 20, speaking of working with his own hands (20:23-25), as well as his ministering the gospel (20:18-27)—“night and day,” 20:31!
  - (d) Because of verse like these, some Swiss Brethren churches will not pay a pastor, but rather will be led by a teaching elder, who earns an income in some other way
- (5) Heb 8:11, “And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, And everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ For all shall know Me, From the least to the greatest of them”
  - (a) The eschatological context of this quote from Jeremiah 31:34, while clearly referring to the new covenant, does not make evangelism unnecessary in the new covenant
  - (b) The key words are “everyone his brother,” which seems to imply that within the family of God, He will make Himself known
- (6) James 3:1, “Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment”
  - (a) Again, this passage seems unrelated to evangelism; it is a warning for the fulfillment of a command (or obedience in the use of the gift of teaching)

- (b) Obedience to the command to evangelize must be obeyed, while remembering that we will be responsible for what we do teach
- (7) 1 Pet 3:1, “That they may be won without a word”
  - (a) Again, using this passage to say that evangelism is non-verbal is misinterpreting the verse (isogesis), and using it to negate a clear command
  - (b) The command is for the verbal proclamation of the Gospel, and is unrelated to what God may use in the life of any person to draw them to Christ
  - (c) The text of 1 Peter 3 implies that the unsaved husband has already heard the Gospel, the seed has already been planted, now God will use the quiet witness and submission of the believing wife to draw her husband, according to His will (1 Cor 7:16)
- b. Specific contexts in which some are commanded not to evangelize or to wait:
  - (1) Matt 10:5, “These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them, saying, ‘Do not go in *the* way of *the* Gentiles, and do not enter *any* city of the Samaritans’”
  - (2) Luke 24:49, “And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”
  - (3) Acts 16:6-7, “And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them.”
- c. In this light, Chart 7, “Alternatives to Mere Proclamation,” in my *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman, 2007), lists 57 [possible] arguments against mere proclamation into the following categories:
  - 1) Biblically-derived (10 cited reasons)
  - 2) Non-biblical (7 reasons)
  - 3) Ecclesiological (9 reasons)
  - 4) Sacramental (4 reasons)
  - 5) Good works (9 reasons)
  - 6) Miracles (5 reasons)
  - 7) Attitude (3 reasons)
  - 8) Spiritual maturity (10 reasons)
 None of which (I believe) displace the priority of the Great Commission as the command to evangelize.

Some questions:

- 1) How are we to understand these verses in light of the Great Commission passages and emphases in the Bible?
- 2) Do they provide parameters for the accomplishment of the Great Commission, or do they completely negate the weight and thrust of the Great Commission passages?
- 3) Can both sets of commands or teachings be understood simultaneously (the unity of Scriptures as one voice of the Holy Spirit)?

## 5. Punctiliar or Linear Action?

- a. How much linear action can be attributed to μαθητεύω [make/win disciples] in Matt 28 (which verb is in the aorist tense, by the way) to counter the punctiliar action of κηρύσσω [preach] in Mark 16 and Luke 24 or μαρτυρέω [bear witness] in Luke 24 or Acts 1?
- b. How does the Acts 1:2 translation of the participle ἐντέλλομαι (aor-mid-nom-masc-sing) into a plural form impact this question?
  - 1) Plural in the English (as an equivocating colloquialism):
    - a) KJV, “after that he ... had given commandments”
    - b) Bible in Basic English (1949/1964), “after he had given his orders”
    - c) NAS, “after he had ... given orders”
    - d) NKJ, “after He ... had given commandments”
    - e) NIV, “after giving instructions”
    - f) ESV, “after he had given commands”
    - g) NLT, “after giving his chosen apostles further instructions”

- h) HCS, “after giving instructions”
  - i) NET, “after he had given orders”
- 2) Singular in the English:
    - a) Darby (1884/1890), “having ... charged [the apostles]”
    - b) ASV, “had given commandment”
    - c) RSV, “after he had given commandment”
  - 3) As an active verb:
    - a) James Murdock (1852), “after he had instructed those legates”
  - 4) Some thoughts:
    - a) Issue regards how many commandments Christ gave His disciples: was it one (hence the Great Commission), or many?
    - b) If “giving instructions” in Acts 1:2 parallels Acts 10, is the emphasis of the Great Commission sowing or reaping? ...
- c. If the emphasis of the Great Commission is punctiliar, is that emphasis on sowing, reaping, or growing?

### Is the Emphasis of the Great Commission Sowing, Reaping, or Growing?

[John 4:37, “For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows, and another reaps.’”]

Passage	Matt 28:19-20	Mark 16	Luke 24:47	John 20:21	Acts 1:8
Active Verb	“Win disciples” or “Make disciples”	“Preach the gospel”	“Repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed”	“As the Father has sent Me, I also send you”	“You shall be testifiers of Me”
Emphasis	“Win”—Reaping or “Make”—Reaping or Growing	Sowing	Sowing	Sowing, reaping, and growing	Sowing

## 6. Exclusively Spiritual or Not?

- a. What of the “as” (Gk. καθὼς) in John 20:21? What is its significance? There seems to be considerable leeway taken in using the “as” to apply to multiple aspects of the Christian life: For example: the following exemplifies how John 20:21 was applied to the Trinitarian theology of mission of the Orthodox Bishop Anastasios (Yannoulatos) of Androussa, Greece:

“The conjunction ‘as’ which is found in John 20:21, remains very decisive for Orthodox mission. It is I who always remain your model, Christ stresses. You must walk in my footsteps and follow my example. Christological dogma defines the way of the mission of the Trinitarian God, which the faithful continue. The most crucial point of mission is not what one announces, but what one lives, what one *is*.”<sup>683</sup>

- a) Notice that the “as” in John 20:21 is used to state that “the crucial point of mission is not what one announces”! What of Luke’s Great Commission, Luke 24:46-47?
- b) Rather, as Anastasios posited, the “as” in John 20:21 shows that our lifestyle is the crucial point in mission. Does this match with a plenary view of the Great Commission?

So then, does the “as” in John 20:21 carry such hermeneutical weight that it can completely overturn:

- 1) The clear proclamational/conversionist emphasis of all the other Great Commission passages?
- 2) The plenary example of the book of Acts?
- 3) The theological weight of justification by faith in Romans?

<sup>683</sup>Anastasios (Yannoulatos) of Androussa, “Orthodox Mission—Past, Present, Future,” in *Your Will Be Done: Orthodoxy in Mission*, edited by George Lemopoulos (Geneva: WCC, 1988), 79-81; quoted in Norman E. Thomas, ed., *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995), 120.

- 4) And provide for non-spiritual elements in the Great Commission, such as:
    - a) The founding of educational institutions,
    - b) Encouraging political agendas,
    - c) Commanding Christians to feed the hungry,
    - d) Emphasizing lifestyle, such as the ancient monastic vows of poverty (Jesus was poor), chastity (Jesus never was married), and obedience (Jesus was absolutely obedient to the Father)?
  - 5) Thereby inserting multitudinous non-Evangelical elements into the theology of the “true” mission of the church?
  - b. How flexible is “win disciples” (μαθητεύω) in Matt 28:19 as regards non-spiritual elements of the Gospel, such as:
    - 1) Founding Christian day cares for children?
    - 2) Founding educational institutions?
    - 3) Providing for pastoral counseling, etc.?

[Granted this emphasis for those who are already disciples is included in the “teaching them to obey” of Matt 28:20]
- 7. Dispensational/Hermeneutical Questions:**
- a. Does the OT teach “come” (centripetal) and the NT teach “go” (centrifugal)?
  - b. Does the OT teach lifestyle (Lev 18:5) and the NT teach proclamation (Mark 16:15)?
  - c. Does the OT teach works (lifestyle) and the NT teach faith alone (as a response to proclamation)?
  - d. Interestingly from the perspective of the OT:
    - 1) The scattering into all the world, commanded in the Great Commission, is mentioned as a curse in the OT (Deut 28:64; 30:3-5), and so is being driven to all the peoples (Deut 28:37; cf. Jer 8:3), even to the ends of the earth (Deut 30:4).
    - 2) And the gathering together into the land, and possessing it (remaining stationary for a long time), is repeatedly mentioned as a blessing, Deut 17:20; 30:1-5; cf. Psalms 106:47
    - 3) And yet Christ commanded this geographic scattering as part of His Great Commission!
- 8. Particularity versus Universality:**
- a. To whom is the Great Commission addressed and under what circumstances (e.g. the Apostles, pastors, missionaries, or all Christians)?
  - b. Is the Great Commission confined to unreached areas only (prior to an established church, as Gustav Warneck)?
  - c. Was the Great Commission only meant for Apostolic Christianity or the Apostolic era?
  - d. Are the lost to “be disciplined,” or is this a term that can only be applied to the saved?
- 9. Was Not Jesus Really Setting up His Disciples for Failure [in the world’s eyes]? (see Matt 10:9-10; Deut 28:):**
- a. Jesus’ approach seems to be the opposite of “How to Win Friends and Influence Others”!
    - 1) He sent them as traveling evangelists, always strangers wherever they went:
      - a) Meaning that they may not know the local dialect, likely spoke with an accent, and may not even have known the language at all (cf. Acts 14:11):
        - (1) Granted in Matthew 10 they were sent to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 10:6)
        - (2) But was this limitation not lifted in Matthew 28:19-20?
      - b) Meaning that they had no reputation, no political clout, no building, no house, no property—no “presence” (Deut 28:37)
    - 2) He sent them with no money or moneybelt:
      - a) Does not Proverbs 14:20 state: “The poor is hated even by his neighbor, But those who love the rich are many”?
      - b) They could not serve the poor or disenfranchised, because that was what they themselves were!

- c) Meaning they could not even pay for a hotel room!
  - d) Meaning that they did not have social clout or the stature of wealth, but they came on the basis of their message alone
- 3) He sent them with no change of clothes:
- a) Meaning that they needed to be served by those whom they reached out to, even more than housing, but also for the washing of clothes
  - b) Meaning that they dressed as the Lord would provide through those whom He foreordained to provide clothing for them
  - c) Meaning no clerical collar, no monastic robes, and no special haircut (a tonsure)!
  - d) Meaning also that sometimes they had no place to lay their heads, just as Jesus (Matt 8:20; Luke 9:58)
- 4) Without even food:
- a) Meaning that multiple times during the day they were needy for food, or else they went without food (Deut 28:47-48; 1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 11:27)
  - b) Meaning that they were completely dependent on God for food, even as Elijah (1 Kings 17:8-16; 19:5-8) and Jesus (during His temptation, as a temptation!)
  - c) Even though they were grateful to the Lord (Deut 28:47-48; Phil 4:4, 11-12)
- b. However, it seems like Jesus was giving a recipe for truly indigenous evangelism ministry!
- 1) Notice how the ministry would become almost immediately indigenous:
    - a) Eat their food
    - b) Sleep in their homes!
    - c) Wear their clothes
  - 2) It sounds like effective methods of evangelism in the history of the churches:
    - a) 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Century “Poor Men of Lyons,” the Medieval Hermits, the Beghards, the Albigensian and Waldensian preachers,
    - b) 17<sup>th</sup> Century French desert church evangelist and preacher Claude Brousson
    - c) 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Baptist Preachers and Methodist Circuit Riders
    - d) 19<sup>th</sup> Century missionaries (e.g. J. Hudson Taylor)
  - 3) Does this not sound like Book of Acts evangelism?
- c. Notice also some other considerations as to obedience in these commands:
- 1) There is no financial overhead and very little if any administrative time or cost (buildings, salaries, budgets, organization, etc.) in this type of evangelism ministry
  - 2) Everything and everyone is involved in front-line ministry:
    - a) Likewise, there is very little hierarchy in such a ministry, even leaders are involved in the same ministry as all the others
    - b) Notice that Jesus sent out His disciples to do what He himself had been doing (Matt 9:35), and what He Himself continued to do (Matt 11:1), in other words, He did not graduate from a ministry of itinerant evangelism to a desk job!
  - 3) Perhaps these factors are why this type of evangelism is so easy to whitewash from the pages of history, there is very little physical trace of their existence:
    - a) Whereas the massive territorial churches, with their buildings, budgets, influence, affluence, and hierarchy, would be and are remembered in the annals of history
    - b) Those obedient to Christ’s commissioning would barely be noticed, much like the ministries of Isabeau and Pintarde mentioned at the end of Chapter 2
    - c) By the way, the same is also true of house church movements
  - 4) Why would Jesus have wanted it so? Are there lessons to be taken away from such a commissioning?

10. See *My Charts for a Theology of Evangelism*.<sup>684</sup>

a. Competition for the Main Idea

---

<sup>684</sup>Johnston, *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman, 2007).

- b. Verbs for Great Commission Methodology
- c. Twelve approaches to the Great Commission, the Christian Life, and Holy Living
- d. What is commanded in the Great Commission?

## In the Great Commission, the Christian Is Commanded to Evangelize!<sup>685</sup>

### 1. The Great Commission:

- a. The five passages:
  - 1) “Win disciples,” Matt 28:18-20: going; [winning]; baptizing; teaching.
  - 2) “Go... and preach the Gospel,” Mark 16:15 ff.
  - 3) “Repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name,” Luke 24:46-49
  - 4) “As the Father has sent Me, so send I you,” John 20:21<sup>686</sup>
  - 5) “And you will be My testifiers,” Acts 1:8
- b. To whom are the Great Commission passages addressed?
  - 1) The audience in context, the 12 disciples, 120 (Acts 1:15), or the 500 (1 Cor 15:6)
  - 2) This is a command to all followers of Jesus:
    - a) Following the use of the word disciple, Matt 28:19-20 >> Mark 1:17, 15:16, for disciple speaks of all followers of Jesus Christ.
    - b) This is a command of Christ, and obedience to Christ’s commands is not an option for the believer, John 14:21, 15:14, 1 John 2:3-6 (or “keeping His word,” John 17:6).
  - 3) The Great Commission is binding as a command on **all** Christians<sup>687</sup>
    - a) Herein Evangelicals stand in sharp contrast to Rome, who requires that they discover, approve, appoint, and oversee all who preach the Gospel;<sup>688</sup> likewise, the same is true

---

<sup>685</sup>Mark Liederbach seemed to downgrade this motivation, by categorizing it as “deontological”: “The second type of motivation that I will evaluate is the idea that all Christians should do evangelism because we are commanded to do it. ... This form of motivation is what an ethicist would call deontological. The emphasis here is on duty, obedience to command, or rule keeping. Deontology maintains that proper moral behavior is determined by focusing on the nature of the act itself. The value of the activity, then, has little to do with motive, results, even the character of the one performing the action. Rather, the value of the activity in question is determined solely by the inherent ‘rightness’ or ‘wrongness’ of the thing done or left undone. ... From the deontological point of view, evangelism is right because God commanded it. Thus, because we are commanded by Christ to go to the world, we should go and evangelize. ... Only when the command to evangelize is tied to the person and worship of God [where is Christ?] will knowledge of what we ought to be [be] transformed into a part of the ‘art of living well’ that Bavinck refers to and which we long for it to be” (Mark D. Liederbach, “Ethical Evaluation of Modern Motivations for Evangelism,” 5, 7).

<sup>686</sup>Other passages in John are sometimes cited as Great Commission passages, such as John 15:26-27, “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is* the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, and you *will* bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” While this passage is remarkably similar to Acts 1:8, it was not given during a post-resurrection appearance of Jesus.

<sup>687</sup>Clearly the Great Commission passages are meant for all Christians, not solely for those who may have “the gift of evangelism.” In fact, all of the general commands, analogies, and metaphors of Scripture regarding evangelism are inclusive of all Christians. Donald A. Carson speaking of Matthew 28:19-20 concluded that, “Either way it is binding on *all* Jesus’ disciples to make others what they themselves are—disciples of Christ.” [italics his] Donald A. Carson, “Matthew”, *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E., Gaebelien ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984, Vol. 8, 596; see also Roland Q. Leavell, *Evangelism: Christ’s Imperative Commission*, rev ed. (Nashville: Broadman, 1979) and John Ed Mathison, “How Does a Church Develop a Heart and a Vision for Evangelism?” *Decision Magazine* (April 1989), 29, 38.

<sup>688</sup>“875 ‘How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?’ No one—no individual and no community—can proclaim the Gospel to himself [a veiled reference to 2 Cor 4:5 in reference to those who do not preach Rome’s way of salvation]: ‘Faith comes from what is heard.’ No one can give himself the mandate and the mission to proclaim the Gospel [another reference to Evangelicals]. The one sent by the Lord [e.g. Christ or his supposed ‘Vicar’ the Pope] does not speak and act on his own authority; not as the member of the community, but speaking to it in the name of Christ. No one can bestow grace on himself; it must be given and offered. This fact presupposes ministers of grace [ministers of the sacraments], authorized and empowered by Christ [and his ‘Vicar’ on earth]. From him, they receive the mission and faculty (‘the sacred power’) to act *in persona Christi Capitis* [‘in the person of headship Christ’?]. The ministry which Christ’s emissaries do and give by God’s grace what they cannot do and give by their own powers, is called a

for the official teaching of the Church of England, whose “39 Articles” forbid public preaching [evangelizing] by anyone who has not been given “public authority” to do such (i.e. been ordained by the Church of England).<sup>689</sup>

## 2. UNPACKING THE GREAT COMMISSION PASSAGES:

a. An evaluation of the emphases in each Great Commission Passage:

### MATTHEW

- 1) **Matthew** emphasizes winning and teaching disciples with the use of μαθητεύω as the main verb, and three participles modifying the command to “win/make disciples”: going, baptizing/immersing, and teaching:
  - a) “Of all nations” in Matt 28:19:
    - (1) The implication of a plain reading of the text may be that “all nations” can be or will be “discipled” or “taught” in a universalist or triumphalist sense
    - (2) However, other Scriptures, such as Matt 7:13-14 and 1 Cor 9:22, show us that this was not the implication of Jesus
    - (3) Perhaps a better interpretation of the accusative (πάντα) may be: “from among all nations,” or “out of all nations,” clearly showing that individuals are being snatched out from among all nations (as in [ἐκ πάσης] in Rev 5:9, “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation”):
 

“And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with Thy blood *men* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them *to be* a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.’”

(a) The *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998) translated Matt 28:19 with this particularist emphasis:

“Therefore, go and make people from all nations into *talmidim*, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the *Ruach HaKodesh*, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember! I will be with you always, yes, even until the end of the age.”

Note the impact of the “from” instead of the “of” in most other English versions.
  - (b) See also Deut 30:3
 

“then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again **from all the peoples** [ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν] where the LORD your God has scattered you”

Again we find an “out from among” emphasis, which seems to parallel both Matt 28:19 and Rev 5:9
  - (c) Therefore a more exacting translation of Matthew 28:19 may preferably translate the accusative of πάντα as follows, “Go, [make/win] disciples from all nations...”

---

‘sacrament’ by the Church’s tradition. Indeed, the ministry of the Church is conferred by special sacrament” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ed. by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger [Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994], §875).

<sup>689</sup>“Article 23: Of Ministering in the Congregation: It is not lawful for any man to take vpon hym the office of publique preaching, or ministring the Sacramentes in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to iudge lawfully called and sent, whiche be chosen and called to this worke by men who haue publique auctoritie geuen vnto them in the congregation, to call and sende ministers into the Lordes vineyarde” (39 Articles of the Church of England [1572]; available from: <http://www.episcopalian.org/efac/1553-1572.htm>; accessed: 21 Oct 2004; Internet).

- b) “Them” in Matthew 28:19, “baptizing/immersing them,” shows:
- (1) The masculine plural “them” [αὐτοὺς] does not necessarily match with the neuter plural “all nations” [τὰ ἔθνη], especially if the point above is a correct interpretation:
    - (a) Rather, it seems to be referring to those “out of” the nations that are won as or become “disciples”, thereby referring to the particular group of those who are won as disciples
    - (b) This application of the baptized referring to a particular group also applies to the masculine plural of the “them” [αὐτοὺς] in “teaching them to keep” in v. 20
    - (c) This **particularist interpretation**, it must be remembered, may fly in the face of both:
      - [1] **Territorial churches** (Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran),
      - [2] **Non-conversionistic churches** (i.e. Liberal Protestant and Liberal Baptist, etc.), and/or
      - [3] Churches, theologians, and practitioners who believe in or practice a form of **Universalism** (most authors in Christendom)
  - (2) If “them” speaks of disciples that are won, then it only follows that they must have heard preaching:
    - (a) Is this an example of ellipsis as a figure of speech,<sup>690</sup> wherein “Go and preach” is reduced to “Go”, perhaps for greater emphasis on what is obviously lacking, and to reduce redundancy?
      - [1] To begin with:
        - [a] Matt 28:19 uses the Greek word πορεύομαι, which means “Go”
        - [2] Likewise, this exact same word is used in combination with preaching:
          - [a] “Go and preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” Matt 10:7 (translation mine)
          - [b] “Go and report to John what you hear and see,” Matt 11:4
        - [3] Also there are other uses of “Go” (πορεύομαι) in Matthew which also parallel Matthew’s Great Commission:
          - [a] “Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” Matt 10:6
          - [b] “Go and search for the one that is straying, Matt 18:12
          - [c] “Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find *there*, invite to the wedding feast,” Matt 22:9
          - [d] “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead,” Matt 28:7
        - [4] Notice also the parallel missional texts in Matthew, with both movement and mission:
          - [a] “John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” Matt 3:1-2
          - [b] “From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” Matt 4:17
          - [c] “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men,” Matt 4:19
          - [d] “And Jesus was going about [περιάγω] all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness,” Matt 9:35
          - [e] “Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out [ἐκβάλλω] workers into His harvest,” Matt 9:38
          - [f] “Behold, I send you out [ἀποστέλλω]...” Matt 10:16
          - [g] “...He departed [μεταβαίνω] from there to teach and preach in their cities, Matt 11:1
          - [h] “Behold, the sower went out [ἐξέρχομαι] to sow,” Matt 13:3

---

<sup>690</sup>“The omission of one or more words that are obviously understood but that must be supplied to make a construction grammatically complete” (*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary* [Springfield, MA: Merriam, 1977]).

- (b) Like all the examples, because there can be no faith without hearing (Rom 10:17), it is clear that preaching was an unrepeated part of Jesus' command to "Go"
- (c) Where "Go" to include an ellipsis, as conjectured and ascertained, then the construction would follow: Go – Preach – Win disciples – Baptize – Teach to obey.<sup>691</sup>
- (3) If "them" speaks of disciples that are won, then it follows that only the disciples that are won [μαθητεύω] should be baptized/immersed:
- (a) That the winning of the disciple is a completed action prior to the baptism/immersion, thereby nullifying both infant and generalistic baptism as being taught in this verse:
- [1] This **baptistic interpretation** flies in the face of all denominations and churches that baptize infants: the Eastern Orthodox, Church of Rome, Lutheran, Anglican/Episcopalian, Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc.
- (b) The issue of baptism by immersion also comes into this verse:
- [1] Immersion is the only form of baptism exemplified in the Bible:
- [a] John the Baptist baptized in the Jordan river, Matt 3:6; Mark 1:5, 9;
- [b] "After being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water," Matt 3:16
- [c] "I came baptizing in water," John 1:31, "in water"
- [d] The need for "much water," John 3:23
- [e] "They both went down into the water," Acts 8:38
- [2] Also, immersion is the only form of baptism which parallels the imagery in the NT:
- [a] "Buried with him in baptism," Rom 6:4; Col 2:12
- [b] "Passing through the sea," 1 Cor 11:1-2
- [c] "Clothed with Christ," Gal 3:27
- [3] On top of that, the Greek word βαπτίζω actually means "to immerse":
- [a] Friberg lexicon: "strictly *dip, immerse* in water"
- [b] Lidell-Scott-Jones: "*to dip in or under water*"
- [c] Thayer's: Meaning #1: "**1.** properly, *to dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge*"
- [d] Gingrich lexicon: "*dip, immerse*"
- [4] Therefore, it seems clear that the word "baptize" (which is a transliteration) should likely be translated "immerse"
- (4) If "them" in verse 19 speaks of disciples that are won, then it follows that the "them" in verse 20 refers to disciples that have been won and baptized (after believing as in Mark 16:16):
- (a) That the winning of the disciple is a completed action prior to the immersion, thereby separates the action of "win disciples" from the "teaching them to obey" in verse 20
- [1] Which implication is that the local church is primarily and predominantly for saved people to be taught to obey
- [2] Which **particularistic interpretation** flies in the face of:

---

<sup>691</sup>Notice the snide words of Calvin against the [ana]Baptists' use of Matthew 28 for believer's baptism: "To prove this, they allege the passage of Saint Matthew (28:19), where Jesus Christ tells to his Apostles: Go, and teach all people, baptizing them, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: to which they add this sentence from Mark (v. 16): Who believes, and is baptized, will be saved. Behold, this seems to them an invincible foundation" (Jehan Calvin, "Brieve Instruction pour Armer tous Bons Fideles contre les Erreurs de la Secte Commune des Anabaptistes"; or: "Brief Instruction to Arm All Good Faithful [Ones] against the Errors of the Common Sect of the Anabaptists" [Geneva: Jehan Girard, 1544]; in *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol 35; Ioannis Calvini, *Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*, vol. 7 [Brunsvigae: Schwetschke, 1868], 45-142). Translation mine.

- [a] **Seeker sensitive churches** who seek by their church services and their worship to woo non-believers into the kingdom of God, and may likewise not ground disciples in the faith as they ought to do
  - [b] **Territorial churches** who wrongly take it upon themselves to teach all people [whom they have baptized as infants] in the same way, as if the converted and unconverted are able to discern the same spiritual truths.
- (b) This clear distinction between the two actions of “win disciples” and “teaching to obey” is taught throughout the book of Acts by different sets of verbs (compare the lists of verbs on evangelism in Chapters 7 and life in the church in Chapter 26)
- (c) This distinction leads to a number of interesting conclusions:
- [1] Winning a disciple is the result of evangelizing:
    - [a] Much like the ministry of Barnabas in Antioch resulted that “a great many people were added to the Lord” (Acts 11:24)
  - [2] Winning a disciple speaks of conversion or the beginning of the Christian life:
    - [a] For Joseph of Arimethea (Matt 27:57), the word μαθητεύω could not have meant “spend two years walking with and being mentored by Jesus”
    - [b] Nor could it have meant a prolonged time for Paul’s ministry in Acts 14:21
  - [3] Winning disciples shows that God does not want His people to evangelize without aim or purpose (cf. 1 Cor 9:26):
    - [a] Their aim is to win disciples (1 Cor 9:19-22)
    - [b] They are to tirelessly give themselves to this one task (2 Cor 12:15)
- (d) **Non-conversionistic churches will cringe at translating Matthew’s Commission with a conversionist bent—again reducing the likelihood that a broadly-received Bible would translate μαθητεύω as “win disciples”!**
- c) Similarly, Acts 14:21, “After they had evangelized [εὐαγγελίζω, vpanmp] that city and won many disciples [μαθητεύω, vpaanmp] they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,” where the verbs “evangelize” and “winning disciples” were used together as:
- (1) Related actions, quite likely both referring to the beginning of salvation:
    - (a) Some scholars place the context of Paul’s second missionary journey in A.D. 47-48,<sup>692</sup> making the entire missionary journey one of two years, which does not allow for a prolonged [2-3 year] discipleship program to be implemented in each town listed in the text:
      - [1] Sailed to the Island of Cyprus, Acts 13:4
      - [2] City of Salamis, 13:5
      - [3] Ministry in the city of Paphos, 13:6
      - [4] Sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, 13:13
      - [5] Antioch in Pisidia, 13:14
      - [6] Iconium, 14:1
      - [7] Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia, 14:6
      - [8] Derbe, 14:20
      - [9] Return to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch for ministry, 14:21
      - [10] Passed through the regions of Pisidia and Pamphylia, 14:24
      - [11] Attalia, 14:25
      - [12] Return trip to Antioch, 14:26
  - (2) In Acts 14:21, both evangelism and winning disciples were completed actions

<sup>692</sup>“Chronological Table” in F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 55.

- (3) Therefore, “evangelism” and “winning disciples” [or making disciples or discipleship] may not really be as different as some have made them out to be.
- (a) Notice, however, how Howard Hendricks counter-positioned evangelism and discipleship:
- “‘Make disciples’ is the mandate of the Master (Matthew 28:19-20). We may ignore it, but we cannot evade it.
- “Our risen Christ left this legacy—the magna charta of the church. He provided both the model and the method. His life—and death—recast the lives of men. He demonstrated that you have not done anything until you have changed the lives of men.
- “‘Follow Me,’ He urged His men. And then that staggering assurance: ‘Lo, I am with you *always*...’ Somehow we have forgotten that this promise is linked to a process. We cannot embrace the *promise* and ignore the *process*.”<sup>693</sup>
- (b) Notice Hendricks’:
- [1] Strong emphasis on “process,” with a correlating disemphasis on the point or time and place of conversion.
  - [2] Note also the partial quote of Matt 4:19, with the removal of “and I will make you fishers of men.” Perhaps it was ignored or overlooked because fishing does not emphasize process, but rather the punctiliar act of catching the fish. A phrase that would not buttress the point he was seeking to make.
  - [3] Notice the onus of the responsibility is placed on the shoulders of the [unworthy] “discipler”:
    - [a] “**You** haven’t done anything until **you** have changed the lives of men”; which emphasis is actually not completely biblical as regards the Holy Spirit’s role in conversion (cf. Gal 3:1-5)!
    - [b] one wonders if being born of the Holy Spirit has any lasting impact in the life of the new believer? It appears not from Hendricks, much against what most Evangelical Systematic Theologies would affirm about conversion and salvation!
    - [c] Likewise, I have heard repeated, “You must reproduce yourself in your disciple!” What? I have too much evil within me. I want Jesus to be formed in those with whom I work, not Tom Johnston!
- (c) In this case, Hendricks exemplifies a missional turn which took place in the middle 1970s:
- [1] From evangelism as being the primary thrust of the Evangelical church
  - [2] To discipleship as a process-oriented task being the primary thrust of the church, of which evangelism is considered a silent assumption (at least in their reading of Matt 28)
  - [3] See Chart 5 in my *Book of Charts for a Theology of Evangelism* titled, “Twelve Approaches to the Great Commission and the Christian Life.”
- (d) Notice, however, that Hendrick’s view is not new, it not only mirrors the monastic views of the Dark Ages, but it also mirrors the contemporary Roman Catholic view of “make disciples”:
- “We should take careful note of the fact that Christ did not send His disciples to convert the whole world to the Church but rather to send them out to teach or make disciples of all nations.”<sup>694</sup>
- “In the past we wrongly conceived the mission task in terms of converting as many as possible, overlooking the fact that Christ commanded the apostles to teach or make disciples of all nations, not to convert them.”<sup>695</sup>

---

<sup>693</sup>Howard Hendricks, “Foreword,” in Walter A. Hendrichsen, *Disciples Are Made—Not Born: Making Disciples Out of Christians* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1974; 23<sup>rd</sup> printing, 1985), 5. Italics from original.

<sup>694</sup>Ronan Hoffman, [in response to: 1967: Are Conversion Missions Outmoded?] “Yes! Conversion and the Mission of the Church,” in Donald McGavran, ed., *Eye of the Storm: The Great Debate in Mission* (Waco, TX: Word, 1972), 71.

- [1] Notice that this Catholic gentleman's views seem to appreciate the process orientation of the discipleship movement
- [2] Notice also his uncomfortable use of "we," referring to Catholics and Evangelicals in the second person plural. To find true spiritual conversion in official Roman documents, one has to reach back prior to the sacramentalism of Ambrose and Augustine!
- [3] Notice his use of "converting as many as possible" as a past view, and Christ's use of "making disciples" as "not to convert them!"

For an "infallible" view of what Rome teaches on evangelism and conversion as a process, beginning with [Holy] Baptist, and constantly nurtured through the [Holy] Eucharist, and the Church of Rome's place in evangelism, see [Pope] Paul VI's encyclical, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 Dec 1975)

- (e) Likewise, following the pattern of the Medieval church interpretation of Matthew's Great Commission, the King James use of "teach" in Matt 28:19 for the Greek verb μαθητεύω, and its use of the verb "teach" for the Greek verb διδάσκω in Matt 28:20 further communicated soteriological nuance:
  - [1] The KJV merely followed the precedent set by Jerome's Vulgate, as he used the verb *docete* (Latin for teach) in both places
    - [a] A precedent which allowed the Vulgate to be a monastic-friendly and sacramental-friendly translation
  - [2] Using the same verb (teach) to describe the ministry toward the lost of "winning disciples" and ministry toward those who are baptized disciples confused the fast difference between evangelism and teaching to obey within the church
  - [3] Likewise the KJV's translation confused justification with sanctification<sup>696</sup> (a distinction which territorial or sacramental churches are wont to ignore)
- d) "Make [to become] disciples" or "Win disciples" in Matt 28:19:
  - (1) That "make disciples" speaks of the beginning of faith, rather than a prolonged period in the Christian life which continues indefinitely after conversion, is made evident by the use of the verb μαθητεύω in Matt 27:57; the following are four contemporary translations of the verse:
    - New American Standard:** "And when it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself **had also become a disciple** of Jesus."
    - New King James:** "Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself **had also become a disciple** of Jesus."
    - New International Version:** "As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who **had himself become a disciple** of Jesus."
    - Holman Christian Standard:** "When it was evening, a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph came, who himself **had also become a disciple** of Jesus."
    - Nestle-Aland 27<sup>th</sup> Edition:** Ὁψίας δὲ γενομένης ἦλθεν ἄνθρωπος πλούσιος ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, τοῦνομα Ἰωσήφ, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς **ἐμαθητεύθη** τῷ Ἰησοῦ.

---

<sup>695</sup>Ibid., 77.

<sup>696</sup>"17. Of the Righteous and the Wicked: We believe that there is a radical difference and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death" ("New Hampshire [Baptist] Confession [1833]," in Lumpkin, William L. *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, rev. ed. [Valley Forge: Judson, 1959, 1969]).

(2) Some thoughts about the translation of μαθητεύω as “had become a disciple” in Matt 27:57:

(a) The name of Joseph of Arimathea shows up uniquely at the end of each of the four Gospels (Matt 27:57; Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50-51; John 19:38):

[1] Mark 15:43 he described Joseph as, “who himself was waiting for the kingdom of God”

[2] Luke 23:50-51 stated of Joseph:

[a] “Who was a member of the council”

[b] “A good and righteous man”

[c] “He had not consented to their plan of action” (cf. Nicodemus, John 7:50-52; Gamaliel, Acts 5:33ff., who taught Paul, Acts 22:3)

[d] “A man from Arimathea, a city of the Jews

[e] “Who was waiting for the kingdom of God”

[3] John elaborated:

[a] “Being a disciple of Jesus”

[b] “But a secret one, for fear of the Jews” (cf. John 3:1-2; 12:42-43)

**Various Translations of “secretly” John 19:38**

Was Joseph a secret disciple of Jesus, or did he secretly ask for the body of Jesus, or both?

Byzantine	Wycliffe (1388)	Tyndale (1534); cf. Geneva; Webster’s; Young’s; NET; HCSB	New American Bible (1901, 1991); cf. NLT	NAS (1977); cf. New Jerusalem	NIV (1984)	KJV (1611, 1769); cf. Darby; English Revised; ASV; RSV; ESV	NKJ (1982)
Μετὰ ταῦτα ἠρώτησεν τὸν Πιλάτον Ἰωσήφ ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀριμαθαίας, ὃν μαθητὴς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, <b>κεκρυμμένος</b> δὲ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἵνα ἄρῃ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ· καὶ ἐπέτρεψεν ὁ Πιλάτος. Ἦλθεν οὖν καὶ ἤρεν τὸ σῶμα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ.	But after these things Joseph of Armathe preyede Pilat, that he schulde take awei the bodi of Jhesu, for that he was a discipule of Jhesu, but priui for drede of the Jewis. And Pilat suffride. And so he cam, and took awei the bodi of Jhesu.	After that Ioseph of Aramathia (which was a discipule of Iesus: but secretly for feare of the Iewes) besought Pylate that he myght take doun the body of Iesus. And Pylate gave him licence.	After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a discipule of Iesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Iesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body.	nd after these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a discipule of Iesus, but a secret <i>one</i> , for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Iesus; and Pilate granted permission. He came therefore, and took away His body.	Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a discipule of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate’s permission, he came and took the body away.	And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a discipule of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave <i>him</i> leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.	After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a discipule of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave <i>him</i> permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.
Notice the comma added prior to the word “secretly” adding some ambiguity	The “privi” is associated with his being a discipule; the period breaks the two ideas	The parentheses make it clear that Joseph was a secret discipule	Moved the word secret prior to the phrase about being a discipule	Add interpretive word “one” to emphasize that it relates to his being a secret discipule	Use punctuation to separate the clauses, as in the 1388 Wycliffe	Slightly open to interpretation	Through punctuation, make “secretly” an adverb of asking for the body of Jesus

[c] John is also unique to include Nicodemus in the burial narrative of Jesus, 19:39

[4] Matthew simply used the verb μαθητεύω that Joseph “had become a disciple of Jesus [τῷ Ἰησοῦ]”!

(b) It is clear that:

[1] Nothing else is said of Joseph of Arimathea except for in the passion narratives of Jesus:

[a] Therefore, Joseph could not have been “discipled” for two or three years

- [b] At best Joseph would have been in the crowds following Jesus and hearing Him speak (i.e. large group cognitive communication, as decried by some of our education specialists), although even this is somewhat unlikely in light of John 12:42-43, other than the fact that scribes and pharisees were sent to spy out what Jesus was saying to find fault with Him and ask Him difficult questions
- [2] Nor was Joseph of Arimathea ever listed as one of the twelve apostles:
- [a] He is not listed among the disciples in any list, and it is unlikely that he was one of the 70 others in Luke 10, as he was a “secret disciple”
- [b] Therefore his “having become a disciple” (Matt 27:57) or his being called a “disciple of Jesus” (John 19:38) could not have been from a prolonged intentional relationship with Jesus (which while being important, is the view of “make disciples” in the interpretation of Matt 28:19 portrayed by most experts)
- [3] Therefore, Joseph of Arimathea could not have gone through the three year *The Training of the Twelve* as in A. B. Bruce’s book by that title, that has helped shape the discipleship movement.<sup>697</sup>
- [a] The only way to make a long term relationship possible between Jesus and Joseph of Arimathea would be to adhere to an argument from silence
- [b] However, it would not have been possible for Joseph to be an overt disciple, as he was said to be a secret follower, John 19:38—even after the death of Christ!
- [4] Yet Joseph of Arimathea was made a “disciple of Jesus”:
- [a] Matthew stated that Jesus “had become a disciple of Jesus [ὁς καὶ αὐτὸς ἐμαθητεύθη τῷ Ἰησοῦ]”
- [b] John called Joseph of Arimathea a disciple of Jesus [ὄν μαθητῆς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ], using the noun μαθητῆς (nominative masculine singular), the special word that is [naively] thought to distinguish between a “convert” and a “disciple”
- [c] Whereas Matt 28:19 does not include the predicate “of Jesus” (i.e. “win disciples to Jesus”), this can be gleaned from Matt 27:57 and John 19:38, leading one to consider that Matt 28:19 could be interpreted, “Go win disciples [unto Jesus] from all nations...”
- { 1 } The implication being that a person is instantaneously made into a disciple of Christ, and not a disciple of a particular person or movement
- { 2 } Historically, this implication differentiates Protestantism from the Church of Rome’s monastic movement, whose monks became disciples of particular people who wrote out specific “Rules” that their devotees were to follow, and unto whom they even made a vow of obedience!
- { 3 } Some current discipleship programs and guidelines for spiritual disciplines come dangerously close to Rome’s works-oriented monastic practices
- (c) Clearly:
- [1] The use of μαθητεύω in Matthew 27:57 cannot refer to a long-term process of discipleship, which definition is usually associated with the verb in Matthew 28:19

---

<sup>697</sup>“Probably the most careful study to date in the Master’s larger plan of evangelism has been done in reference to the training of the disciples, of which A. B. Bruce’s *The Training of the Twelve* is the best” (Robert Coleman in *The Master Plan of Evangelism* [Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1964], 14; referencing A. B. Bruce *The Training of the Twelve* [1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1872; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1899; 3<sup>rd</sup> edition New York: Richard B. Smith, 1930]).

- [2] The view that term “disciple” refers to something different than a convert, believer, or “Christian” (Acts 11:26), as noted above, is also suspect from this and related passages
- [3] Also the commonly used designation, “He is my disciple” or “I am his discipler,” is not warranted from this passage, as Christians are to be disciples of Jesus!
- (3) More about no specific use of the English verb “make” in translating Matthew 28:19:
- (a) Had Jesus wanted to use the verb “make” in Matt 28:19, He had already used it in Matt 4:19 when He called Peter and John, “And He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make [ποιέω] you fishers of men.’”
- [1] ποιέω is said to mean: “do, make” or “do, cause, accomplish, also keep, carry out, practice, etc.”<sup>698</sup>
- (b) He was even more emphatic in Mark 1:17, using two verbs, “make” as well as “become”: “And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become [ποιήσω ὑμᾶς γενέσθαι] fishers of men.’”
- [1] γίνομαι [“become”] is said to mean: “capable of many translations in various contexts, of which these are typical; 1. be born or produced 2. be made or created, be done; be established 3. happen, take place 4. become 5. be largely”<sup>699</sup>
- (c) Likewise, John 4:1 is even more pointed, in that Jesus “made” disciples (μαθητὰς ποιεῖ), literally, “he was making disciples”
- (d) Although these other verbs were clearly available in the contemporary Greek, available in the vocabulary of Jesus, and even in the Book of Matthew (in the case of Matt 4:17), Jesus did not use them in His Great Commission in Matthew 28:19; He merely used the term μαθητεύω.
- (4) The aorist tense used in all four uses of the verb μαθητεύω also points to the punctiliar action of this verb, as related to a person beginning his/her relationship with Jesus Christ (Matt 13:52; 27:57; 28:19; Acts 14:21):
- (a) Had Jesus wanted to emphasize the linear, He could have or should have used either the present or imperfect tenses<sup>700</sup>
- (b) Since Jesus chose the aorist to communicate His commissioning, then it seems likely that μαθητεύω in Matt 28:19 refers primarily to the beginning of faith:
- [1] If this is true, that μαθητεύω refers primarily to the beginning of faith, or conversion, then it does not refer to the process of catachetics, spiritual development, or mentoring normally associated with this verse; rather, catechetics is found in verse 20, “teaching them to keep...”
- [2] If this is true, then the constant and unavoidable bickering and positioning between the “evangelism” and “discipleship” sectors in the Evangelical church based on Matt 28:19 is unnecessary:
- [a] Yes, “teaching to observe” is found in the Matt 28:20
- [b] But it is subservient to the main verb, that of “winning disciples” in Matt 28:19.

<sup>698</sup>“Shorter Lexicon of the Greek NT (Gingrich, Danker),” BibleWorks 7.0.

<sup>699</sup>Ibid.

<sup>700</sup>“As we saw in Lesson 3, the Greek Present tense corresponds most closely to the English Present Continuous tense, usually referring to continuous or repeated action in the present” (J. W. Wenham, *The Elements of New Testament Greek* [Cambridge: University Press, 1965], 54).

- (c) If μαθητεύω in Matt 28:19 refers primarily to the beginning of faith, then Matt 28's commissioning is not divorced from Jesus' sending of the 12 in Matthew 10:
- [1] Therefore, Matthew 10 provides an expansive explanation of the commissioning in Matthew 28 (reflexive property of the two passages ☺)
  - [2] Matthew 10 emphasizes:
    - [a] Authority: power over unclean spirits (10:1, 8), to heal (10:1, 8)
    - [b] Physical displacement: going (10:7, 23), entering villages (10:11, 14-15, 23), entering homes (10:12-13, 14), being received (Matt 10:14, 40-42), being sent (10:16)
    - [c] Saying something: preaching (10:7, 27), speaking certain words (10:7, 14, 19-20, 27), confessing Christ before men (10:32-33)
    - [d] Persecution: not listening (10:14), lambs in the midst of wolves (10:16), delivered up (10:17, 19, 21), whipped (10:17), put to death (10:21, 28), hated by all (10:22), persecution (10:23), called Beelzebub (10:25), division (10:34-36)
    - [e] Commitment: persevere (10:22), not fear man (10:26, 28, 33), love Christ more than parents (10:37), take up one's cross (10:38), lose one's life (10:39)
  - [3] Wasn't the Book of Acts a picture of Matthew 10 evangelism?
- (d) If Matt 28:19 emphasizes the beginning of salvation for the listener, then the chasm between the 54/55 NT uses of εὐαγγελίζω ("evangelize") is not that far from the 4 NT uses of μαθητεύω ("win disciples"); the dichotomy that we have created between evangelism and discipleship is not God's, it is man's!
- (e) If this is true, then it strongly impacts our view of the mission of the church, and reorients the "Evangelical" church to reemphasize evangelizing—how refreshing!
- (5) Thoughts on use of the word "win":
- (a) Use of the word "win" correlates with Paul's five uses of κερδαίνω in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22:
    - [1] 1 Cor 9:19-22, "For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a slave to all, that **I might win** the more. <sup>20</sup> And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that **I might win** Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that **I might win** those who are under the Law; <sup>21</sup> to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that **I might win** those who are without law. <sup>22</sup> To the weak I became weak, that **I might win** the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some."
    - [2] In fact, so closely is the term "win" associated with salvation, that in his summary at the end of verse 22, Paul changed his pattern and used the word "save" [σώζω]; cf. 1 Cor 10:33; Jude 23
  - (b) This corresponds with other verses in which God's word highlights the role of the proclaimer:
    - [1] Notice for example, 1 Cor 3:5, "What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants **through whom you believed**, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one."
    - [2] Acts 19:26, "This Paul has **persuaded** and turned away a considerable number of people"; cf. Acts 28:23-24
    - [3] Acts 11:21, "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed **turned** to the Lord"

- (c) The translators of the NIV used the word “win” [“won”], rather than “make” [“made”] as most other translations do, in their translation of μαθητεύω in Acts 14:21: “They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch”
- [1] Indicating that the translators determined that the verb μαθητεύω was referring to the beginning of salvation, rather than its long-term continuation
- (d) Historically speaking:
- [1] It is interesting to note, the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (1968-1973) gives the meaning of *evangelizo* in Classical Latin (First Two Centuries) as: “(1) to preach, declare, proclaim, bring good tidings, and (2) to evangelize, preach to, win to the Gospel by preaching.”<sup>701</sup>
- [2] The meaning for Thomas Aquinas is given as: “to preach, declare, proclaim, always with the notion of bringing glad tidings, proclaiming the Gospel; to evangelize, to win to the Gospel by preaching.”<sup>702</sup>
- (e) Therefore, use of the English word “win” in Matthew 28:19 is not without biblical or historical precedent.
- (6) Some thoughts on “discipleship” as a movement:
- (a) The grammatical provenance of the term “discipleship”:
- [1] If Matt 27:57 referred to the beginning of Joseph of Arimathea’s faith,
- [2] And if a lost person ought not be baptized, unless he is first won as a disciple,
- [3] And if a lost person cannot be taught to obey all that Christ has commanded, unless he is first won as a disciple,
- [3] Then it follows that Matthew 28:19 must refer solely to the initiation of faith, and not the continuation thereof;
- [4] Then, properly speaking, the concept of “discipleship” does not properly come from Matt 28:19, but rather from Matt 28:20, “teaching to obey”
- [5] Therefore the “discipleship movement” *per se* is derived from a misreading of Matthew 28:19 as speaking more of the continuation of faith than uniquely of the initiation of faith
- (b) Likewise, historically speaking:
- [1] Roman Catholic monasticism has its roots in a combination of Greek ascetism (Stoicism), and Greek philosophical pedagogy
- [2] The early Protestants shunned this notion of spiritual growth through lifestyle discipleship (see Francois Lambert d’Avignon’s testimony appended to Chapter 26)
- [3] As is noted in Chapter 26, both graphically and in the text, John Darby was the first to translate Matt 28:19 in English “make disciples” in 1884
- [4] Once this somewhat equivocal translation came into common usage in English (through most subsequent English translations), then the concept of discipleship began to gain traction in the English-speaking world, to the detriment of a unique focus on evangelism (in many cases)
- (7) Remembering that:
- (a) The mainline and territorial church authors will virtually never agree with using “win disciples” because they view of conversion as a process, they have a generalistic view of baptism, as well as a universalistic view of salvation
- (b) There are Not-for-Profit ministries (that need to protect their funding base) and academic disciplines (that need to protect their degrees and programs) whose existence or priority is predicated on the fact that “make disciples” in Matthew

<sup>701</sup>David B. Barrett, *Evangelize! A Historical Survey of the Concept* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1987), 21.

<sup>702</sup>*Ibid.*, 22.

28:19 speaks of a prolonged process (of mentoring in the spiritual disciplines); therefore, one can expect resistance from these people to the interpretation that μαθητεύω deals primarily or only with the conversion of an individual or the act of placing his/her faith in Christ;

- (c) Likewise, there are some conservative professors, pastors, and authors who are antagonistic to initiative evangelism (either overtly or secretly); one can also expect resistance and antagonism from these people to μαθητεύω meaning “winning disciples”
- (d) Consider the end result of various conceptions of the verbs in Matthew’s Great Commission, as it relates to the *ordo salutis*, or the “Order of Salvation”:

Various Orders of Salvation Based on Verbs in Matthew 28:19-20

Orders of Salvation	First Stage	First Stage	Second Stage	Third Stage
Canonical order	1. Go [Πορευθέντες]	2. Win as a disciple [μαθητεύσατε]	3. Baptize/immerse [βαπτίζοντες]	4. Teach to obey [διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν]
Anabaptist, Baptist, or Baptist	1. Go, evangelize	2. Win others as disciples	3. Baptize/immerse only those that are won	4. Teach those that are won and are baptized to follow all the commands of Christ
Generic Evangelical Evangelism*	3. Time or manner of baptism doesn't matter, it is a secondary issue	1. Go, evangelize	2. Win as disciples	4. Teach them to obey through the local church
Discipleship-Oriented or Relationship-oriented	3. Time or manner of baptism doesn't matter, it is a secondary issue	4. Teach them to obey, through building relationships, mentoring within and outside of the local church, and teaching to worship God	2. Gradually make them into a disciple; winning them as a disciple will usually take a lot of time; don't over-emphasize the point of conversion	1. No need to go; stay where you are, and be “salt and light”
Protestant Sacramental	3. Baptize all infants of members in good standing	4. Teach those that are baptized to obey through catechism and the teachings of the church	2. Those baptized/sprinkled and taught will gradually develop as disciples; “evangelism” (whatever that may mean) is only for those outside the fold	1. Need not go, except for approved clergy and missionaries
Roman Catholic Sacramental	3. Baptize all infants of members in good standing or not; the lifestyle or credentials of the baptizer do not negate the effect of the sacrament <i>ex opere operato</i>	4. Teach those that are baptized to obey through catechism and the sacraments and teachings of the church	2. Those baptized/sprinkled and taught will gradually develop as disciples; need to use apologetics to reach those outside the fold of the Church	1. Prohibited to go, except for approved clergy and missionaries

\*Making an issue of believers baptism would eliminate Evangelical pedobaptist churches from most cooperative evangelism efforts (e.g. some Presbyterians and Methodists). Therefore, in an effort to be ecumenically-minded, and perhaps to show the unity and size of the combined Evangelical churches, mainstream evangelists tend to downplay issues like believers baptism. Therefore, in practice, those doing the evangelism are not very clear on the Matthew 28 pattern of ministry, nor on their convictions concerning baptism.

- e) There may be a further lesson in the words “of/from all nations” (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) in Matthew 28:19:
  - (1) As part of the curse of God in the book of Deuteronomy, God’s disobedient people were to be scattered:
    - (a) Deut 28:64, “Among all people” (Heb ‘am; Gk εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)

- (b) Deut 28:65, “Among the nations” (Heb *gowi*; Gk ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν)
  - (c) Deut 30:3, to “all the peoples” (Heb *‘am*; Gk ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν)
- (2) This same implication was also affirmed by other verses:
- (a) Psa 106:47, “Save us, O LORD our God, And gather us from among the Gentiles (καὶ ἐπισυνάγαγε ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν)”
- (3) What is the implication of being called unto a curse in the geographic expansion mandated by Christ’s Great Commission?
- (a) God knew that scattering His people was difficult, that is why He made it a curse upon them
  - (b) The geographic movement mandated by the Great Commission brings stress, pain, and discomfort at every level
  - (c) The common tendency may be to turn the difficulties of fulfilling the Great Commission into a bed of ease, or to ignore this clear part of the mandate by turning it into “as you go” (as noted above)
  - (d) Herein may be part of the need to fulfill the Great Commission, not trusting in our own understanding, but rather trusting Him, Prov 3:5-6
  - (e) More on this under a section title “The Search for OT Sequels to the NT Great Commission Passages” below...
- f) A possible translation of Matthew 28:19-20, following some of the considerations above is may be:

**“Go! Win disciples from all nations! Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit! Teach them to observe all that I commanded you! And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20)**

Or even:

**“Onward! Win disciples from all nations! Immerse them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit! Teach them to observe all that I commanded you! and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20)**

- g) Lastly on Matthew 28, it seems that some Christians may consider Matthew 28 as:
- (1) The only complete Great Commission passage:
    - (a) For example, note the words of Joe M. Kapolyo, Principal of All Nations Christian College:
 

For the majority of Christians mission starts and ends with Matt 28:18-20. This text occupies a significant place in our understanding of mission, but is just the apex of everything the Bible has to say about God and mission.<sup>703</sup>
  - (2) And likewise that the Great Commission refers primarily to Christian development and growth, and only peripherally to evangelism (if at all)
  - (3) **However, there exist four other Great Commission passages that ought not be ignored;** these complement (rather than contradict) and illuminate the breadth of what Jesus had in mind when he commanded His disciples after the resurrection...<sup>704</sup>
    - (a) By the way, translating μαθητεύω as “win disciples” corresponds with the teaching in the other Great Commission passages, removes the ambiguity that has become associated with “make disciples”, and eliminates the methodological battles that exist between uses of the Great Commission passages (I am of Matthew, I am of Mark, I am of John, etc... (1 Cor 1:12])

<sup>703</sup>Joe M. Kapolyo, “The Easneye Lectures,” in Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), viii.

<sup>704</sup>See chart below, “Semantic Range of the Great Commission Passages.”

- (b) Therefore, μαθητεύω highlights the result to some (they become disciples), whereas Mark and Luke highlight the proclamation necessary to produce this result in some.

### MARK

- 2) **Mark** emphasized proclamation (κηρύσσω) of the Gospel and the geographic and sociological extent of this task by repetition of the idea of “all the world” and “all creation.”
- a) Mark 16:15 makes it clear that the Commission includes:
- (1) An action (and in this case one of two actions), κηρύσσω, and
  - (2) A message, εὐαγγέλιον.
- b) κηρύσσω in Mark 16:15 is a natural flow of the preaching of John the Baptist in Mark (1:4) and Jesus (1:14-15), the call of the apostles (3:14-15) and their preaching (6:12-13), as well as the sending forth of the former demoniac (5:19-20)
- c) In this case, κηρύσσω [preach] is a parallel rendering to εὐαγγελίζω [evangelize]:
- (1) Compare the parallel passages of Mark 6:12-13 and Luke 9:6  
 Mark 6:12-13, “And they went out and preached [κηρύσσω] that *men* should repent. And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them”  
 Luke 9:6 And departing, they *began* going about among the villages, preaching the gospel [εὐαγγελίζω], and healing everywhere
  - (2) See also Acts 8:4-5:  
 Acts 8:4-5 “Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching [εὐαγγελίζω] the word. And Philip went down to the city of Samaria and *began* proclaiming [κηρύσσω] Christ to them”
- d) κηρύσσω in Mark 16:15 is the **method** of communication, μαθητεύω in Matthew 28:19 is the **result** to those who are foreordained unto salvation as they hear the life-saving message and are won as disciples.
- e) κηρύσσω in Mark 16:15 also parallels 1 Peter 2:9’s use of εξαγγέλλω, “that you may proclaim” as the main verb in this important text.
- f) The textual critical question regarding the authenticity of this text [as not found in the earliest originals] does not minimize the breadth or emphasis of evangelism in the New Testament:
- (1) It is clearly an argument from silence in both directions
  - (2) The Byzantine tradition and Majority Text affirm its authenticity
  - (3) In fact, let’s add some doubt to the [untainted and pristine] science of “Textual Criticism” as regards the two oldest manuscripts:<sup>705</sup>
    - (a) Could Sinaiticus have been planted for Tischendorf to find?<sup>706</sup>
      - [1] Was it not a rejected manuscript? Was it authentic? Did it have a theological or methodological agenda?
      - [2] Does the existence of one manuscript lacking the end of Mark 6 mean anything? Is it not true that there was Great Commission battles going back

<sup>705</sup>See my comments at the end of Chapter 6, “Some Thoughts about Bible Translation.”

<sup>706</sup>“On the afternoon of this day I was taking a walk with the steward of the convent in the neighbourhood, and as we returned, towards sunset, he begged me to take some refreshment with him in his cell. Scarcely had he entered the room, when, resuming our former subject of conversation, he said: ‘And I, too, have read a Septuagint’— i.e. a copy of the Greek translation made by the Seventy. And so saying, he took down from the corner of the room a bulky kind of volume, wrapped up in a red cloth, and laid it before me. I unrolled the cover, and discovered, to my great surprise, not only those very fragments which, fifteen years before, I had taken out of the basket, but also other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and, in addition, the Epistle of Barnabas and a part of the Shepherd of Hermas” (source: wikipedia; Constantin von Tischendorf, *When Were Our Gospels Written? An Argument by Constantine Tischendorf. With a Narrative of the Discovery of the Sinaitic Manuscript* [New York: American Tract Society, 1866]).

into the first century (cf. Book of Galatians), not to mention the third and fourth centuries?

- (b) Could Vaticanus have been tampered with, as some allege? Why was the Catholic church so secretive of its being found? What of the 795 “umlauts” in the margin seemingly indicating textual uncertainty?

### LUKE

- 3) **Luke** stated the Great Commission in a prophetic sense, emphasizing the proclamation of repentance for the forgiveness of sin in the name of Jesus, the witness [μάρτυρος] of the disciples, and the necessary power of the Spirit:
- a) **Luke** combined:
- (1) Meat of the message: “Thus it is written”
  - (2) Message: “that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day”
    - (a) The Evangel as the center of Gospel proclamation (though it may be foolishness to some, 1 Cor 1:18-25)
    - (b) This commissioning comprises Christ’s divine interpretation of His own death and resurrection to the disciples who did not yet understand its meaning, purpose, or place in salvation, Luke 24:25-27
  - (3) Method: “would be proclaimed”
  - (4) Applications of the phrase: “Repentance for the forgiveness of sin”
    - (a) As “the preaching” anticipated by the Gospel message of v. 46
    - (b) As the primary emphasis of message of the cross
    - (c) As the response dictated by the message
    - (d) As the response expected by the messenger as he delivers the message
  - (5) Fulfillment of the commission: “would be proclaimed in his name to all nations”
- b) Further elements in Luke:
- (1) Geographic
  - (2) Testimonial
  - (3) The promise of the Holy Spirit
  - (4) The power of the Holy Spirit
- c) Some implications of Luke:
- (1) As the most complete and contextual theological Great Commission passage
  - (2) As the interpretive grid for all Gospel preaching in the Book of Acts

### JOHN

- 4) **John** 20:21 emphasized the exemplary role of Christ in the accomplishment of the Great Commission. The personal evangelism of Jesus is much attested in this Gospel.<sup>707</sup>
- a) Note the comment of the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor 11:1, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (cf. 1 Cor 10:32-33).
- (1) In the case of 1 Cor 11:1, Paul was the biblically-ordained example of following the exemplary role of Christ.
- b) As noted above, the “as” in John 20:21 is often used as a proof-text to allow for the necessity or priority of non-spiritual elements in the communication of the Gospel (e.g. feeding the hungry). See in Chart 65, “Guide to Evangelical Drift Portrayed in Charts 66-75” my *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism*.
- (1) Some will say, “it’s not an either/or, it’s a both/and”
  - (2) True, but what was the one Great Commission that Christ gave? “Go into all the world and feed all the hungry people?”
  - (3) Adding the physical to the spiritual muddies the power and eventually nullifies the spiritual emphasis of the Great Commission

<sup>707</sup>Merrill C. Tenney, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 313-16, calls of the twenty-seven spiritual conversations of Jesus “interviews.” These give cohesive flow to the Gospel of John.

### ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

- 5) **Luke in Acts** 1:8 reemphasized in a prophetic sense the testifiers (μάρτυρος) and the power (δύναμις) of the Holy Spirit, as found in the Lucan Great Commission; however some new material is emphasized:
- a) Jesus repeated the geographic extent of Great Commission with the same language as the curse of being scattered in Deuteronomy (as was noticed above with Matthew's Great Commission):
    - (1) Deut 28:64a, "Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth"
    - (2) Deut 30:4a, "If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you"
  - b) This curse parallels Paul's mention of being "offsoured" and "refuse" in 1 Cor 4:13, as Deut 30:4 calls the people of God in the many lands of the earth, "outcasts"
  - c) Some thoughts about the geography of the Great Commission:
    - (1) Where were the disciples when they received the Great Commission?
      - (a) Matthew 28:16, Mark 16:7, and John seem to indicate that the disciples were in Galilee
      - (b) Mark 16:7 appears to say to the women to hurry, because Peter was going to Galilee; then Mark 16:14 gives another scene much like the upper room in Jerusalem
      - (c) In Luke 24:33, the disciples appear to have been gathered in Jerusalem in an upper room when they received the Great Commission
      - (d) In John 20:21, the disciples were still in Jerusalem; eight days later, they still appear to be in Jerusalem, John 20:26; then in John 21 the epilogue is written from the area of the "Sea of Tiberias" or the sea of Galilee
      - (e) In Acts 1:12, following the reception of the Great Commission, we have the disciples returning to Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit
      - (f) Some conclusions:
        - [1] There is clearly room for several different commissioning being stated over the 40 days in which Jesus appeared to them
        - [2] However, it seems clear that there are three phases: Jerusalem, Galilee, and back in Jerusalem
        - [3] The addition of a geographic element adds not only credibility to each of the accounts, but also interpretive depth
    - (2) Some thoughts about the geographic element in the Great Commission:
      - (a) The disciples were told to make Jerusalem the starting point of their mission, while they were in Galilee:
        - [1] Jerusalem was not where they were located at the time; so it requires geographic displacement just for them to go to Jerusalem, returning to Jerusalem was the starting point of their obedience
        - [2] The disciples did return to Jerusalem, even though they feared the Jews, John 20:19
        - [3] Apparently, Jerusalem, with the Temple, was the place from which God had promised that He would bless the world:
          - [a] It was the place God had chosen for the people, Deut 12:5, 11, 18; 31:11
          - [b] Jerusalem is also a type of Christ's church, Psa 51:18; 122:1-9
        - [4] Jerusalem was the starting point of the ministry of Paul, Rom 15:19
      - (b) Jerusalem was also the place of persecution:
        - [1] Note the ode of Jesus: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling," Matt 23:37
        - [2] Note the historical reality of Jerusalem: "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and

some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation,” Matt 23:34-36

- [3] Jerusalem was the place where Christ was crucified, Luke 9:51; 23:7, 28; 24:18
  - [4] Jerusalem was the central location for Saul’s persecution of believers, Acts 8:2, “he might bring them bound to Jerusalem” (cf. Acts 9:13, 21)
  - [5] Jerusalem was the place that would violently reject the evangelizing of the Apostle Paul:
    - [a] Paul’s early evangelizing in Jerusalem, Acts 9:28
    - [b] Their rejection of Paul, Acts 21:27-32; 22:18, 22
  - [6] Jerusalem was the place where Paul would be arrested and held illegally by the Romans (Acts 23:26-30; 24:26; 26:32), as well as plotted against by the Jews (Acts 23:12-22)
- (c) What then may be some implications of “beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8)?
- [1] God fulfilled His promise to bless the world from Jerusalem
  - [2] God’s people (both Israel and in the church) are:
    - [a] Often in rebellion against God, and therefore
    - [b] The starting point of fulfilling the Great Commission, and therefore
    - [c] Revival ministry is a necessity!
  - [3] Christ sent His disciples back to preach where the ministry was very difficult
    - [a] Ease of ministry or “abundant harvest” does not necessarily imply the will of God, 1 Cor 16:8-9
- (d) What of “in all Judea and Samaria” (Acts 1:8)?
- [1] The apostolic church became a regional church by Acts 5:16, “And also the people from the cities in the vicinity of Jerusalem were coming together, bringing people who were sick or afflicted with unclean spirits; and they were all being healed.”
  - [2] It seems that it took persecution for the disciples to venture beyond a “come and see” regional-type church, Acts 8:1-4
  - [3] A saved Hellenistic Jew, Philip, seems to be the first to venture into Samaria, with much success, Acts 8:5-12
- (e) Somehow, although others were being persecuted for their evangelism, the apostles stayed back in Jerusalem, Acts 8:25; 15:2
- [1] Is this a signal that the apostles had ceased to be evangelistic?
  - [2] Or was this a sign that the apostles knew that the Great Commission must originate from Jerusalem, as they also were persecuted in Jerusalem, Acts 12:1-4?
  - [3] Therefore, Paul and Barnabas came to Jerusalem to find answers to the Judaizer problem, Acts 15
  - [4] Yet those who were of reputation contributed nothing to Paul, Gal 2:6
  - [5] And the apostles did not host Paul when he came to Jerusalem, Acts 21:16
- (f) God seems to have allowed Jerusalem to include some variance as to application and interpretation

b. **Some Distractions or Alternatives** to the Great Commission:<sup>708</sup>

- 1) Matthew 7:12 or Luke 6:31 (the “Golden Rule”) as the Great Commission for the unregenerate

---

<sup>708</sup>Chart 7, “Alternatives to Mere Proclamation” includes 57 alternatives to “mere” proclamation as the main mission of the church (Johnston, *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism*, 20-23).

- 2) The Matthean Beatitudes as the “Great Commission” of liberalized Protestants or Stoicized Christians (“act in this way, and you will be acting Christianly”)
- 3) Romans 12:1 as the Great Commission for the the Gospel lifestyle
- 4) 2 Timothy 2:2 as the Great Commission for the discipleship movement
- 5) Philippians 3:17 (imitating a pattern of life) as the Great Commission for the monastic movement, as well as possibly for the contemporary Spiritual Disciplines movement
- 6) 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6 (the passing on of oral traditions) as the Great Commission for Roman Catholics
- 7) While many of the commands are important, they do not carry the practical or missional weight of the post-resurrection Great Commission passages.

**WHAT IS COMMANDED IN THE GREAT COMMISSION?—  
A LINEAR VIEW OF THE GREAT COMMISSION<sup>709</sup>**

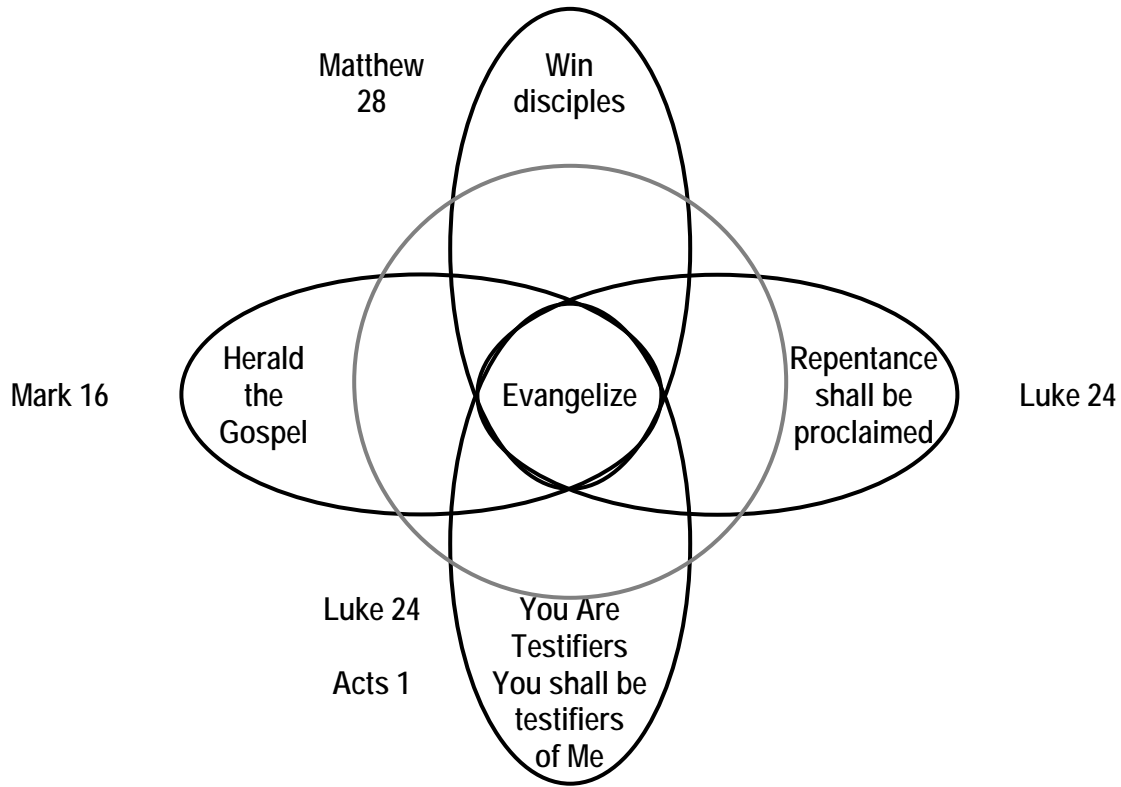
The Missionary Call	Geographic Extent			Missionary Method		Missionary Message		Necessary Nurture	Missionary Example	Necessary Power	A Sure Fulfillment
Going; Go	“All the world ... to all creation”	“To all nations, beginning from Jerusalem”	(1) Jerusalem, (2) Judea, (3) Samaria, (4) uttermost parts of the earth	Preach; proclaim; bear witness	Win disciples	The Gospel: “the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day”	The Message: “repentance for the forgiveness of sins ... in His name”	(1) baptizing (2) teaching to obey	Christ	Holy Spirit	Prophetically Stated
Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15	Mark 16:15	Luke 24:47	Acts 1:8	Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48; Acts 1:8	Matt 28:19	Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46	Luke 24:47	Matt 28:19-20	John 20:21	Acts 24:49	Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8

- c. Christ is not divided (cf. 1 Cor 1:13), nor does the Holy Spirit speak in contradictory terms: Introduction: Coherence or unity of God’s revelation of Himself in the Scripture<sup>710</sup>
- 1) The Great Commission passages do not teach contradictory truths, but rather complimentary truths
  - 2) Therefore the semantic range of the Great Commission passages must overlap, for example...

<sup>709</sup>Chart 3, “A Linear View of the Five Great Commission Passages,” in Johnston, *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism*, 14-15.

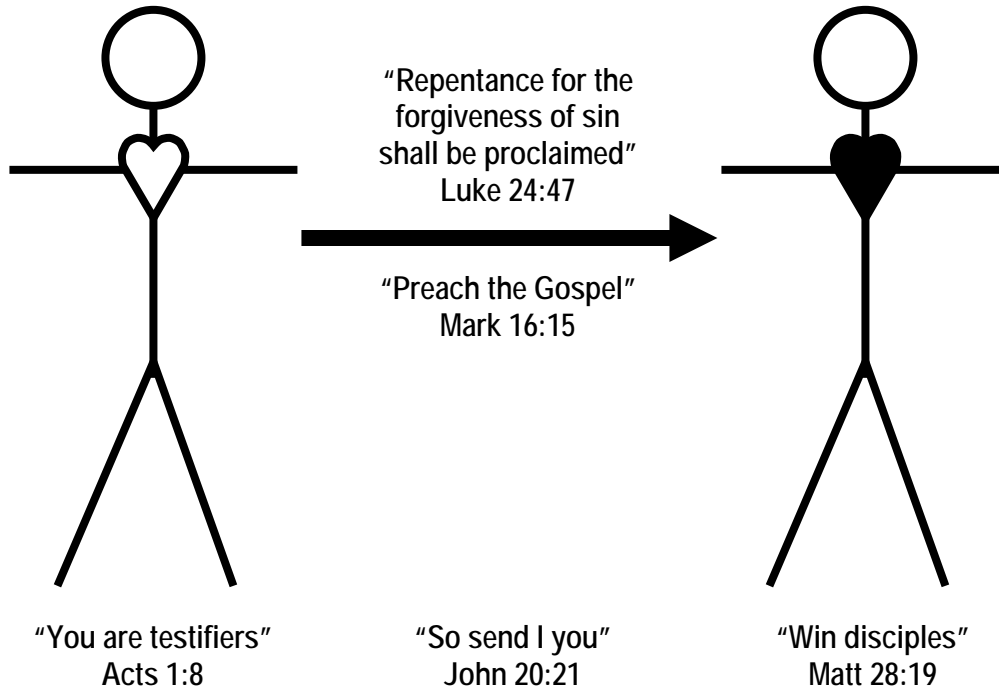
<sup>710</sup>“Further, since the Bible does have an objective meaning which we come to understand through the process of illumination, illumination must have some permanent effect” (Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983], 1:253).

Semantic Range of the Great Commission Passages<sup>711</sup>  
 [Comparing Semantic Ranges]



3) Note also:

A Paradigm for the Interworking of the Great Commission Passages



<sup>711</sup>Ibid., Chart 2, “The Great Commission’s Common Ground,” 13.

- d. An expansion of the missionary method:
  - 1) Using the Matthean Great Commission and expanding its methodology with terminology from the Gospels and the book of Acts;
  - 2) Passages in the following chart were chosen because they provided several verbs to describe some aspect of the method in the context...

EXAMPLES AND EXPANSIONS OF GREAT COMMISSION'S METHODOLOGY<sup>712</sup>

Rubric: Matt 28:19-20	Going (πορεύομαι)	Win Disciples (μαθητεύω)	Baptizing (βαπτίζω)	Teaching to Observe (διδάσκω + τηρέω)
Matt 3:1-2	Came (παραγίνομαι)	Preaching (κηρύσσετε) Saying (λέγω)		
Matt 4:17	[v. 13 "came and settled"]	Preach (κηρύσσω) Say (λέγω)		
Matt 4:23	Went about (περιάγω)	Teaching (διδάσκω) Proclaiming (κηρύσσω) Healing (θεράπεύω)		
Matt 9:35	Went about (περιάγω)	Teaching (διδάσκω), Preaching (κηρύσσω), Healing (κηρύσσω)		
Matt 10:7	As you go (πορευόμενοι)	Preach (κηρύσσω) Saying (λέγω)		
Matt 11:1	Departed (μεταβαίνω)	Teaching (διδάσκω), Preaching (κηρύσσω)		
Matt 13:1-3	Went (ἔρχομαι) Sitting (κάθημαι)	Spoke (λαλέω) [in parables]		[to hide the meaning from the multitudes, 13:10-17]
Mark 1:14	Came into (ἔρχομαι)	Preaching (κηρύσσω)		
Mark 1:38	Let us go (ἄγω)	That I may preach (κηρύσσω)		
Mark 1:39	Went (ἔρχομαι)	Preaching (κηρύσσω) Casting out (ἐκβάλλω)		
Mark 1:45	Went out (ἐξέρχομαι)	Proclaim (κηρύσσω) Spread the news (διαφημίζω)		
Mark 2:13	Went out (ἐξέρχομαι)	Again (πάλιν) Was teaching (διδάσκω)		
Mark 3:14-15	[and that might He] send [them] out (ἀποστέλλω)	To preach (κηρύσσω) To have authority (ἔχω + ἐξουσία) + to cast out (ἐκβάλλω)		[so that they would be with Him]
Mark 5:19-20	Go (ὑπάγω), Went away (ἀπέρχομαι)	Report (ἀπαγγέλλω), Began to proclaim (ἄρχω + κηρύσσω)		
Mark 6:12-13	Went out (ἐξέρχομαι)	Preached (κηρύσσω + μετανόεω), Casting out (ἐκβάλλω), Anointing (ἀλειψω), Healing (θεράπεύω)		
Mark 10:1	Arose (ἀνίστημι) + went forth (ἔρχομαι)	According to his custom (ὡς εἰώθει) + again (πάλιν) <i>Began</i> to teach (διδάσκω)		
Mark 16:15	Go (πορεύομαι)	Preach (κηρύσσω)		
Mark 16:20	Went forth (ἐξέρχομαι)	Preached (κηρύσσω)		
Luke 3:3	Came (ἔρχομαι)	Preaching (κηρύσσω)	a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins	
Luke 4:14-15	Returned (ὑποστρέφω)	Teaching (διδάσκω)		
Luke 4:44		Was preaching (εἰμί + κηρύσσω)		
Luke 8:1	Traveled about (διοδεύω)	Preaching (κηρύσσω), Evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Luke 9:2	Sent [them] (ἀποστέλλω)	To preach (κηρύσσω)		
Luke 9:6	Departed (ἐξέρχομαι), Went (διέρχομαι)	Evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω), Healing (θεράπεύω)		
John 4:1		Jesus was making ... more disciples (Ἰησοῦς πλείονας μαθητὰς ποιεῖ)	Baptizing (βαπτίζει)	

<sup>712</sup>Ibid., Chart 4, "Verbs for Great Commission Methodology," 16-17.

Rubric	Going (πορεύομαι)	Win Disciples (μαθητεύω)	Baptizing (βαπτίζω)	Teaching to Observe (διδάσκω + τηρέω)
John 4:2			Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were (Ἰησοῦς αὐτὸς οὐκ ἐβάπτισεν, ἀλλ' οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ)	
Acts 5:20-21	Go (πορεύομαι), Went in (εἰσέρχομαι)	Speak (λαλέω), Teach (διδάσκω)		
Acts 5:42	Not cease (οὐκ παύω)	Teach (διδάσκω), Evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Acts 8:4	Scattered (διασπείπω), Went about (διέρχομαι)	Evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Acts 8:5	Went down (κατέρχομαι)	Preached (κηρύσσω)		
Acts 8:12		Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω)	Baptized (βαπτίζω)	
Acts 8:25	Started back (ὑποστρέφω)	Evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω)		Solemnly testified (διαμαρτύρομαι), Spoken (λαλέω)
Acts 8:26-39	Get up (ἀνίστημι), Go (πορεύομαι), Got up (ἀνίστημι), Went (πορεύομαι), Go up (προσέρχομαι), Join (κολλάομαι), Ran up (προστρέχω)	Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω)	Baptized (βαπτίζω), Baptized (βαπτίζω)	No longer saw [him] (ouk oraō)
Acts 8:40	Was found (εὕρισκω), Passed through (διέρχομαι)	Kept evangelizing (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Acts 10:37		Proclaimed (κηρύσσω)	Baptism [noun] (βάπτισμα)	
Acts 10:42		To preach (κηρύσσω) Solemnly to testify (διαμαρτύρομαι)		
Acts 14:6-7	Fled (καταφεύγω)	Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Acts 14:20-22	Departed (ἐξέρχομαι)	Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω), Won Disciples (μαθητεύω)		
	Returned (ὑποστρέφω),			Strengthening (ἐπιστηρίζω), Encouraging (παρακαλέω)
Acts 16:9-10	Come over (διαβαίνω) Sought to go (εὐθέως ἐζητήσαμεν ἐξελεῖν)	Help us (βοηθέω) Evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω)		
Acts 17:2-3	Went in (εἰσέρχομαι)	Reasoned (διελέγομαι), Opening (διανοίγω), Setting forth (παρατίθημι), Protesting (καταγγέλλω)		Reasoned (διελέγομαι)
Acts 18:9	Do not fear (μη φοβέομαι)	Speak (λαλέω), Do not be silent (μη σιωπάω)		
Acts 19:8-9	Entered (εἰσέρχομαι)	Bold speech (παρρησιάζομαι), Reasoning (διαλέγομαι), Persuading (πέιθω)		
Acts 19:13		Preaches (κηρύσσω)		
Acts 20:18, 20, 25, 31	Set foot (παραγίνομαι)	Not shrink + declaring (ouden upostellō + anaggellō), Teaching (διδάσκω) Preaching (κηρύσσω)		Not cease + admonish (ouk pauō + noutheteō)

Rubric	Going (πορεύομαι)	Win Disciples (μαθητεύω)	Baptizing (βαπτίζω)	Teaching to Observe (διδάσκω + τηρέω)
Acts 28:30-31	Welcoming (ἀποδέχομαι) + [All who] came in (εἰσπορεύομαι)	Preaching (κηρύσσω), Teaching (διδάσκω)		
Rom 10:15	How beautiful are the feet (ὡς ὠραῖοι οἱ πόδες)	Of those who evangelize peace (τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων εἰρήμην) Who evangelize good (τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ)		
Rom 15:20		Make it my ambition (φιλοτιμέομαι) + to evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω)		
1 Cor 1:17	Send (ἀποστέλλω)	To evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω)	Not to baptize (βαπτίζω)	
1 Cor 9:6		To evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω) [Do not] evangelize (εὐαγγελίζω)		
1 Cor 15:1-2		Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω) Evangelized (εὐαγγελίζω)		Make known (γνωρίζω) Received (παραλαμβάνω) Stand (ἵστημι) Saved (σώζω) Hold fast (κατέχω)
2 Cor 2:12	Came (ἔρχομαι)	[No verb] unto the Gospel of Christ (εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ χριστοῦ)		
1 Thess 2:1-2	Our entrance (εἴσοδος) to you	Boldness to speak (παρρησιάζομαι) Speak (λαλέω)		
2 Thess 3:1	That the word of the Lord may spread rapidly [run] (ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου τρέχῃ)			just as <i>it did</i> also with you (καθὼς καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς)

- e. The Great Commission commands all Christians to evangelize, which is the **verbal** proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Note the words of the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*:

“It is the *duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ* to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by *verbal witness* undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ. Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.”<sup>713</sup>

- f. For further clarity on the role of proclamation, please note the addendum at the end of this chapter entitled, “Evangelism as the Means to an End or as an End in Itself.” This addendum also includes a chart titled, “Evangelizing and the Great Commission’s Fulfillment”

4. The extent of the Great Commission is all inclusive:<sup>714</sup>

- a. **Geographical extent** (cf. Isa 24:14-16)

- 1) “Everywhere,” Luke 9:60
- 2) “Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, and unto the remotest part of the earth,” Acts 1:8 (cf. Isa 41:9)
- 3) “Go into all the world... to all creation,” Mark 16:15
- 4) “The whole world,” Matt 24:14
- 5) “Throughout the whole earth,” Rom 9:17 (cf. Ps. 66:1)
- 6) “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth,” Deut 32:1

<sup>713</sup>“XI. Evangelism and Missions,” in *The Baptist Faith and Message* (2000); accessed 14 August 2002; available from: <http://www.sbc.net/bfm/default.asp>; Internet. Emphasis mine.

<sup>714</sup>T. Johnston, *Mindset*, Chap 6, VI.E, develops this theme from an Old Testament vantage point beginning with the Psalms. There is found a wide breadth of material and the conclusions are virtually identical.

- 7) “So as to preach the gospel even to the regions beyond you, *and* not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another,” 2 Cor 10:16
- b. **Sociological extent** (cf. Psa 148:11-13, Rev 5:9)
- 1) “All nations,” Matt 24:14, 28:19, Mark 13:10, Luke 24:47
  - 2) “All the peoples,” Isa 56:7; “O peoples,” Psa 66:8; “to the people,” Acts 13:31
  - 3) “All the families of the earth,” Gen 12:3
  - 4) “All men,” 1 Cor 9:22 (cf. Col 1:28)
  - 5) “Gentiles” [the nations], Is 42:6; 49:6; Acts 13:46-48; 15:7-11
  - 6) “The foreigner,” 1 Kg 8:41-43
  - 7) “The foreigner ... all the peoples of the earth,” 2 Chron 6:32-33
  - 8) “The poor,” Gal 2:10 (cf. Jms 2:5-9)
  - 9) “The cities of Judah,” Matt 10:23
  - 10) “Kings,” Acts 9:15 (cf. Psa 119:46)
- c. **Spiritual extent:**
- 1) “And thus I aspired to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not build upon another man’s foundation,” Rom 15:18-21 (cf. Rom 10:14-15)
  - 2) Those not reconciled to God, 2 Cor 5:20
  - 3) Those “appointed to eternal life,” Acts 13:48
5. **Prophecies on the fulfillment of the Great Commission:**
- a) As the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, Luke 24:46-47
  - b) Of the propagation of the God’s Word, Psa 147:15 (cf. 2 Thess 3:1)
  - c) Of righteousness and salvation going forth to the nations from Zion, Isa 62:1-2
  - d) Of those who obey the Great Commission, Psa 68:11, Isa 43:21, John 15:26-27, Acts 1:8
  - e) Of those who receive the Gospel, Isa 24:13-16
  - f) Of the earth being full of the knowledge of the glory of God, Hab. 2:14
  - g) As necessary before the return of Christ, Matt 24:14, Mark 13:10
  - h) Of those before the throne of God, Rev 5:9
6. Conclusions:

Note the words of Paul in the closing doxology in Romans [16:25-27]:

Byzantine: Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑμᾶς στηρίζαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν μυστηρίου χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σεσιγημένου, φανερωθέντος δὲ νῦν, διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν, κατ’ ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ, εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη γνωρισθέντος, μόνῳ σοφῷ θεῷ, διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.

NAS: “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading* to obedience of faith; <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.”

My tweak: “Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, **through** the Scriptures of the prophets, **according to the commandment of the eternal God, being** made known **unto the** obedience of faith **among all the nations**; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.”

J.E. Conant wrote, “The Commission according to Mark, therefore, in one phrase from Matthew, tells us that witnessing is the main work of the whole church in the whole world throughout the whole age.”<sup>715</sup>

<sup>715</sup>J. E. Conant, *Every Member Evangelism* (New York: Harper, 1922), 7.

### C. Other commands to evangelize in the Bible:

#### a. A selection of the OT commands:<sup>716</sup>

##### Introduction:

Most OT examples are not in command form, at least in the way they are commonly translated into English; e.g. Psa 35:8; 51:13; 118:17; cf. Isa 42:12; 43:21;

Some OT relate to sinners turning or converting, Psa 51:13; Mal 2:6; cf. Ez 18:30-32; 33:11

Other commands relate to the action of going to gather, Psa 50:5

- 1) Psa 9:11, “Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion; **Declare** (Heb *saphar*; LXX διηγέομαι) among the peoples His deeds.”
- 2) Psa 22:31, “They will come [go (Heb *bo*; LXX ἔρχομαι) and will declare [Heb *nagad*; LXX, ἀναγγέλλω] His righteousness To a people who will be born, that He has performed *it*.”
- 3) Psa 35:28, “And my tongue shall declare Thy righteousness *And* Thy praise all day long”
- 4) Psa 64:9, “Then all men will fear, And will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done”
- 5) Psa 66:8, “Bless the Lord, O peoples, And **sound His praise abroad**” (Fr. NEG, “Peuples, bénissez notre Dieu, Faites retentir sa louange !”)
- 6) Psa 71:15, “My mouth shall **tell** of Your righteousness *And* of Your salvation all day long”
- 7) Psa 75:1, “Men declare (*saphar*) Thy wondrous works”
- 8) Psa 79:13, “So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture Will give thanks to You forever; To all generations we will **tell** of Your praise”
- 9) Psa 92:1-2, “It is good to give thanks to the LORD, And to sing praises to Thy name, O Most High; To declare Thy lovingkindness in the morning, And Thy faithfulness by night”
- 10) Psa 96:2-3, “Sing to the Lord, bless His name; **Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Tell of His glory among the nations**, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.”
- 11) Psa 105:1-2, “Oh give thanks to the lord, call upon His name; **Make known His deeds among the peoples**. Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; **Speak of all His wonders.**”
- 12) Psa 145:4, 11-12, “One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts. ... They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom And talk of Your power; To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts And the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom”
- 13) **Isaiah 40:9**, “Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift *it* up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Here is your God!’”  
 Greek: ἐπ’ ὄρος ὑψηλὸν ἀνάβηθι ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος Σιων ὑψώσον τῇ ἰσχύϊ τὴν φωνήν σου ὁ εὐαγγελιζόμενος Ἱερουσαλημ ὑψώσατε μὴ φοβεῖσθε εἰπὸν ταῖς πόλεσιν Ἰουδα ἰδοὺ ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν  
 My English [note the need for taking a stand, and raising one’s voice]:  
 “Get up on a high mountain [high place], O evangelizer of Zion;  
 “With strength raise your voice, O evangelizer of Jerusalem;  
 “Lift *it* up, be not afraid;  
 “Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Behold your God!’”
- 14) **Isaiah 49:6**, “He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth’” (cf. Isaiah 42:6)  
 Paul applied this verse as a commissioning for his own ministry of evangelism, even unto Gentiles, Acts 13:47 (“for so the Lord commanded [ἐντέλλομαι] us”)  
 The French Segond Revise Geneve translated the last phrase in Isaiah 49:6, “Pour porter mon salut jusqu’aux extrémités de la terre” (my trans. “to carry my salvation unto the ends of the earth”)

<sup>716</sup>These are just a few examples of the wealth of material on this subject in the Psalms. For greater detail see T. Johnston, *Mindset*, Chap 6, V., “An Expanded Study of Testifying in the Psalms.” For our use here, I have only listed several direct commands. There are many testimonials concerning testifying throughout the Psalms—in fact, the latter is by far in the majority (e.g. Psa 40:10; 71:15-16).

- 15) **Isaiah 52:7**, “How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, *And* says to Zion, “Your God reigns!””  
 Greek: ὡς ὥρα ἐπὶ τῶν ὄρεων ὡς πόδες εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης ὡς εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀγαθὰ ὅτι ἀκουστὴν ποιήσω τὴν σωτηρίαν σου λέγων Σιων βασιλεύσει σου ὁ θεός  
 My English [notice the five proclamational verbs in the Hebrew!]:  
 “How beautiful upon the hills  
 “Are the feet of **those evangelizing**,  
 “**Announcing** peace;  
 “**Those evangelizing** good,  
 “**Announcing** salvation, [LXX, “that announce salvation”]  
 “**Saying** unto Zion, “Your God reigns!”  
 [i.e. NT “kingdom of God”]
- 16) Jer 4:16 (KJV), “For a voice declareth from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim. Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah”
- 17) Ezek 16:2, “Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations”
- 18) Jonah 1:2, “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and cry (Heb *qara*’; LXX κήρυξον) against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me.”  
 ἀνάστηθι καὶ πορεύθητι εἰς Νινευη τὴν πόλιν τὴν μεγάλην καὶ κήρυξον ἐν αὐτῇ ὅτι ἀνέβη ἡ κραυγὴ τῆς κακίας αὐτῆς πρὸς με
- 19) Jonah 3:2, “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you.”  
 ἀνάστηθι καὶ πορεύθητι εἰς Νινευη τὴν πόλιν τὴν μεγάλην καὶ κήρυξον ἐν αὐτῇ κατὰ τὸ κήρυγμα τὸ ἔμπροσθεν ὃ ἐγὼ ἐλάλησα πρὸς σέ

Interesting combinations:

- Psalm 40:5, declare and speak (*nagad* and *dabar*)  
 Psalm 106:2, speak and show forth (*malal* and *shama*)  
 Isaiah 40:9, get up and evangelize; get up and evangelize, do not fear, say  
 Isaiah 52:7, evangelize, announce, evangelize, announce, say

b. Jesus to those He healed:

- 1) “Go home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you,” Mark 5:19; Luke 8:39
- 2) “Go and show yourself to the priest for a testimony to them,” Mark 1:44, Luke 5:14 (cf. Luke 17:14)

c. Christ to his disciples:

Introduction: The call of Jesus to His disciples was:

- “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men,” Matt 4:19  
 “Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men,” Mark 1:17  
 “Do not fear, from now on you will be taking men alive,” Luke 5:10
- 1) “And as for you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand,’” Matt 10:7 (cf. Matt 3:2; 4:17)
  - 2) “What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear *whispered* in *your* ear, proclaim upon the housetops,” Matt 10:27
  - 3) “And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs; and He was giving them authority over the unclean spirits,” Mark 6:7
  - 4) “But as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God,” Luke 9:60 (cf. Luke 9:2)
  - 5) “And you will bear witness also, because you have been with Me from the beginning,” John 15:27
  - 6) “And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead,” Acts 10:42

d. In the parables of Christ (cf. Matt 13:3, 19, 44-46):

- 1) “Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there, invite to the wedding feast,” Matt 22:9
- 2) “Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and lame,” Luke 14:21
- 3) “Go into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled,” Luke 14:23

- e. To the Apostle Paul (notice how Paul fulfilled Christ's Acts 1:8 commission both of being a testifier [μάρτυς] and of testifying [μαρτυρέω]):
- 1) "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake," Acts 9:15-16
  - 2) "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them," Acts 13:2
  - 3) "For thus the Lord has commanded us, 'I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You should bring salvation to the end of the earth,'" Acts 13:47
  - 4) "'Come over to Macedonia and help us.' When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel [to evangelize] them" Acts 16:9-10
  - 5) "And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid *any longer*, but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.'" Acts 18:9-10
  - 6) "For you will be a witness [μάρτυς] for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard." Acts 22:15
  - 7) A two-part calling:
    - a) "and I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me,'" Acts 22:18
    - b) "And He said to me, 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'" Acts 22:21
  - 8) "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed [διαμαρτύρομαι] to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness [μαρτυρέω] at Rome also," Acts 23:11
  - 9) "And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister [ὑπηρέτης] and a witness [μάρτυς] not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; rescuing you from the *Jewish* people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.' So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but *kept* declaring [ἀπαγγέλλω] both to those of Damascus first, and *also* at Jerusalem and *then* throughout all the region of Judea, and *even* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance," Acts 26:15-18
- f. To other people:
- 1) To Isaiah: "Go and tell this people" Isa 6:8-9
  - 2) To Jeremiah: "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all I command you you shall speak." Jer 1:7
  - 3) To Ezekiel: "Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me." Ezek 3:17ff. (cf. Ezek 33:7ff.)
  - 4) To the Apostles: "Go your way, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life." Acts 5:20
  - 5) To Philip: "But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, 'Arise and go south' ... 'Go up and join this chariot.'" Acts 8:26, 29
  - 6) To Ananias: "But the Lord said to Him, 'Go'" Acts 9:15
  - 7) To Peter: "And the Spirit told me to go without misgivings" Acts 11:12
  - 8) To Timothy: "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season" 2 Tim 4:2
  - 9) To Timothy: "Do the work of an evangelist," 2 Tim 4:5
  - 10) To Titus: "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you." Tit. 2:15
- g. Other general commands:
- 1) Prov 24:11-12
  - 2) Isa 43:10-11
  - 3) 1 Pet 3:15

### 3. The Search for OT Sequels to the NT Great Commission Passages (taking our lead from words of Jesus, "Thus it is written" (Luke 24:46):

This topic is fraught with theological and missiological disagreement (due to literal versus figurative views of the atonement and the Great Commission, Covenant versus Dispensational theologies, etc.). That being said, it is instructive to consider and understand the issues in delineating

an OT parallels—antecedent Scripture, as these impact the practice or method of fulfilling the Great Commission.

a. **NT Great Commission and Deuteronomy’s “Conquest Tread:”**<sup>717</sup>

Introduction:

- a) Deuteronomy, written as an executive brief (chapter 1) for the Israelite King (Deut 17:18-20), then becoming an in-depth class from God, urged the conquest tread of the kings of Israel and/or Judah:
    - (1) Notice God’s repetition of the exact borders and boundaries (giving the king a vision), Deut 1:6-7; 2:24, 36-37; 3:8-9, 12-17; 4:44-49; 7:1-2; ... 34:1-3
    - (2) Notice God’s repetition of the fact that He swore to give and gave this specific land to the people of Israel, and that they should possess it, Deut 1:8; 2:24, 29-31, 33; 3:2, 18, 20, 26-28; 4:1, 5, 26; 5:31, 33; 6:3, 10-11, 18, 23; 7:1, 18, 22-24; 8:1, 7-9; 9:1-6; 10:11; 11:8-12; ... 34:4
      - (a) As well as the land that He did not give to them, Deut 2:5, 9, 19, 37
    - (3) And yet they did not automatically get the land, they had to fight for it; there were enemies in the land; God had predestined the need for battles and warfare!
  - b) In an analogous way, the same commissionings apply to the NT Christian with some NT distinctions.
  - c) First let’s notice the Deuteronomic commissioning, then consider the comparisons with the NT Great Commission passages and related passages.
- 1) Various commissionings in Deuteronomy (not exhaustive):
    - a) Deut 1:21, “See ... go up, take possession” (please note that the verbs in this verse are all in the singular)
      - (1) Some positives:
        - 1:21, “See” (John 4:35 has three verbs for seeing)
        - 1:21, “Go up” (Heb ‘alah’: rise up, get up, climb, ascend; parallel to Isa 40:9, “Get thee up [on a high place]”)
        - 1:21, “take possession” (Heb yarash; [imperative]: possess the land:
          - NT parallel to evangelizing leading to the “kingdom of heaven” being at hand (cf. Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7)
          - NT parallel to evangelizing leading to the rule of Christ in the hearts of those who respond favorably
          - A morphological search on the Hebrew verb yarash yields 71 hits in Deuteronomy; likewise, there are 52 uses of the English verb “possess” in Deuteronomy; almost all of these are related to God’s gift of “the land”
      - (2) Some negatives:
        - 1:21, “Do not fear”
        - 1:21, “Do not be dismayed [or discouraged]”
        - 1:29, “Do not be shocked, nor fear them”
          - [after their disobedient response to their sociological survey]
        - 1:42, “Do not go up nor fight, for I am not among you”
    - b) Deut 2:24, “Arise, set out ... Look! I have given...”
    - 2:25, “This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere”
    - 2:31, “See, I have begun to deliver ... that you may possess his land”
    - c) Deut 3:2, “Do not fear him, for I have delivered him...”
    - d) Deut 3:18, “The LORD your God has given you this land to possess it”
      - 3:21, “Your eyes have seen”
      - 3:22, “Do not fear them, for the LORD your God is the one fighting for you.”
    - e) Deut 3:27, “Go up to the top of Pisgah”
      - 3:28, “But charge Joshua and encourage him and strengthen him, for he shall go across at the head of this people, and he will give them as an inheritance the land which you see”
        - [an interesting analogy is being made between Joshua and Jesus; Joshua meaning “The LORD saves,” and Jesus meaning “the LORD saves”]

---

<sup>717</sup>“It is not wise to say that *soul winning* is the main thing or that *soul building* is the main thing. They are Siamese twins of God’s gospel, going hand in hand, and they ought to keep up with each other.... And this leads me to say that the main thing in the Kingdom of God is the evangelistic spirit, the martial note and conquest tread” (L. R. Scarborough, *Recruits for World Conquest* [New York: Revell, 1914], 58).

- f) Deut 7:17, “If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’”
  - 7:18, “You shall not be afraid of them
  - 7:21, “You shall not dread them
  - 7:22, “The Lord your God will clear away...”
  - 7:24, “He will deliver...”
- g) Deut 9:23, “And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, ‘Go up and possess the land which I have given you,’ then you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; you neither believed Him nor listened to His voice”
- h) Deut 10:11, “Arise, proceed on your journey ahead of the people”
  - 10:11, “That they may go in and possess the land”
- i) Deut 11:8, “so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land...”
- j) Deut 31:23, “Then He commissioned Joshua the son of Nun, and said, ‘Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you.’”

Comparing the Deuteronomic "Conquest Tread" with the NT Great Commission

Aspects	Deuteronomic	New Testament
Similarity: God's Vision	See, Deut 1:21 (2 <sup>nd</sup> person sing); 2:31 Look, Deut 2:24 Your eyes have seen, 3:21 Lift up your eyes and see, Deut 3:27	Behold, Lift up your eyes, and see, John 4:35 "Come over to Macedonia and help us," Acts 16:9
Similarity: God's Calling	Go up, Deut 1:21 (2 <sup>nd</sup> person sing) Arise, set out, Deut 2:24 Go up, Deut 9:23 (2 <sup>nd</sup> person pl) Arise, proceed, Deut 10:11 That they may go in, Deut 10:11	Go, Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15 So send I you, John 20:21 To all nations, Luke 24:48
Dissimilarity: Purpose	People don't matter (they must be annihilated, Deut 7:24) What matters is taking the land! The people must be dispossessed (Deut 7:17-26)	The land doesn't matter (other than peace to tell the people, 1 Tim 2:1-4) What matters is the people! Let them possess their own land
	To take the land, Deut 1:21 (2 <sup>nd</sup> person sing); 9:23 (2 <sup>nd</sup> person pl); 31:23 (to Joshua) [Was it not this type of teaching that drove the Medieval Church of Rome's military crusades and Holy Inquisitions? "Annihilate the infidels; take the 'Holy Land', take Constantinople, take Southern France, take Bohemia, whatever the cost; kill all the inhabitants, drive them out of the land"] [For Rome's inquisition methodology against the Albigenses from Southern France and the Hussites of Bohemia, see Deut 13:12-18; 17:1-7, whereas "other gods" is interpreted as "other churches", likewise "other nation," 7:22, is "other church"; I often heard as a youth in France, "j'ai déjà ma religion!" (meaning: I already have my religion)]	The kingdom of heaven is at hand, Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7 Possess the land spiritually, Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36 Clearly the Great Commissions have a geographic element to them: "All nations," Matt 28; "All the world ... all creation," Mark 16; "Unto the uttermost parts of the earth," Acts 1:8
Dissimilarity: Weapon	A carnal weapon: physical sword	A spiritual weapon: the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17) and the power of the Gospel of Christ (Rom 1:16) The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual..., 2 Cor 10:3-5
Dissimilarity: Method	Military battle, with the Lord fighting for them	Method: "Preach the Gospel," Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-47 Method: Testify of Christ, Acts 1:8 Method: Win disciples, Matt 28:19-20
Similarity: God's promised presence	The LORD your God is fighting for you, Deut 1:30; 3:22; 31:3-5	Lo, I am with you, Matt 28:20; Acts 18:10
Similarity: God's needed presence	When God was present—victory, Deut 2:31; 3:2-7 When God was not present—defeat, Deut 1:34-46	God's presence gives power (shown by the infilling of the Spirit), Acts 2:14; 6:15; 13:9; and boldness in speech, Acts 4:31
Similarity: God's direct involvement	The LORD your God who goes before you will fight on your behalf, Deut 1:30	The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment, John 16:8 The Word of God is quick and lively, sharper, piercing, able to judge, no creature hidden before him, Heb 4:12-13 The Word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing, Acts 19:20
Similarity: Need for strong and courageous people and leaders	To people: "Be strong and courageous," Deut 31:6 To Joshua: "Be strong and courageous," Deut 31:7	To all Christians: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might," Eph 6:10; "be steadfast, immovable," 1 Cor 15:58; "Be on the alert, ... act like men, be strong," 1 Cor 16:13
Similarity: Need for fearless people and leaders	To people: "Do not be afraid or tremble," Deut 31:6 (cf. Isa 40:9) To Joshua: "Do not fear or be dismayed," Deut 31:8	As evangelism training: "Do not fear them," Matt 10:26, 28, 31 To Paul: "Do not be afraid <i>any longer</i> , but go on speaking and do not be silent; for I am with you," Acts 18:9-10

Aspects	Deuteronomic	New Testament
Dissimilarity: Result	Conquer land and possess it; Possess the Lord's promised land [or in the crusades: the "Holy Land"]	Conquer souls: Fish for men, Matt 4:19; Mark 1:17 Win disciples, Matt 28:19-20 Take men alive, Luke 5:10 Snatch souls from the fire, Jude 22-23

- 3) These parallels also coincide with Paul's repeated use of military imagery to describe the spiritual battle (2 Cor 10:3-5; Eph 6:10-20; etc.)
- 4) These parallels also coincide with prior proto-Evangelical and Evangelical military imagery:
  - a) In 1326-1327, a so-called "heretical" sect appeared in Portugal called "Gendarmes de Jesus" [police of Jesus]; this movement spread throughout Tuscany and Senes.<sup>718</sup>
  - b) William Booth's "Salvation Army"
  - c) L.R. Scarborough speaking of the Great Commission as "the Martial Note and Conquest Tread" (see Chapter 3)
  - d) The post-World War II mission agency called "Far Eastern Gospel Crusade"
  - e) Billy Graham calling his revival meetings "crusades"

In this regard, there is an interesting photo of Billy Graham, Chuck Templeton, and Youth for Christ founder, Torrey Johnson, looking at a map as they plan their 1946 post-WWII offensive of the Gospel in Europe.<sup>719</sup>

I included a section in *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism* titled "Graham's World Conquest Methodology."<sup>720</sup>
  - f) I led an evangelism team, the "Trinity Evangelistic Team" or "TET" for short, which we called the "TET Offensive," based on the Vietnam War
  - g) It's amazing how military imagery seems to naturally parallel aggressive evangelism!
- b. **Matthew 28:19-20**—locating OT parallels for Matthew's Great Commission emphasis depends on how it is translated (notice how the translation colors the parallels):
  - 1) Calvin's 1560 French Geneva Bible translated μαθητεύω as "indoctrinate":
    - a) English Bibles from Wycliffe's 2<sup>nd</sup> edition to the King James Version also used "teach" in Matthew 28, as that followed "docete" in the Latin Vulgate
    - b) This translation parallels Deut 6:7 addressed to all fathers, "You shall teach them [shanan] diligently to your sons and shall talk of them..."
    - c) The message to be taught are "these words which I am commanding you" (Deut 6:6)
    - d) It must be noted that the emphasis of Deut 6:7 is within the family unit, whereas the emphasis of Matt 28 is "all nations"—quite a difference in scope
  - 2) The King James Version translated μαθητεύω as "teach":
    - a) This translation parallels Deut 4:14, where Moses was commanded by God to teach the people, "And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach [lamad] you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it"
    - b) Whereas in the Old Covenant, commissionings were generally to specific people (in this case Moses), under the Great Commission of Jesus, all of Christ's followers are commanded to teach all nations
    - c) Similarly, in this specific verse, the command is directed for Moses to teach the sons of Israel. However, the impact would be felt by the nations around (Deut 4:6), similarly to the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chron 6:32-33)
  - 3) Webster's Bible of 1833 translated μαθητεύω as "disciple":
    - a) Webster broke from Jerome's precedent

<sup>718</sup>Jean Crespin, *Histoire des vrais Tesmoins de la verite de l'evangile, qui de leur sang l'ont signee, depuis Jean Hus iusques autemps present* (Geneva, 1570; reproduction, Liège, 1964).

<sup>719</sup>Billy Graham, *Just as I Am* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997), photo facing page 105.

<sup>720</sup>Thomas P. Johnston, *Examining Billy Graham's Theology of Evangelism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 19-24.

- b) While quite similar to the word “teach”, visions of Greek peripatic learning can be gleaned from this term, along with parallels in the OT, such as Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, the sons of the prophets, etc.
  - c) Psa 105:1, “Make known His deeds among the peoples”
    - (1) Make known comes from the Hebrew *yada'* (hiphil imperative masculine plural), meaning (*Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs*) make known, declare, teach, make one known, teach the difference between, discriminate between
    - (2) Slightly more receptor-oriented than straight teaching
- 4) Darby’s French NT translation of 1859 translated μαθητεύω “make disciples,” which came into English Bibles through Darby’s 1884 English translation, and continues to be the prominent use as a translation of μαθητεύω today:
- a) The emphasis moved from teaching the word of God, to seeking and/or developing a human methodology of “teaching to obey”
  - b) Hence, the first edition of A.B. Bruce’s *The Training of the Twelve* appeared in 1872, analyzing the reproducible [human] methods of Jesus to “make disciples”
  - c) However, “make disciples” may be considered a synonym of “win disciples” (following NIV’s translation of Acts 14:21), in which case instantaneous conversion is emphasized—it would seem that the Greek aorist tense and the French word “faites” (from which Darby introduced the English term “make”) have more of a punctiliar emphasis, rather than the strong linear emphasis generally associated with “make disciples” (See much more detail here in Chapter 27)
- 5) The “go” and the “all nations” have their earliest antecedent Scripture in God’s call of Abraham (Gen 12:1-3):
- a) “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth:
    - (1) 2 Chron 17:7, officials are commissioned by King Jehoshaphat in the third year of his reign to teach the Law of the Lord
    - (2) 2 Chron 30:6, couriers are commissioned and commanded by King Hezekiah with a proclamation to repent and return to God
  - b) “Go”
    - (1) Gen 12:1, “Go forth from your country”
    - (2) Deut 1:8, “Go in and possess...”, 21, “Go up, take possession...”:
      - (a) Deut 4:1, “that you may live and go in and take possession”; 6:18, “that you may go in and possess the good land”; 8:1; 9:1, 23; 10:11; 11:8, 31
      - (b) Deut 21:10, “When you go out to battle against your enemies”; 23:9, “When you go out as an army against your enemies”
    - (3) 2 Chron 17:7, King Jehoshaphat sent officials
    - (4) 2 Chron 30:6, King Hezekiah sent couriers
    - (5) Isaiah 40:9, “Get yourself up”
    - (6) Jonah 1:2, “Arise, go”
    - (7) Jonah 3:2, “Arise, go”
  - c) “teach-win disciples”
    - (1) 2 Chron 17:7-9, King Jehoshaphat sent revival teams throughout the land of Judah and Israel to teach the people:
      - (a) Note the emphasis on “teach” in verse 9, “And they taught in Judah, *having* the book of the law of the LORD with them; and they went throughout all the cities of Judah and taught among the people”
    - (2) 2 Chron 30:6, King Hezekiah, of Judah, sent couriers to call the Israelites to repent, return to the Lord, and come to the Passover celebration, “Come to the feast” (cf. Luke 14:16-24)
  - d) “all the nations”
    - (1) Gen 12:3, “And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”
    - (2) Deut 28:65, “Among those nations [to whom the Lord would scatter His people as a cure]”

- (3) 2 Chron 6:32-33, “Also concerning the foreigner who is not from Thy people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Thy great name's sake and Thy mighty hand and Thine outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, <sup>33</sup> then hear Thou from heaven, from Thy dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to Thee, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Thy name, and fear Thee, as *do* Thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Thy name”
- (4) Psa 96:3, “Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples”
- (5) Psa 105:1, “Make known His deeds among the peoples”
- (6) Isa 42:4, “καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἔθνη ἐλπιοῦσιν”—and in his name the nations will hope

c. **Mark 16:15:**

- 1) May glean from Jonah 3:2, “Arise, go to Nineveh the great city and proclaim to it the proclamation which I am going to tell you”
  - a) Arise and go = “go”
  - b) Specific—to Nineveh (virtually uttermost parts of the earth at the time) = “into all the world”
  - c) Proclaim (κηρύσσω) the proclamation (κήρυγμα) = “preach [κηρύσσω] the Gospel”
- 2) May glean from the proclamational verses in the Psalms and Isaiah as noted above, especially perhaps Psa 96:2-3:
  - a) “Preach the Gospel”—“Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day”
  - b) “Into all the world”—“Tell of His glory among the nations”
  - c) “To all creation”—“His wonderful deeds among all the peoples.”
- 3) As far as the recipient of the message, the following may be parallels: [See especially “Sociological extent of the Great Commission”]
  - a) “In the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes,” Deut 4:6

d. **Luke 24:46-48:**

- 1) May glean from 2 Chron 30:1-12, esp v 6:
  - a) The king (Hezekiah) commissioned and commanded couriers
    - (1) Verse 6 reads (in English Geneva Bible), “So the postes went with letters by the commission of the King, and his princes, thorowout [sic] all Israel and Iudah, and with the commandement of the King, saying, Ye children of Israel, turne againe vnto the Lord God of Abraham, Izhak, and Israel, and he will returne to the remnant that are escaped of you, out of ye hands of the Kings of Asshur”
    - (2) Notice:
      - (a) The messengers (of the King’s proclamation) are likened to swift-footed couriers
      - (b) They are both commissioned and commanded
      - (c) Their message was the proclamation of the King
  - b) To go from city-to-city, not only in Judah, but also in Samaria (vv 10-11, “Through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun”)
  - c) With a proclamation (kerygma) to repent (turn) and obey the Lord (in observing Passover in Jerusalem)
- 2) The following verses in Luke’s Great Commission may also glean from numerous other verses:
  - a) Luke 24:46, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day,” Isa 52:13-53:12

- b) Luke 24:47:
- (1) “And that repentance for forgiveness of sins”
    - (a) Note the condition of repentance for forgiveness:
      - 1- 2 Chron 7:14, “and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land”
      - 2- Isa 59:20, ““And a Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression [ἀποστρέψει ἀσεβείας] in Jacob,’ declares the LORD”
      - 3- Jer 36:3, “Perhaps the house of Judah will hear all the calamity which I plan to bring on them, in order that every man will turn from his evil way; then I will forgive their iniquity and their sin”
    - (b) Jer 31:34, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more”
  - (2) “would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations,” Isa 42:9-12
    - (a) See all the OT proclamational verses listed for Matthew above, and in Chapters 2, 7, and earlier in this chapter
  - (3) “beginning from Jerusalem,” Psa 20:2; 128:5; 134:3; 135:21; Isa 59:20
    - (a) Micah 4:2, “For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem”
- c) Luke 24:48, “You are witnesses of these things,”
- (1) Isa 43:10, ““You are My witnesses,’ declares the LORD, ‘And My servant whom I have chosen, In order that you may know and believe Me, And understand that I am He””
  - (2) Isa 43:12, ““It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange *god* among you; So you are My witnesses,’ declares the LORD, ‘And I am God””
  - (3) Isa 44:8, “Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any *other* Rock? I know of none”
- d) Luke 24:49, “And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you,” Joel 2:28-29
- e. **John 20:21**, “Peace *be* with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you”
- 1) Deut 18:18-19, “I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require *it* of him.”
  - 2) Isa 40:11, “Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry *them* in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing *ewes*”
  - 3) Jer 23:3-6 ““Then I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply. I shall also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,’ declares the LORD. ‘Behold, *the* days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, “The LORD our righteousness.”””
  - 4) Ezek 34:11-16, “For thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down in good grazing ground, and they will feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest,’ declares the Lord God. ‘I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.””
- f. **Acts 1:8** (see Mark and Luke above)
- 1) Further thoughts about “the ends of the earth” in Acts 1:8:
    - a) The message of the Bible is addressed to the “earth,” Deut 32:1; Isa 1:2

- b) It is through this message that Abraham’s blessing reaches “all the families of the earth,” Gen 12:3
  - c) This message of the Bible, when proclaimed in all the earth, actually feeds and nurtures the earth, Deut 32:1-2; Isa 55:10-11
- g. Fulfilling the Great Commission and the Curses of Deuteronomy 28:
- 1) Mentioned above (in the section describing Matthew 28) is the concern that the geographic expansion mentioned in the curses of Deuteronomy 28 was included in Matthew’s Great Commission, through the words “of/from all nations” (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) in Matthew 28:19:
    - a) As part of the curse in the book of Deuteronomy, God’s disobedient people were to be scattered:
      - (1) Deut 28:64, “Among all people” (Heb ‘am; Gk εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)
      - (2) Deut 28:65, “Among the nations” (Heb gowi; Gk ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν)
      - (3) Deut 30:3, to “all the peoples” (Heb ‘am; Gk ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν)
    - b) Therefore, as it were, Jesus was calling the results of the Deuteronomic curse upon His disciples when He sent them out:
      - (1) Perhaps this was why the Jerusalem Jews reacted so negatively to Paul when he repeated the words of God, “Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles,” Acts 22:21
      - (2) The Jews wanted capital punishment for Paul
      - (3) Notice the exact words in the Greek: “Πορεύου, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰς ἔθνη μακρὰν ἐξαποστελῶ σε,” Acts 22:21
      - (4) Notice Deuteronomy 28:37, “among all the people where the LORD will drive [Darby: ‘lead’] you” [ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰς οὓς ἂν ἀπαγάγη σε κύριος ἐκεῖ]
  - 2) How about the three curses: Hunger—Thirst—Nakedness?
    - a) As the curse of God, Deut 28:47-48
    - b) The promise of Christ:
      - (1) Matt 6:31-33
      - (2) cf. John 6:35
    - c) The result in Paul’s life of the fulfilling the Great Commission:
      - (1) 1 Cor 4:11
      - (2) 2 Cor 11:27
    - d) Care for others in the life of the true believer:
      - (1) Care for the traveling evangelists, Matt 10:40-42
      - (2) Care for others, Matt 25:35-38, 41-44
  - 3) There is more material to be uncovered as to the relationship of the Great Commission, evangelizing, and NT persecution for evangelizing

#### 4. Other Commands to “Go” in the Bible.<sup>721</sup>

**“Go” implies not only a change in geography, but the making a concerted effort!**

Stephen F. Olford in *The Secret of Soul-Winning* discusses “The Soul-Winner’s Travail.” His comments are based on 1 Thess 2:9:

The expression “travail” here denoted the toil, labor, and weariness which were involved in bringing those men and women at Thessalonica to a personal knowledge of Christ. Souls are not easily won, although they may appear to be when we observe the glamorized mass evangelism of a modern age. Men can never be born into the kingdom of God without tears and travail. Even if the evangelist does not pay

<sup>721</sup>A study of the word “Go” in the Bible proves very enlightening, as this section is only a mere sampling.

the price, God has His own who are prepared to suffer with Christ in order to bring to birth His redemptive purposes in the world.<sup>722</sup>

- a. Jesus commands the Christian to “Go!” Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15
 

Please note the unfortunate downgrade of the term “Go” which is sometimes found in lifestyle literature, above in the this chapter: “Some Issues in the Study of the Great Commission,” “1. Lifestyle or Initiative?”
- b. The lost need someone to make an effort to reach them:
  - 1) The principle:
    - a) “The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few,” Matt 9:36-38, Luke 10:2
    - b) “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor,” John 4:38
    - c) “And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” Rom 10:14-15
    - d) “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me,” 1 Cor 15:10
    - d) “Having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace,” Eph 6:15
    - e) “Always being ready to make a defense to every one who asks,” 1 Pet 3:15
  - 2) The spheres:
    - a) Going to one’s family, Mark 5:19
    - b) Going to the next town, Luke 4:43-44
    - c) Going to another region, 2 Cor 10:15-16
    - d) Going to the uttermost parts of the earth, Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8
  - 3) The reality:
    - a) Being driven to all nations in Deut 28 is listed as one of the curses of God:
      - (1) “And you shall become a horror, a proverb, and a taunt among all the people where the LORD will drive you” Deut 28:37
      - (2) “Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. And among those nations you shall find no rest” Deut 28:64-65a
    - b) Therefore, it cannot be expected to be an easy thing to “go to all nations”—yet it is commanded!
- c. Biblical examples of making an effort:
  - 1) In the ministry of Jesus, Mark 1:38; Luke 4:42-44
  - 2) In the evangelism of the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor 9:16, 22; 10:33; 2 Cor 5:9, “nous nous efforçons [we force ourselves],”<sup>723</sup> Col 1:29, “And for this purpose also I labor,” 1 Thess 2:9-10 (cf. Acts 18:9-11)
- d. Some biblical examples of going:
  - 1) In the OT: Isa 6:8-9; 52:7; 55:12; Jer 1:7; Ezek 2:3; 3:3; 33:2, Jonah 1:2; 3:2
  - 2) In the NT: Jesus, the disciples (Matt 10; Mark 6; Luke 9, 10), the apostles after Pentecost, Stephen, Philip, Barnabas, Paul (see below)
  - 3) Several people took the initiative for salvation or eternal life:
    - a) The Rich Young Ruler, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 18:18-23
    - b) Luke 10:57-62, Several people come to Jesus after He says “Follow-Me” (v. 59).
    - c) Nicodemus, John 3:1-21
    - d) The jailer came to Paul and Barnabas for salvation, Acts 16:30

---

<sup>722</sup>Stephen F. Olford, *The Secret of Soul-Winning* (Chicago: Moody, 1963), 79. Olford’s comments do not discount the effectiveness of mass evangelism as seen in the Bible and throughout the history of the church. However, for those who preach the Gospel to their neighbor or to many in an auditorium, there is travail of soul.

<sup>723</sup>From *Nouvelle Edition the Genève* (Société Biblique de Genève, 1979). The French John Darby (1800-1882) translation is even more emphatic here, “nous nous appliquons avec ardeur [we apply ourselves with zeal].” The Greek φιλοτιμούμεθα indicates the idea of aspiration, which is emphasized in the French translation tradition.

- e. Evaluation: There is an effort to be made in reaching out to the lost. In a few cases, some came to Jesus for salvation or eternal life. In the same way, sometimes people come to those who are aggressively seeking the lost for salvation (1 Pet 3:15).<sup>724</sup>

Johan Lukasse applied this principle of “going” to the local church:

Often we have reversed the command of Jesus Christ, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation” (Mk. 16:15), by turning this ‘go’ evangelism into ‘come’ evangelism. We invite people to attend a Sunday service, to come to hear the preacher, to come to join this or that, but Jesus said, “Go.” We need to visit people and build up relationships and introduce them to Christ.<sup>725</sup>

## 5. Examples of obedience to the Great Commission:

- a. Two remarkable examples:
- 1) Paul at the marketplace every day, Acts 17:16-17
  - 2) Paul going house-to-house, Acts 20:20-21 (cf. Acts 5:42)
- b. Select summary statements of ministry in Luke-Acts:
- 1) Luke 4:15, “And He *began teaching* in their synagogues and was praised by all”
  - 2) Luke 4:40, “So He kept on **preaching** in the synagogues of Judea”
  - 3) Luke 8:1, “Soon afterwards, He *began* going around from one city and village to another, **proclaiming and preaching [evangelizing] the kingdom of God**. The twelve were with Him”
  - 4) Luke 9:2, “And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing”
  - 5) Luke 9:6, “Departing, they *began* going throughout the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere”
  - 6) Luke 10, 1, “Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come”
  - 7) Luke 13:10, “And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath”
  - 8) Luke 13:22, “And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem”
  - 9) Luke 20:1, “On one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted *Him*”
  - 10) Acts 4:31, “And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and *began to speak the word of God with boldness*”
  - 11) Acts 5:42, “And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on **teaching and preaching [evangelizing] Jesus as the Christ**”
  - 12) Acts 8:4-5, “Therefore, those who had been scattered went about **preaching [evangelizing] the word**. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and *began proclaiming Christ* to them”
  - 13) Acts 8:25, “So, when they had **solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord**, they started back to Jerusalem, and were **preaching the gospel [evangelizing]** to many villages of the Samaritans”
  - 14) Acts 8:40, “But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he kept **preaching the gospel [evangelizing]** to all the cities until he came to Caesarea”
  - 15) Acts 9:27, “But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had **spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus**”
  - 16) Acts 9:28, “And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem, **speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord**”
  - 17) Acts 11:20, “But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and *began speaking* to the Greeks also, **preaching the Lord Jesus**”
  - 18) Acts 13:5, “When they reached Salamis, they *began to proclaim [kataggello] the word of God* in the synagogues of the Jews”
  - 19) Acts 14:7, “and there they continued to **preach the gospel [evangelize]**”
  - 20) Acts 14:21 (NIV), “They **preached the good news in [evangelized]** that city and **won** a large number of **disciples**. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch”
  - 21) Acts 14:25, “When they had **spoken the word** in Perga, they went down to Attalia”

<sup>724</sup>Billy Graham is such an example. In his book, *How To Be Born Again* (Waco, TX: Word, 1977), 19-20, Dr. Graham spoke of a famous scientist from an eastern university who asked to see him one day. He had seen Billy Graham on television and felt that the evangelist knew the meaning of life. Those who are sowing the seed, will reap with joy.

<sup>725</sup>John Lukasse, *Churches with Roots* (Bromley, Kent, England: MARC, 1990), 108-09.

- 22) Acts 15:35, “But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch, **teaching** and **preaching** [evangelizing] with many others also, the word of the Lord.”
- 23) Acts 15:36, “Let us return and visit the brethren in every city in which we **proclaimed** [kataggello] the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are.”
- 24) Acts 16:6, “They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to **speak the word** in Asia”
- 25) Acts 16:10, “When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to **preach the gospel** [evangelize] to them”
- 26) Acts 17:13, “But when the Jews of Thessalonica found out that **the word of God had been proclaimed** [kataggello] by Paul in Berea also, they came there as well, agitating and stirring up the crowds”
- 27) Acts 18:11, “And he settled *there* a year and six months, **teaching the word of God** among them” (note that his purpose for teaching was evangelistic, Acts 18:10, “for I have many people in this city”)
- 28) Acts 19:8, “And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, **reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God**”
- 29) Acts 20:20-21, “How I did not shrink from **declaring to you anything that was profitable**, and **teaching** you publicly and from house to house, **solemnly testifying** to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ”
- 30) Acts 20:27, “For I did not shrink from **declaring to you the whole purpose of God**”
- 31) Acts 24:24, “But some days later, Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and **heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus**”
- 32) Acts 26:20, “but *kept* **declaring** both to those of Damascus first, and *also* at Jerusalem and *then* throughout all the region of Judea, and *even* to the Gentiles, that **they should repent and turn to God**, performing deeds appropriate to repentance”
- 33) Acts 28:31, “**preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ** with all openness, unhindered”

Summation of the 24 summary statements in Acts:

- a) **Method:** evangelize (8 times); speak (5 times); teaching (4 times); proclaim [kataggello] (thrice); declare (thrice); bold speech (twice); solemnly testify (twice); preaching (once); reason and persuade (once); listen [hear] (once)
- b) **Message:** word of God (4 times); word of the Lord (3 times); word (3 times); Lord Jesus (once); Lord Jesus Christ (once); Christ (once); Jesus as the Christ (once); name of Jesus (once); name of the Lord (once); faith in Christ Jesus (once); kingdom of God (twice); repent and turn to God (once); repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (once); the whole purpose of God (once)
- c. Other examples of obedience:
  - 1) Mark 5:20; Luke 8:39
  - 2) Mark 16:10, 20
  - 4) 1 Cor 16:9-10
  - 5) Gal 4:13
  - 6) 1 Thess 2:1-2
- d. Examples of disobeying the command (or opportunity) to preach:
  - 1) Jonah, Jonah 1:2-3
  - 2) The case of the fearful “rulers” who would not confess Christ openly for fear of the Jews, John 12:42-43 (cf. John 7:13; 19:38):
 

“Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.”
  - 3) The case of Peter denying Christ, Matt 26:69-75 and parallels
  - 4) The case of John Mark withdrawing from the missionary journey, Acts 13:13; 15:38
  - 5) The case of Paul’s fear and silence, Acts 18:9-10

## 6. Results of obedience:<sup>726</sup>

- a. Souls are saved (cf. Psa 51:13; Mal 2:6):
  - 1) Acts 2:41, "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls"
  - 2) Acts 11:21, "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord"
- b. Rejoicing:
  - 1) Acts 8:8, "So there was much rejoicing in that city"
  - 2) Acts 8:40, "and the eunuch no longer saw him [Philip], but went on his way rejoicing"
  - 3) Acts 13:52, "And the disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit"
- c. Churches are planted:
  - 1) Acts 16:40, "They went out of the prison and entered *the house of* Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed"
  - 2) Acts 18:7-8, "Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue. Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized"
- d. Churches grow:
  - 1) Acts 2:47, "So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls"
  - 2) Acts 5:14, "And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to *their number*"

## 7. Obedience to the Great Commission relates to other aspects of following Christ:

### Introduction:

- 1) Obedience to the Great Commission does not compete with or contradict other commands
  - 2) Obedience to the Great Commission does not conflict with or alter the other commands of Scripture
    - a) By the way, false dichotomies and segmentations abound with virtually every other command in Scripture, from theological to practical
  - 3) Obedience to the Great Commission, in fact, compliments all the other commands of Scripture and motivates the Christian to obey them
- a. Verbal proclamation follows the purpose of Jesus on earth:
    - 1) His **revelatory** purpose, Matt 17:5, Mark 1:11, John 12:45; 14:9
    - 2) His **redemptive** purpose, Mark 10:45, John. 1:29
    - 3) His **prophetic** purpose, Luke 24:44 (cf. John 19:28, 1 Cor 15:3-4)
    - 4) His **evangelistic** purpose, Luke 4:43-44 (cf. Matt 4:17, 9:35, Mark 1:14-15)
    - 5) His **exemplary** purpose, John 13:14-15 (cf. Mark 10:45, John 20:21, 1 Cor 11:1)
  - b. Verbal proclamation follows the example of Jesus on earth (cannot have *imitatio Christi*—the imitation of Christ without aggressive proclamational evangelism):
    - 1) Following Jesus' example in evangelism, Mark 10:45, Luke 4:43-44; John 20:21
    - 2) Following Jesus' example in obedience:
      - a) Jesus' submission to God the Father's will, Matt 26:42, John 17:4, Phil 2:7
      - b) Jesus learned obedience, Heb 5:8
      - c) The importance of obedience for the Christian, John 3:36, 13:17, 14:21, 23-24, James. 1:22, 1 John 2:3-6, 5:3, 3 John 6, Rev 14:12
    - 3) Following Jesus' example of service:
      - a) Jesus came to serve, Mark 10:45

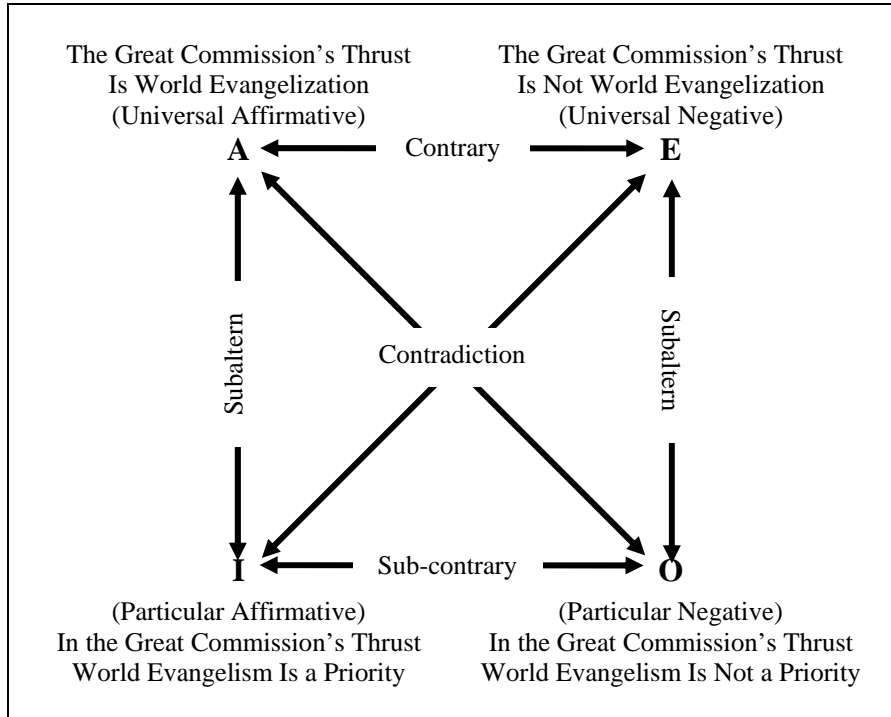
---

<sup>726</sup>The results of disobedience in fulfilling this command are very sad. See Chapter 20, "Results, Reactions, and Responses," D. 5, "The Results of No Verbal Witness of God's Word."

- b) Evangelism is serving others, I Pet. 1:12
- c) Evangelism allows Christ to work through us, Rom 15:18
- c. Verbal proclamation glorifies God:
  - 1) The Christian is commanded to glorify God, 1 Cor 10:31, Col 3:17, 1 Pet 4:11
  - 2) Evangelism glorifies God, John 15:8 (cf. John 4:36, “fruit for life eternal”)

Conclusion: Millard J. Erickson wrote, “This was the final point Jesus made to His disciples. It appears that He regarded evangelism as the very reason for their being.”<sup>727</sup>

- d. The Great Commission and Logic’s Square of Opposition:



**8. Additions to the Great Commission and/or “Preach the Gospel and ...”:**

The existence of other commands compliments and does not contradict, negate or alter the thrust of the Great Commission passages:

“If Christians don’t become comfortable with outreach, Bible study is academic, prayer is boring, and fellowship is superficial.”<sup>728</sup>

“Without outreach, the [small] group will die a natural death and produce lopsided Christians. Christians who know the Bible, love to fellowship with other Christians, and pray on a regular basis, but don’t do outreach *militate against the cause of Christ.*”<sup>729</sup>

<sup>727</sup>Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 1052.

<sup>728</sup>Bill Hull, *The Disciple Making Pastor* (Old Tappan, NJ; Revell, 1988), 176.

<sup>729</sup>*Ibid.*, 179 (italics mine).

Question on Galatians 2:6—  
Additions to Proclamation or to Message?  
Or, Is Galatians 1:8-9 about Method or Message?

Original	Left Ambiguous [allowing for methodology]				Imply "Message"		Add the Word "Message" to the Text				
	Byzantine Textform	English Geneva (1599)	New King James (1982)	King James Version (1611, 1769)	New American Standard (1977)	Bible in Basic English (1949, 1964)	New American Bible (1970)	New Jerusalem Bible (1985)	NIV (1984)	God's Words for the Nations (1995)	ABS's CEV (1995)
Ἄπο δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι ὅποιοι ποτε ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον θεοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει.  Ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἱ δοκούντες οὐδὲν προσανέθειντο·	But by them which seemed to be great, I was not taught (whatsoever they were in time passed, I am nothing the better: God accepteth no mans person) for they that are the chiefe, did adde nothing to me aboue that I had.	But from those who seemed to be something—they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me.	But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:	But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me: God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.	But from those who seemed to be important (whatever they were has no weight with me: God does not take man's person into account): those who seemed to be important gave nothing new to me	But from those who were reputed to be important (what they once were makes no difference to me: God shows no partiality)—those of repute made me add nothing.	but those who were recognised as important people—whether they actually were important or not: There is no favouritism with God—those recognised leaders, I am saying, had nothing to add to my message.	As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me: God does not judge by external appearance—those men added nothing to my message.	Those who were recognized as important people didn't add a single thing to my message. (What sort of people they were makes no difference to me, since God doesn't play favorites.)	Some of them were supposed to be important leaders, but I didn't care who they were. God doesn't have any favorites! None of these so-called special leaders added anything to my message.	But from those who were influential (whatever they were makes no difference to me; God shows no favoritism between people)—those influential leaders added nothing to my message.

The Greek verb προσανατίθημι is found twice in the NT, and only in Galatians: 1:16; 2:6.

The French *Le Semeur* (1992, 1999) for the last phrase is even more dynamic reading, “Oh well, these very influential people imposed no other directives upon me” (notice that these others are characterized as “very influential people who impose directives”—in sink with the Roman Catholic hierarchy).

Notice some issues in the translation of this verse:

- 1) Is the main thrust of the Book of Galatians the message or the method?
  - a) This issue parallels the issue in translating 1:8-9
- 2) At issue is also the translation of the verb προσανατίθημι, which is unique to Galatians, and forms one of the main elements in the message of Galatians:
  - a) Paul did not communicate with, confer with, or consult flesh and blood
  - b) The great or those of high reputation added or contributed nothing to Paul
- 3) At issue is the evangelism methodology of Paul, which is not unrelated to the message that he preached:
  - a) Did he need to do more than just proclaim or evangelize?
  - b) The only advice given here is in 2:10, “only remember the poor”—again advice dealing with methodology:
    - (1) Could it be that the apostles were more comfortable with servant evangelism?
    - (2) Could it be that this was the “I am of Christ” contingent in the church of Corinth?
    - (3) Was the church in Jerusalem so interested in lifestyle issues that they had lost the preach in the Great Commission?
    - (4) When those of James came to Antioch, Peter began to stand aloof from the Gentiles (2:11-12)—that was not very evangelistic, it was lifestyle!

- 4) The changing of the dative ἐμοὶ to a genitive, and then the addition of the word “message” in both the New International Version and in the Catholic New Jerusalem Bible brings consternation

a. **Understanding the Great Commission in light of other biblical commands:**<sup>730</sup>

1) **Love:**

- a) Deut 6:5, “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” (cf. Matt 22:36-40, Mark 12:28-31)
- b) Lev 19:18, “But you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.” (cf. Matt 22:36-40, Mark 12:28-31):
- (1) Love for God is needed first before we can love our fellow man or even our brother in Christ, 1 John 5:2
  - (2) If a knowledge and acceptance of the forgiveness of the Lord Jesus is the most important thing for the Christian, it must be the most important thing for his neighbor also!<sup>731</sup> The command for evangelism is clearly implied in this command.
  - (3) Eli the priest honored his sons above God, therefore, displacing the order of these commands, 1 Sam. 2:29. It is possible to let our priorities become incorrect even though we seem to be doing good.
- c) John 13:35, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
- d) Romans 13:8-10, “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law. For this, ‘You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,’ and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; love therefore is the fulfillment of *the* law”
- e) 1 John 2:15, “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him.”
- f) Sample approaches to love as the priority:
- (1) Charles Arn:
 

“The great commission—to make disciples—and the great commandment—to love—are inseparably linked. The *mission* Christ gave us is to make disciples. The *model* He gave us is love ... the *method* He gave us is love ... the *motive* He gave us is love ... the *message* He gave us is love.”<sup>732</sup>
  - (2) John Shore (as an example of the logic involved and impact):
    - (a) Shore began his argument with equating the Great Commission and the Great Commandment as twin commands:
 

“And what I’m suggesting we concentrate *upon* is this book’s Core Idea, which is that here in America we (lovely, lovely) Christians have for so long now been so energetically endeavoring to fulfill the Great Commission that it’s reasonable to wonder whether or not at this point we are, by continuing to press upon people a belief system they already know about and have already rejected, working to the detriment of the Great Commission, but also against that *other* humongous To Do item Jesus gave us—the Great Commandment.

I mean, I’m totally just an Average Layperson, for sure—but I’m pretty sure that’s all anyone needs to be in order to at least know that Christ gave his followers two

<sup>730</sup>Resulting from this study, I have noted a total of 57 additions or alterations of the Great Commission in Chart 7, “Alternatives to Mere Proclamation,” in my *Charts for a Theology of Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman, 2007), 22-25.

<sup>731</sup>Contra John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL; InterVarsity, 1975), 29.

<sup>732</sup>Charles Arn, “A Response to Dr. Rainer: What Is the Key to Effective Evangelism?” *Journal of the American Society for Church Growth* 6 (1995): 77-78.

Colossal Directives: the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, right? The former, of course, tells us (in so many words) to do our best to try to convert nonbelievers into Christians ('Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.');

the latter (after the 'Love the Lord Your God with all your heart') enjoins us to 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>733</sup>

- (b) Shore restated the argument (above) that most if not all Americans have heard the Gospel, or that the Great Commission has been fulfilled in the U.S.:

"Yay! Pretty much every last, single person in America has heard the word of God! The Great Commission has gone a very long way toward being fulfilled right here in our own backyard!

"Whoo-hoo!

"We rock!

"Well done, good and faithful servants"

"Glory be to God!

"So. Now what?"

"Well, the contention of this book is that now that it's safe to assume that all of our neighbors already know the story of Christ and the Bible and so on, it might be a good time to take some of that enormous energy we currently spend on converting those same people, and to focus it instead on 'just' loving them as much as we love ourselves."<sup>734</sup>

- (c) Shore then related his logic to the Great Commission in the very next paragraph:

"In other words, I think that here in the great, gospel-saturated U.S. of A., it's time to shift our concentration from fulfilling the Great Commission to fulfilling the Great Commandment."<sup>735</sup>

- (d) After denigrating initiative evangelism, Shore continued, giving the context for the title of his book:

"It's not good for the Great Commission because it simply doesn't work: A person on the receiving end of the message that in order to become a better (or at least 'okay') person they need to undergo a radical transformation is generally inspired to do nothing so much as hightail it away from the messenger. And it's not good for the Great Commandment, either, since once an evangelizer and his or her would-by Christian have split up, their relationship is finished—and unless the Hallmark company has come up with some truly amazing new card I haven't yet heard about, it's not possible to love someone with whom you have no relationship at all.

"The bottom line is that no matter how artfully we put it, or how passionately or sincerely we mean them well, when we convey to an unbeliever the message that they really *need* to become a Christian, the only thing they can possibly understand us to be saying—the only thing *we'd* hear if we were in their shoes<sup>736</sup>—is that we're okay, and that they definitely are not.

"We're great; they're on their way to perdition.

"A message not exactly cockle-warming to hear. Which is why unbelievers, as we all know, never listen to it for long at all."<sup>737</sup>

- (e) Finally, Shore placed the Great Commandment as a priority above the Great Commission (an amazing admission):

"Besides, doesn't as Great Commandment totally trump a Great Commission? Isn't it a much bigger deal to be *commanded* to do something than it is to be *commissioned* to do it? ...

---

<sup>733</sup>John Shore, *I'm OK—You're Not: The Message We're Sending to Unbelievers and Why We Should Stop* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2007), 11-12.

<sup>734</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>735</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>736</sup>Reminiscent of the book: John Kramp, *Out of Their Faces and Into Their Shoes: How to Understand Spiritually Lost People and Give Them Directions to Find God* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1995).

<sup>737</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

“The point it: Just on the *face* of it, shouldn’t we pay a lot more attention to fulfilling the Great Commandment than we do to fulfilling the Great Commission? (Yes. I’m submitting that the answer is ‘Yes.’)

“And let us, by the by [sic.], not forget that Jesus himself never referred to what he said in Matthew 28 as the ‘Great Commission’—that those words are *our words*, not his.”<sup>738</sup>

(3) Further recent books in this area:

- (a) Apparently, in 2007, NavPress decided to create a new marketing wave [possibly to parallel or compete with Zondervan’s *EmergentYS* line?] by focusing on love as the overriding commandment over the Great Commission, and, along with John Shore’s *I’m OK—You’re Not: The Message We’re Sending to Unbelievers and Why We Should Stop*, they published three companion volumes:

[1] Paul Borthwick, *Stop Witnessing ... and Start Loving*.

[2] Paul Miller, *Love Walked Among Us*.

[3] Scott Morton, *Down-to-Earth Discipling*.

- (b) Moody Press also published on this topic: Timothy George and John Woodbridge, *The Mark of Jesus: Loving in a Way the World Can See* (Chicago: Moody, 2005).

- (c) A quick perusal of the chronological bibliography at the end of Chapter One in this text should show how many books are published in this vein on a regular basis. Special focus should be the “Friendship/Lifestyle Evangelism” wave from 1974-1981.

g) Analysis:

- (1) If anything, the commands to love in the Bible encourage obedience to the Great Commission:
- (a) God’s love actively brought salvation to us, John 3:16, Rom 5:8, 1 Jn 4:10
- (b) Our love for others, if it is from God, will lead us to actively pursue bringing salvation to others (cf. 2 Cor 5:14; e.g. J. I. Packer quote above).
- (2) Also, are not the quotes of Jesus in Matt 22:37-39 (and parallels) merely a summary or restatement of the Law of Moses, which was therefore fulfilled by Jesus, and not part of the “law of Christ” (1 Cor 9:21)?
- (a) As such, they are not salvific, lest we make Jesus into a Moses, as was noted by Luther,<sup>739</sup> and as was confirmed by [Pope] Leo XIII<sup>740</sup>
- (b) Nor is the “Great Commandment” ever said to summarize the New Covenant
- (c) The “Great Commandment,” the second commandment, and their corollary, the “Golden Rule” (Rom 13:19) summarize the Old Covenant
- (d) Under the New Covenant, Jesus gave a “New Commandment,” in which He limited the command to mean love toward believers, “love one another”
- (e) True, non-conservative theologians (falsely) try to insert (at this point) the collectivist idea of the “Brotherhood of Men” and the “Fatherhood of God”
- (f) However, “One another” from the mouth of Jesus to His disciples in the upper room, and from the Apostle John in his epistles, is clearly communicated within the context of the household of faith, and parallels Paul admonition in Gal 6:10:

---

<sup>738</sup>Ibid., 16, 17.

<sup>739</sup>“Therefore, beware lest you make Christ into a Moses, and the gospel into a book of law or doctrine, as has been done before now, including some of Jerome’s prefaces” (Martin Luther, “Preface [to New Testament],” in *Martin Luther*, John Dillenberger, ed. [Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1961], 17).

<sup>740</sup>“If Sacrifices are abolished, Religion can neither exist nor be conceived. The Evangelical Law is not inferior, but superior, to the Old Law. It brings to perfection what the Old Law had merely begun.” (Leo XIII, *Caritatis Studium* [25 July 1898]; available at: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/ENCYC/L13CARIT.HTM>; accessed: 8 Sept 2004; Internet).

“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith”

- (g) My experience in local church ministry has shown me that those churches who do not obey the differentiation of Paul in Galatians 6:10, because unending need exists, and because they help all people (proudly) without regard to their being converted Christians or not, ultimately neglect even the believers within their own churches! A very sad state of affairs for any local church. How quickly non-conversionistic pastors, churches, and schools become anti-conversionistic!

h) A special analysis of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

“Love is patient, it is kind; love is not jealous; love is not boastful, it is not arrogant, it is not disgraceful, it does not seek its own, it is not irritable, it does not devise evil, it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but celebrates in truthfulness; it bears all things, it believes all things, it hopes all things, it endures all things. Love is never destroyed. But for prophecies, they will be nullified; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will be nullified” (trans. mine).

- (1) Is this definition of love a list of virtues by which a person is saved?
- (a) No! Not only is God the initiator of love (1 John 4:19), “We love, because He first loved us.”
- (b) But He is the initiator of our salvation, (1 John 4:10), “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”
- (c) God gives us His love, we cannot work it up (Rom 5:5), “and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”
- (2) If love “bears all things,” does God not show love if He holds mankind accountable for sin? No! Note the uses of “those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven” (Rom 1:32; 2:2; Gal 5:21; cf. 1 Cor 6:9-10)
- (3) If love never fails, and prophecies will be nullified, then is love (lifestyle, friendship, and service), more important than prophesying (evangelizing and preaching) in evangelism, especially in light of 1 Cor 8:1, “Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies”? Again, no!
- (a) This reversal exemplifies the nullifying of a direct command, by the misapplication of a tangential principle; likewise, the Jews nullified the command of God to care for their parents by their sophistry, Matt 15:3-9
- (4) If knowledge will “pass away,” is love therefore more important than knowledge? And is love therefore more important than doctrine or doctrinal statements, such as the BF&M?

No! It’s not a matter of either-or, it’s a matter of both/and:

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. (John 1:14-17)

i) A thought from J. I. Packer:

“My neighbor’s deepest need is to know the love of God in Jesus Christ, and my claim to love him or her is hollow if I make no attempt to meet that need as best I can.”<sup>741</sup>

<sup>741</sup>J.I. Packer, “Foreword” in Lewis A. Drummond, *The Word of the Cross* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 7.

## 2) Ministry/Service:

- a) Jesus came to serve, Mark 10:45
- b) The Christian is called to serve God, Psa 100:2
- c) Evangelism is clearly serving the Creator rather than the creature (cf. Rom 1:25):

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. Gal 1:10 [cf. Gal 1:6-12; 5:11]

- d) Jesus' service evangelism of feeding 5,000 in John 6 accounted for no advance in followers. He started the chapter with 12 and ended the chapter with 12, even though he had healed many, fed 5,000, and even walked on water!

### (1) An interesting sidenote on this chapter:

- (a) Jesus may have even lost Judas due to the events in this chapter, 6:70-71
- (b) Notice that Judas seemed to have a fascination with acts of servanthood, John 12:4-6, and with personal financial gain
- (c) When did the Devil put into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus, was it John 6 or John 12? Interesting!

### (2) How easy it is for God's people to have man's interests on their minds and not God's:

- (a) Notice what Jesus said of Peter:

"From that time Jesus Christ began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, 'God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You.' But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's'" (Matt 16:21-23)

- (b) Remember that this weakness of Peter showed up again:

"Simon Peter therefore having a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus. Jesus therefore said to Peter, 'Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?'" (John 18:10-11; cf. Matt 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:49-51)

- (c) Jesus said to Pilate:

"Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm'" (John 18:36)

- (d) Jesus also said of His kingdom:

"Now having been questioned by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was coming, He answered them and said, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; <sup>21</sup> nor will they say, "Look, here *it is!*" or, "There *it is!*" For behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.'" (Luke 17:20-21)

- (e) Was not this view of a future reward why the men of old were commended in Hebrews 11?

### (3) Notice that one of Paul's issue with the "James, Cephas, and John"—was this an issue brought up by the Judaizers against Paul's methodology of evangelism?

"And recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we *might go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. *They only asked* us to remember the poor—the very thing I also was eager to do" (Gal 2:9-10)

[also see my discussion of Galatians 6:10 above, which also fits with so-called servant evangelism]

### 3) Worship:

Introduction: Over-emphasizing the worship of God, as does the Westminster Confession,<sup>742</sup> is perhaps the most common theologically-based approach to de-emphasize an urgent evangelism.<sup>743</sup>

- a) “I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth,” Psa 46:10
- b) Consider the words of the Apostle Paul:

How shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?  
And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard?  
And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Rom 10:14)

It is clear that without conversion to Christ (the new birth), no man can worship God in Spirit and in truth (cf. John 4:23-24). In fact they do not know whom nor why they are to worship. Evangelism is the only means of acquainting people to Jesus that they may worship Him. Thus evangelism is not only a chronological priority to worship, but it is also the priority of the Great Commission passages and the methodology in the Book of Acts. Note that there are few if any worship services in Acts (other than a non-voluntary audience in prison in Acts 16), while the Book of Acts is replete with examples of evangelism!

### 4) The Great Commission and/or Political Involvement?

- a. The foreword to Charles Colson’s *How Now Shall We Live?* explained his view of the mission of the church. Colson wrote:

“Don’t get me wrong. We need prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship, and witnessing. But if we focus exclusively on these disciplines—and if in the process we ignore our responsibility to redeem the surrounding culture—our Christianity will remain privatized and marginalized.”<sup>744</sup>

- b. Colson seemed to switch belief in the gospel for belief in a Christian worldview [aka. moral philosophy]. He continued later:

“It is our contention in this book that the Lord’s cultural commission is inseparable from the great commission. That may be a jarring statement for many conservative Christians, who, through much of the twentieth century have shunned the notion of reforming culture, associating that concept with the liberal social gospel. The only task of the church, many fundamentalists and evangelicals believed, is to save as many lost souls as possible from a world literally going to hell. But this explicit denial of a Christian worldview is unbiblical and is the reason we have lost so much of our influence in the world. *Salvation does not consist simply of freedom from sin; salvation also means being restored to the task we were given in the beginning—the job of creating culture.*”<sup>745</sup>

[See the notes on historical tautology at the end of this Chapter in response to Colson’s reinterpretation of the Nineteenth Century evangelicalism]

---

<sup>742</sup>“1) What is the chief end of man? A. Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever” (Westminster Shorter Catechism,” accessed 1 Dec 2005; from [http://www.shortercatechism.com/resources/wscformats/BPC\\_wsc.doc](http://www.shortercatechism.com/resources/wscformats/BPC_wsc.doc); Internet).

<sup>743</sup>I have included significant quotes from a paper by Mark D. Liederbach, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in his “Ethical Evaluation of Modern Motivations for Evangelism” (Mark D. Liederbach, “Ethical Evaluation of Modern Motivations for Evangelism” in which he followed this same line of reasoning, citing Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s emphasis on the “who” (knowing Christ) before the “how” (preaching the Gospel). Liederbach made the glory of God his central interpretive motif to the detriment of the urgency of the evangelism mandate and examples (see footnote above under “The Urgencies of Evangelism,” “2 The Lost Are Really Lost”).

<sup>744</sup>Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* x.

<sup>745</sup>*Ibid.*, 295-96; emphasis mine.

## c. Colson continued:

“When we turn to the New Testament, admittedly we do not find verses specifically commanding believers to be engaged in politics or the law or education or the arts. But we don’t need to, because the cultural mandate given to Adam still applies [Gen 1:28].”<sup>746</sup>

d. He buttressed his views with knowledge from special revelation and general revelation,<sup>747</sup> and through affirming, “all truth is God’s truth.”<sup>748</sup> Thus, due to the cultural mandate superseding theological distinctives, Colson continued:

“But if we are to have an impact on culture, the beginning point must be to take our stand united in Christ, making a conscious effort among all true believers to come together across racial, ethnic, and confessional lines.... This is difficult for many evangelicals (as well as Catholics and Orthodox) to accept, and understandably so.... Conservative believers are distrustful of ecumenism because of the danger of glossing over those differences. Focusing on worldview, however, can help build bridges.”<sup>749</sup>

## e. Thus, it seems that Colson may have advised unity based on a Christian worldview [or moral philosophy], rather than based on the gospel and evangelism

**5) The Glory of God?**

Introduction: For some high Calvinists the “glory of God” (with its corollary “worship”) is the Central Interpretive Motif (CIM) of the Bible and for all time. For example, John Piper began his explanation of this view in this way:

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Mission exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.

Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal of missions....

Worship is also the fuel of missions....

If the pursuit of God’s glory is not ordered above the pursuit of man’s good in the affections of the heart and the priorities of the church, man will not be well served and God will not be duly honored.<sup>750</sup>

Notice how this view changed Piper’s approach to the message of salvation:

The gospel demand that flows from God to the nations is an eminently shareable, doable demand, namely to rejoice and be glad in God.... What message would missionaries rather take than the message: Be glad in God! Rejoice in God! Sing for joy in God!<sup>751</sup>

There seems to be a real lack in the gospel according to Luke 24:46-47 or 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 as the primary message. Piper seems not to ascribe to “I have determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified” (1 Cor 2:2). Rather, Piper posited a “more profound message,” the glory of God! What of the reproach of the Christ (Heb 11:26) or the shame of the cross (Heb 12:2)?

There was similarly a lack of clarity as regards “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Luke 24:47):

His first and great requirement of all men everywhere is that they repent from seeking their joy in other things and begin seeking it only in him.<sup>752</sup>

---

<sup>746</sup>*Ibid.*, 296.

<sup>747</sup>*Ibid.*, 296-297.

<sup>748</sup>*Ibid.*, 189-199.

<sup>749</sup>*Ibid.*, 303-04.

<sup>750</sup>John Piper, “Let the Nations Be Glad!” in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed., Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, eds. (Pasadena: William Carey, 1981, 1992, 1999), 49. Piper provides a greater expansion of his view in *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993).

<sup>751</sup>Piper, “Let the Nations Be Glad!” in *Perspectives*, 51.

This statement seems to be nothing more than a restatement of [St] Augustine's own spiritual journey, which in actuality had more to do with philosophical theology and less to do with the Gospel of Christ.<sup>753</sup>

Piper ended by restating the Great Commission(s) of Jesus Christ in his own terms:

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. The Great Commission is first to delight yourself in the Lord (Ps 37:4). And then to declare, "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy" (Ps 67:4). In this way God will be glorified from beginning to end and worship will empower the missionary enterprise till the coming of the Lord.<sup>754</sup>

However, making the choice to use the "glory of God" as the unique or prior CIM to all others is not as clear from Scripture...

- a) Paul argued that **the Jews made their boast in God** (Rom 2:17), *without* however submitting to or believing in Christ (as do also Muslims)!
- b) Can not the necessity for and the practice of verbal evangelism be lost by philosophically-minded Calvinists (e.g. Joseph Hussey<sup>755</sup>), or at least be lowered from being the highest object of the church (e.g. John Gill<sup>756</sup>)?
- c) It would seem preferable to use the hermeneutic of Jesus on the road to Emmaus and elsewhere, that the CIM of the Bible *is* the person and work of Christ (Luke 18:31-33; 24:25-27, 44-45). Christ and His death as the CIM is confirmed in the preaching of the Apostle Paul, "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2; cf. 1 Cor 15:1-8).
- d) On the other hand, Charles Kelley explained that the "Great Commission Hermeneutic" propelled Southern Baptists in New Testament evangelism.<sup>757</sup>
- e) Furthermore, the responses demanded by these two CIMs are also quite different:
  - (1) The response corresponding to the glory of God is worship... Yet unfortunately there are many cases of churches who have a doxology [of sorts] without proper soteriology!
    - (a) Note the philosophical approach of father of Medieval scholasticism, Peter the Lombard (d. 1164) in his *Sentences*<sup>758</sup>
    - (b) Another philosophical parallel is Blaise Pascal's "On the Conversion of the Sinner"<sup>759</sup>

---

<sup>752</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>753</sup>See my notes in *UE*, Chapter 7, B. Some Historic Looks..., 2. On the Demise of Evangelism and Conversion Theology..., b. Augustine.

<sup>754</sup>*Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>755</sup>Joseph Hussey [1659-1726], *God's Operations of Grace: but No Offers of His Grace* (London: D. Bridge, 1707).

<sup>756</sup>John Gill, *Body of Divinity* (1769, 1770, 1839).

<sup>757</sup>Charles Kelley, *How Did They Do It? The Story of Southern Baptist Evangelism* (New Orleans: Insight, 1993), 119-131.

<sup>758</sup>"Among things, therefore, it must be considered, that as (St.) Augustine says in the same (book) [*On Christian Doctrine*, bk 1, ch 3, n 1], 'there are some things, which one is to enjoy, others, which one is to use, others, which enjoy and use. Those, which one is to enjoy, make us blessed; by those others, which one is to use, as ones tending towards beatitude we are helped and, as it were [quasi], propped up, so that we can arrive at those things, which make us blessed, and cleave to them. But between both things, which are enjoyed and used, we have been constituted, as it were,' as both Angels and Saints [*Angeli sancti*]. 'Moreover *to enjoy* is to cleave to any thing by love on account of its very self; but *to use* (is) to refer that which has come to be used to obtain that, which one is to enjoy; otherwise it is abusing, not using. For an illicit use ought to be named abuse [abusum] and/or an abuse [abusio]' [*ibid.*, ch 4 and 5]. 'The things, therefore, which one is to enjoy, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit'" (Peter the Lombard, *Sentences*, bk 1, ch 1; accessed 16 May 2006; available from: <http://www.franciscan-archive.org/lombardus/opera/l1-01.html>; Internet.

- (c) One must remember that this philosophical approach to conversion was developed and taught as the Roman church was persecuting and executing the [so-called] Albigenses, as well as the Waldenses, Lollards, and the Hussites.
  - (2) However, the response corresponding to the New Testament Gospel is to repent and believe (cf. Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47)!
  - f) Please also see my notes following Chapter 5, “The Gospel of Christ or the Glory of God as Central Interpretive Motif?”
- b. Evaluation:
- 1) Two common denominators in most concepts competing for priority over the Great Commission are:
    - a) They are biblical
    - b) They are important
  - 2) However, they move aside the priority of the Gospel and the Great Commission in a subtle way—they redefine the issues and reframe the question:
    - a) In that light, they do not represent “the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27)
    - b) Rather, an overemphasis on some aspect of biblical revelation, representing a partial understanding of God’s revelation, often acquiescing to a non-initiative spirit and methodology of evangelism
  - 3) They fall short of dealing adequately with the teaching of the New Testament, and in the long run move local churches away from their evangelistic mandate.

---

<sup>759</sup>“The first thing that God inspires in the soul that he deigns to truly touch, is a knowledge of and an extraordinary insight by which the soul considers things [material] and itself in a completely new way.

“This new light gives her [the soul] fear and brings her a troubled [spirit] that pierces the tranquility she found in the things that gave her pleasure.

“She can no longer taste with ease the things that charmed her. A continuous unscrupulous battle in the midst of pleasure, and an internal view keeps her from finding the usual tenderness associated with [material] things or else they are abandoned with illusiveness of heart.

“But she finds even greater bitterness with the exercises of piety and the vanity of the world. On one hand, the presence of visible objects touches it with more hope than the invisible, and on the other the solidity of the invisible touches it in a greater way than the vanity of the visible. And in this way the presence of the one and the solidity of the other argue against her affection; and the vanity of the one and the absence of the other excites her horror; in this way there is born in her a disorder and confusion that....

“This uplift is so imminent and transcendental, that it does not stop in the heavens: there is not enough to satisfy above the heavens, nor with the angels, nor with other more perfect beings. She traverses all the creatures, and cannot stop her heart until she arrives at the throne of God, in which she begins to find her rest and the goodness that is such that there is nothing more lovable, and that can be taken from her without her own consent.

“For even if she does not feel the charms by which God rewards pious habits, she understands nevertheless that the creature cannot be more lovable than the Creator, and her reason assisted with the light of grace shows her that there is nothing more lovable than God and that he can be taken only from those who reject him, because to desire him is to possess him, and to refuse him is to lose him.

“Hence she herself rejoices that she has found goodness that cannot be ravished from her as long as she longs for it, and of which there is none higher.

“And in these new consternations she enters with new insight into the greatness of her Creator, and this with deep humiliations and adorations. She annihilates herself in his presence not being able to consider an idea of herself that is lowly enough, nor able to be able to conceive of a great enough revelation of this true sovereign, she makes new efforts to subjugate herself to the lowest abyss of nothingness, in considering God in his immensities which she multiplies; finally in his revelation, that saps all of her strength, she adores in silence, and she considers herself a vile and useless creature, and by these considerations reaffirmed, she adores him and blesses him, and would want to forever bless and adore him...” (Blaise Pascal, “Sur la Conversion du Pêcheur,” in *Pascal: Œuvres Complètes*, Louis Lafuma, ed. [New York: Macmillan, 1963]), 290-91. Translation by Thomas P. Johnston.

## 9. More Competing Priorities to the Great Commission:

### a. Go and Engage the Culture:

Introduction: Common among proponents of Apologetic Evangelism, is the concept of engaging the culture, using its arguments and its methods. While commendable on the surface, several dangers lie beneath the surface:

1. Engaging the culture using its arguments and issues may and *usually* does reframe the question away from the Gospel, biblical concepts, and biblical terminology.
2. Engaging the culture using its methods *quite often* removes the urgency from evangelism and changes the method to a non New Testament method.

### b. Social Transformation:

Social Transformation combines the service element mentioned above with a social zeal and political emphasis which transforms the Great Commission into a socio-economic enterprise. Every time period includes people, churches, and movements which morph in this direction. One example from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century may be the Salvation Army. World Vision was an “Evangelical” organization founded in 1950 by Bob Pierce, who preached two sermons at Billy Graham’s famous 1949 Los Angeles crusade. A look at World Vision’s six stated purposes can be compared to how Christ communicated the Great Commission in the Bible.<sup>760</sup>

---

<sup>760</sup>The following are the six stated purposes of World Vision, International, from its webpage titled, “What We Do”:

[1] “Transformational Development: Children are the hope for the world's future, yet they are its most vulnerable victims of conflict, disaster and poverty. Changing a child's life for the better is at the heart of the process of transformational development. This process first helps people and their communities recognise the resources that lie within themselves to make change possible. As a result, health care, agriculture production, water projects, education, micro-enterprise development, advocacy and other programmes are carried out by the community with the support of World Vision.

[2] “Emergency Relief: People whose lives are endangered by disasters or conflict need immediate, skilled assistance. World Vision is committed to respond to any major emergency around the world, through our own programs or in co-operation with partner agencies. For example, World Vision has responded to famine in Ethiopia and North Korea, hurricanes in Central America, earthquakes in El Salvador and India Taiwan and Turkey, and war refugees in Kosovo, Chechnya, Sierra Leone, Angola, and East Timor.

“World Vision's focus on development is steadfast, even in emergency response situations. To do this World Vision:

- Encourages maximum participation from those being assisted
- Operates with sensitivity to the local culture and relationships
- Works whenever possible through national partners
- Gives immediate attention to economic recover
- Encourages peace building through reconciliation and enhancement of civil society
- Provides local preparedness training in disaster-prone areas

[3] “Promotion of Justice: It is not enough to work with people to address the symptoms of their poverty. World Vision also addresses the complex, systematic factors that perpetuate poverty. World Vision supports community awareness of the collective ability to address unjust practices and begin working for change. World Vision speaks out on issues such as child labour, debt relief for poor nations, and the use of children as combatants in armed conflict.

“World Vision International has endorsed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as fundamental expressions of the freedoms and responsibilities that should exist in every country. Whenever possible, World Vision seeks opportunities to help reduce the level of conflict and to contribute to peaceful resolution and reconciliation.

[4] “Strategic initiatives: As a Christian organisation, World Vision shares a special relationship with local churches of all Christian traditions. World Vision, in partnership with the church, works toward reducing poverty and advocating for justice through our development, relief and advocacy efforts.

“World Vision invites Christian leaders to participate in conferences, consultations, training programmes and various educational opportunities. These diverse activities, which are typically the outcome of local initiatives, involve both clergy and lay people. World Vision welcomes opportunities to contribute to the life and work of the church in general.

[5] “Public Awareness: World Vision encourages people to care about the needs of others, to understand the causes of poverty, and to offer a compassionate response. These efforts include collaboration with media and

**c. Promote the Church of Rome and Its Priorities:**

- 1) Rome succinctly stated its view of mission in the 1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, after first restating that “outside the Church [of Rome] there is no salvation”:

“848 Although in ways known to himself God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, the Church still has the obligation and also the sacred right to evangelize all men.”<sup>761</sup>

- [1] “Through no fault of their own”: this universalistic statement undermines total depravity outside of God’s saving work in the heart through the power of the Gospel proclaimed and received by faith
- [2] “Known to God himself”: describing God as having some secret way of saving people outside of that which He has made known in His Word, e.g. Thomistic Naturalism combined with pure Pelagianism
- [3] “That faith without which it is impossible to please him” = for Rome, its Seven Sacraments with all the accoutrements
- [4] “Evangelize all men” is described in §851 as bringing people to a knowledge of the truth, then stating, “But the Church, to who this truth has been entrusted, must go out to meet their desire [semi-Pelagian], so as to bring them the truth [=Rome and all its Traditions].”<sup>762</sup>

- 2) Then, in stark contrast to Christ’s Great Commission as understood by Evangelicals, the 1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* its commissioning of its people, “The vocation of lay people,” in a very unusual way:

“899 The initiative of lay Christians is necessary especially when the matter involves discovering and inventing the means for permeating social, political and economic realities with the demands of Christian doctrine and life. This initiative is a normal element of the life of the Church:

“Lay believers are in the front line of Church life; for them the Church is the animating principle of human society. Therefore, they in particular ought to have an ever-clearer consciousness not only of belonging to the Church, but of being that Church, that is to say, the community of the faithful on earth under the leadership of the Pope, the Common Head, and of the bishops in communion with him. They are the Church [quoting from Pius XII, Discourse, 20 Feb 1946: AAS 38 (1946), 149; quoted by John Paul II, *Christifideles laici* (30 Dec 1988): 9].”<sup>763</sup>

- 3) Perhaps this methodology of “permeating social, political and economic realities” can coincide to some degree with the liberal Protestant social Gospel, however, in the case of liberal Protestant churches, “social gospel” does not include making their specific churches or denominations the entire and only center of salvific reality for all of human life and activity.

---

community participation in fundraising. In all its communications, World Vision upholds the dignity of suffering children and families in presenting explanations of the causes and consequences of poverty, war, neglect, and abuse. Its ministry seeks to touch the hearts and minds of both the poor and those with means.

[6] “Witness to Jesus Christ: World Vision believes that God, in the person of Jesus Christ, offers hope of renewal, restoration, and reconciliation. It is this message that World Vision seeks to make known by life, deed, word, and sign.

“World Vision’s work of human transformation is holistic and ecumenical. It is holistic by valuing the spiritual as well as the physical and the personal as well as the social. It is ecumenical in its willingness to partner with all Christian churches in fulfilling the mission of Christ.

“At the same time, World Vision is respectful of other faiths. It does not engage in proselytism or religious coercion of any kind. World Vision’s programmes and services are available to people in need regardless of race, ethnic background, gender, or religion” (available from: [http://www.wvi.org/wvi/about\\_us/what\\_we\\_do.htm](http://www.wvi.org/wvi/about_us/what_we_do.htm); accessed 15 Dec 2005).

<sup>761</sup>1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §848.

<sup>762</sup>1994 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §851.

<sup>763</sup>*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ed. by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger [Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994], §899.

## 4) Consider also the role of Mixed Marriages as fulfilling the Great Commission for Rome:

“If after one admonition ... to the end of turning the catholic party from a mixed marriage, this one nevertheless persists in the desire to enter into this contract, and if it is noted that the marriage will continue notwithstanding, the Catholic clergy may accord his physical presence, but must observe the following precautions:

“Firstly, that he not assist in such a marriage in a holy place, and that he not wear vestments giving the notion that it is a sacred rite, that he not pronounce ecclesiastical prayers on the contractants, and that he not bless them in any way.

“Secondly, that he require on the part of the heretical party a written declaration by which, in the form of a vow, and in the presence of two witnessed who must also be signatories, he/she is obliged to permit their partner the free exercise of the catholic religion and to educate in this same religion all the children that will be born, without differentiation of sex. ...

“Thirdly, that the catholic party itself also make a written declaration, sign by he/she and by two witnesses, in which he/she promises that not only will he/she never apostacize from the catholic religion,<sup>764</sup> but that she will educate it the same all children that will be born, and that he/she will tender with effectiveness unto the conversion of the other party, acatholic.”<sup>765</sup>

## 5) In conjunction with other statements of the Church of Rome, the above statements may be considered alarming (placed in chronological order of the citation):

## a) The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) on the rights of heretics:

“We condemn all heretics, whatever names they may go under. They have different faces indeed but their tails are tied together inasmuch as they are alike in their pride. Let those condemned be handed over to the secular authorities present, or to their bailiffs, for due punishment. Clerics are first to be degraded from their orders. The goods of the condemned are to be confiscated, if they are lay persons, and if clerics they are to be applied to the churches from which they received their stipends. Those who are only found suspect of heresy are to be struck with the sword of anathema, unless they prove their innocence by an appropriate purgation, having regard to the reasons for suspicion and the character of the person. Let such persons be avoided by all until they have made adequate satisfaction. If they persist in the excommunication for a year, they are to be condemned as heretics.”<sup>766</sup>

## b) The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) on submission of Catholics to heretical politicians:

“Let secular authorities, whatever offices they may be discharging, be advised and urged and if necessary be compelled by ecclesiastical censure, if they wish to be reputed and held to be faithful, to take publicly an oath for the defence of the faith to the effect that they will seek, in so far as they can, to expel from the lands subject to their jurisdiction all heretics designated by the church in good faith. Thus whenever anyone is promoted to spiritual or temporal authority, he shall be obliged to confirm this article with an oath. If however a temporal lord, required and instructed by the church, neglects to cleanse his territory of this heretical filth, he shall be bound with the bond of excommunication by the metropolitan and other bishops of the province. If he refuses to give satisfaction within a year, this shall be reported to the supreme pontiff so that he may then declare his vassals absolved from their fealty to him and make the land available for occupation by Catholics so that these may, after they have expelled the heretics, possess it unopposed and preserve it in the purity of the faith -- saving the right of the suzerain provided that he makes no difficulty in the matter and puts no impediment in the way. The same law is to be observed no less as regards those who do not have a suzerain.”<sup>767</sup>

---

<sup>764</sup>By the way, notice that from the perspective of Rome, Protestants and/or Evangelicals are members of another religion, foreign and quite different than their own. This same teaching is found over and over in their writings and “infallible” Traditions. Any attempt at cooperation is merely following the dictates of Aquinas, when Catholics are in a minority (see point “4) d)” below).

<sup>765</sup>Pius VI, *Exsequendo nunc* (13 July 1782), in Heinrich Denzinger, Peter Hünermann, and Joseph Hoffmann, *Symboles et définitions de la foi catholique (Enchiridion Symbolorum)*, 38<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Cerf, 1996), §2590.

<sup>766</sup>Canon 3, “Fourth Lateran Council,” available online at: <http://www.dailycatholic.org/history/12ecume1.htm>; accessed: 28 June 2003; Internet. While this quote comes from the first paragraph in Canon 3, *Denzinger (Enchiridion Symbolorum)* only contains the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Canon 3, titled “Concerning the heretics (Waldenses)”, DS 809.

<sup>767</sup>Canon 3, “Fourth Lateran Council,” available online at: <http://www.dailycatholic.org/history/12ecume1.htm>; accessed: 28 June 2003; Internet. While this quote comes from the first paragraph in Canon 3,

- c) Thomas Aquinas (1275) on Catholic fealty to heretics in politics (remembering that recent Popes have entitled him “Angelic Doctor,”<sup>768</sup> giving his teaching highest authority among Rome’s “doctors of the faith”):

“On the contrary, Gregory VII says (Council, Roman V): ‘Holding to the institutions of our holy predecessors, we, by our apostolic authority, absolve from their oath those who through loyalty or through the sacred bond of an oath owe allegiance to excommunicated persons: and we absolutely forbid them to continue their allegiance to such persons, until these shall have made amends.’ Now apostates from the faith, like heretics, are excommunicated, according to the Decretal [\*Extra, De Haereticis, cap. Ad abolendam]. Therefore princes should not be obeyed when they have apostatized from the faith.”<sup>769</sup>

- d) Thomas Aquinas (1275) on Catholics should act when in the minority:

“On the other hand, the rites of other unbelievers, which are neither truthful nor profitable are by no means to be tolerated, except perchance in order to avoid an evil, e.g. the scandal or disturbance that might ensue, or some hindrance to the salvation of those who if they were unmolested might gradually be converted to the faith. For this reason the Church, at times, has tolerated the rites even of heretics and pagans, when unbelievers were very numerous.”<sup>770</sup>

- e) Thomas Aquinas (1275) on Catholics laying ambushes for their enemies:<sup>771</sup>

“I answer that, The object of laying ambushes is in order to deceive the enemy. Now a man may be deceived by another's word or deed in two ways. First, through being told something false, or through the breaking of a promise, and this is always unlawful. No one ought to deceive the enemy in this way, for there are certain ‘rights of war and covenants, which ought to be observed even among enemies,’ as Ambrose states (De Officiis i).

“Secondly, a man may be deceived by what we say or do, because we do not declare our purpose or meaning to him. Now we are not always bound to do this, since even in the Sacred Doctrine many things have to be concealed, especially from unbelievers, lest they deride it, according to Mat. 7:6: ‘Give not that which is holy, to dogs.’ Wherefore much more ought the plan of campaign to be hidden from the enemy. For this reason among other things that a soldier has to learn is the art of concealing his purpose lest it come to the enemy’s knowledge, as stated in the Book on Strategy [\*Stratagematum i, 1] by Frontinus. Such like concealment is what is meant by an ambush which may be lawfully employed in a just war.

“Nor can these ambushes be properly called deceptions, nor are they contrary to justice or to a well-ordered will. For a man would have an inordinate will if he were unwilling that others should hide anything from him.”<sup>772</sup>

---

*Denzinger (Enchiridion Symbolorum)* only contains the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Canon 3, titled “Concerning the heretics (Waldenses)”, DS 809.

<sup>768</sup>“Although he made much of the supernatural character of faith, the Angelic Doctor did not overlook the importance of its reasonableness; indeed he was able to plumb the depths and explain the meaning of this reasonableness” (John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* [14 Sept 1998], 43; the title referring to Thomas Aquinas is found six times in this encyclical, 43, 43, 44, 57, 58, 61). Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis* (29 June 1943), 62; Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (30 Sept 1943), 3, 37; Pius XII, *Mediator Dei* (20 Nov 1947), 32; Pius XII, *Ad Caeli Reginam* (11 Oct 1954), 44; Pius XI, *Casti Connubii* (31 Sept 1930), 6, 94; Pius XI, *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii* (20 Dec 1935), 35, 73, 76; “And let it be clearly understood above all things that when We prescribe scholastic philosophy We understand chiefly that which the Angelic Doctor has bequeathed to us, and We, therefore, declare that all the ordinances of Our predecessor on this subject continue fully in force, and, as far as may be necessary, We do decree anew, and confirm, and order that they shall be strictly observed by all” (Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* [8 Sept 1907], 54); Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus* (18 Nov 1893), 18.

<sup>769</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[12], A[2], “Whether a prince forfeits his dominion over his subjects, on account of apostasy from the faith, so that they no longer owe him allegiance?” (online); available at: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html>; accessed: 10 June 2008; Internet.

<sup>770</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[10], A[11], “Whether the rites of unbelievers ought to be tolerated?” (online); available at: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html>; accessed: 10 June 2008; Internet.

<sup>771</sup>Remembering that the Dominicans considered the Albigenses there “enemies”: “Bishop Diego, borrowing from the enemy, recommended to the legates a new type of apostolate” (William A. Hinnebusch, O.P., *The History of the Dominican Order: Origins and Growth to 1500* [Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965], 1:23).

<sup>772</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[40], A[3], “Whether it is right to lay ambushes in war?” (online); available at: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.html>; accessed: 10 June 2008; Internet.

- f) Pius VI on the democratic form of government and the corresponding need to control education (1775):

“4. ... Since this cannot occur without careful education, it has been decreed accordingly that each diocese should establish a college for clerics in accordance with its means; if such a college already exists, it should be carefully preserved. ...

“Such colleges have been established and carefully equipped with suitable regulations and even greatly expanded in individual dioceses as Benedict XIV recommended to each of you as an indispensable part of your office.[6] So just as We must praise the outstanding labor and concern shown in founding and expanding these colleges, We must also urge on strongly those in whose diocese a college has not been established or completed.

“7. When they have spread this darkness abroad and torn religion out of men’s hearts, these accursed philosophers proceed to destroy the bonds of union among men, both those which unite them to their rulers, and those which urge them to their duty. They keep proclaiming that man is born free and subject to no one, that society accordingly is a crowd of foolish men who stupidly yield to priests who deceive them and to kings who oppress them, so that the harmony of priest and ruler is only a monstrous conspiracy against the innate liberty of man. ...

“... The holy Pope Leo used to say, ‘We can rule those entrusted to us only by pursuing with zeal for the Lord’s faith those who destroy and those who are destroyed and by cutting them off from sound minds with the utmost severity to prevent the plague spreading’ [footnote 13: ‘Epistles 7-8, chap. 2, to the bishops throughout Italy’].”<sup>773</sup>

- g) Further food for thought: Aquinas on loving your neighbor (remembering his role as “Angelic Doctor”):

“Therefore man, out of charity, ought to love himself more than his neighbor: in sign whereof, a man ought not to give way to any evil of sin, which counteracts his share of happiness, not even that he may free his neighbor from sin.”<sup>774</sup>

“Therefore, as regards the welfare of the soul we ought to love our neighbor more than our own body.”<sup>775</sup>

“Therefore it is more meritorious to love one’s friend than to love one’s enemy.”<sup>776</sup>

- h) Comments:

- (1) May these several quotes give an idea of the multitudinous similar quotations in the history of the Church of Rome, particularly before Napoleon’s rule in Western Europe.
- (2) May these quotes also provide insight as to how Rome has been taught to operate when it is in the minority.
- (3) May the reader not be so foolish as to think that these quotations from the history of the Church of Rome have no bearing on how she operates today.

## 11. In conclusion to notes on the Great Commission:

- a. The often repeated quote of Wesley speaks to the centrality of the Great Commission:

“You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those that want you, but to those that want you most. Observe: It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.”<sup>777</sup>

<sup>773</sup>Pius VI, *Inscrutable* (25 Dec 1775); available at: www.ewtn.com; accessed 8 Sept 2004; Internet.

<sup>774</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[26], A[4], “Whether out of Charity, Man ought to love himself more than his neighbor?”

<sup>775</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[26], A[5], “Whether a man ought to love his neighbor more than his own body?”

<sup>776</sup>Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, SS, Q[27], A[7], “Whether it is more meritorious to love an enemy than to love a friend?”

<sup>777</sup>John Wesley, “Charge to His Preachers,” in Robert E. Coleman, “*Nothing to Do but to Save Souls*” (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 1.

- b. Now we can understand the urgency of Bailey E. Smith as he wrote:

“Let me repeat a too-often forgotten truth. Witnessing is every Christian’s responsibility. Escape cannot be found in some other achievement in Christian service. Oh, dear Christian, get hot on the trail for the souls of men.”<sup>778</sup>

- c. Or else we can see that George Truett was biblical (and not just expressing the views of his time, nor some pious platitudes) when he stated:

“What great arguments shall I marshal to get us to do that right now? Shall I talk about duty? Then this is our first duty. And what great word that word duty is! Robert E. Lee was right, that matchless man of the South, when he wrote to his son saying: ‘Son, the great word is duty.’ Shall I talk about duty? My fellow Christians, your duty and mine, primal, fundamental, preeminent, supreme, tremendously urgent, is that we shall tell these around us that we want them saved.”<sup>779</sup>

- d. And W. A. Criswell was not exaggerating when he wrote:

“If the pastor is under authority to do the work of an evangelist, then he must do the same thing; namely, he must use his church organization to win the lost. To what better use could they be dedicated. And what a powerful instrument for witnessing the pastor has in the marching members of his many-faceted ministry through the church. The way the church is put together is inherently, intrinsically made for soul winning, for reaching lost people. It is the thing that comes naturally.”<sup>780</sup>

---

<sup>778</sup>Bailey E. Smith, *Real Evangelism* (Nashville: Broadman, 1978), 162.

<sup>779</sup>George W. Truett, *Quest for Souls* (New York: Doran, 1917), 72.

<sup>780</sup>W. A. Criswell, *Criswell’s Guidebook for Pastors* (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), 233.