

## True Missions

**Matthew 28:19-20** identifies what has come to be called the “Great Commission”: **“Therefore GO and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”** Jesus gave this command to the Apostles shortly before He ascended into Heaven, and it essentially outlines what Jesus expected the Apostles, and those who followed them, to do in His absence. This is every believer’s true mission here on earth.

It is interesting that in the original Greek, the only specific commands in Matthew 28:19-20 are “go,” and “make disciples.” The Great Commission instructs us to make disciples while we are going throughout the world and while we are going about our daily activities. How are we to make disciples? By baptising them and teaching them all that Jesus commanded. “Go,” and “make disciples” are the **commands** of the Great Commission. “Baptising” and “teaching” are the **means** by which we fulfil the “making disciples” aspect of the Great Commission.

Many understand **Acts 1:8** as part of the Great Commission as well, **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

The Great Commission is enabled by the **power of the Holy Spirit**. We are to be Christ's witnesses, fulfilling the Great Commission in our cities (Jerusalem), in our states and countries (Judea and Samaria), and anywhere else God sends us (to the ends of the earth).

The Great Commission is the end of a Gospel and the beginning of faith in action for all Christians. This command from Jesus is significant because it's a personal instruction for Christians to have a profound *faith* in Jesus Christ as indicated in *verse 18*. **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”** This is an incredibly powerful statement, which demands *absolute trust* in Jesus Christ, validating His power in the lives of Christians and their commitment to Him. This verse acts as a clear claim to Christ's omnipotence, and therefore His deity. If Christians do not believe this statement, *complete faith* does not exist. Jesus is very clear about His **authority** in the world -- it is perfect and total from the beginning of time itself (**John 1:1-3**).

In *verse 19*, Jesus gives His believers specific directions to follow after they have affirmed their faith. **“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”** Jesus calls all His followers to act and share the Good News of salvation throughout the world. People from all denominations hear this calling and travel each year on missionary trips throughout the earth, spreading the word of Jesus Christ. Many Christians have made incredible sacrifices, travelling to remote regions of the world beyond the civilised cities into jungles and deserts. However, mission fields can also be very close to home. It could be a neighbour who has not heard the Good News, or a poverty stricken area just down the road where people can't afford Bibles. In the 21st century, the Internet has become a mission field where people can reach out and share Christ's love. The places and people who need to hear the Gospel are everywhere!

Another important aspect of *verse 19* is that Christ is specifically teaching the doctrine of the Trinity to His followers. The three Persons of the Godhead are each equally and fully God and here presented in the logical order of Father, Son and Holy Spirit – yet only One God from the beginning (see **Romans 1:20**).

Finally, in *verse 20*, Jesus provides specific direction with affirmation to His followers, “...**teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**” Christians are instructed to teach others about Jesus Christ. But we can't profess Christ as Saviour and Lord, while rejecting certain of His teachings. As we teach Christ's truths, *verse 20* declares that we can be confident, in faith, that Jesus Christ will support us. This fact has proven trustworthy throughout the centuries as millions of believers have heard, accepted and shared the Good News of Jesus Christ. Yes, Christ has ascended back to heaven, but **He is present** by the power of the Holy Spirit in every believer!

#### **Note – The Great Commission – A Personal Calling**

In the Great Commission, Jesus calls every Christian to step out in faith and spread the Good News. This is *faith in action!* People who obey this command change their spiritual lives forever! As mentioned before, it could be spreading the Good News to a neighbour or moving to another country to reach the people there. It could be sharing with less fortunate kids down the street or spreading the Word in a town two hours away.

But wherever you **go**, every faithful Christian is compelled (through obedience) to share the Gospel. If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, where has He called you to go? Who has God put on your heart to share the gift of salvation? What small or large steps can you take, with the knowledge that Christ will be by your side always, “to make disciples of all the nations”?

Whatever the answers... GO! But GO with all the **authority** that Christ passed on to His church. And, GO with the **power** of the Holy Spirit that is inside of you!