



The Great Commission

1. What is it?

2. What is our response?

3. What's our heart as a leadership team?

The Great Commission - Introduction

Ask the Holy Spirit to grow your heart for the lost
Read

- **Matthew 28:17-20**

1. What is the great commission?

It is God's mission

This is not an idea of the disciples who just think what shall we do now? It's not even an idea from Jesus. This commission is the fulfilment of God's plan from the beginning. His heart for the all the nations can be seen from the beginning.

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be **fruitful** and increase in number; **fill the earth** and subdue it. **Rule** over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God wanted His image to be restore din us throughout the earth – He wanted His rule and reign to be restored through His creature.

Genesis 12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "**Go** from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you.

Go and make a great nation, in you all families on earth will be blessed. But Abraham would have to Go.

Isaiah 49:6 he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you **a light for the Gentiles**, that **my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.**"

Jesus points the same thing out in the verses in Matthew.

Psalms 96.1 Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. 3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

This is an astonishing view from David to declare His glory and majesty to all other nations.

The Great Commission is couched in language that would have been very familiar to the disciples. It would not have been a great surprise to them. They would have understood the heart and the themes reiterated in Jesus' statement.



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Matthew full of the themes of the Great Commission

In our verse at Matthew 28:17 they worshipped Him – the context of the great commission is worship. We have seen this before in Matthew with the Kings at the stable, the disciples worship Him after the storm. Jesus is God made man – all authority has been given to Him. He doesn't restrict Himself to just the people of Israel we see Him with the Samaritan woman and the centurion.

Matthew is full of the promise that Jesus is Immanuel – God with us.

The great commission is the churches mission

We are here 2000 years after the coming of Jesus purely because the disciples obeyed this call. What if Jesus had said just enjoy your salvation, meet together, keep your head down, don't tell anyone? There would have been no Acts, no Epistles, no Revelation.

All of the churches adventure and progress stems from the disciples saying yes to the invite to Go – they took it really seriously. The church is God's vehicle, His chosen instrument ordained to preach the gospel to the whole world through us. We have a responsibility to hear this – mission is an essential part of our spirituality.

'Mission is the force that gives the body of Christ vibrancy, purpose, and direction. When the church neglects its role as God's agent for mission, it is actually neglecting its own lifeblood.' *Gailyn Van Rheenen*

An unexpressed faith withers – mission gives church vibrancy. Our faith and spirituality are linked to the degree to which we can say we are all in for mission. Unexpressed faith withers, expressed life flourishes.

I am rubbish at mission I am coming and saying I want to grow in this. I once went with a friend around the town with a video camera asking people what they thought of the resurrection, we were really terrified at the start but elated at the end. Recently I have given up Wednesday mornings to go into the town and just say hello and good morning to people. Every time I set out; I have doubts but every time I return, I feel blessed by God.

Our spiritual restlessness can be rooted in our refusal to join God in His mission.

2. What is our response?

Our initial response?

How do you feel entering into this series? I once went on a team building exercise culminating in an end of the day ride on a very high zip-wire. It was interesting as we queued for the ride to see the variety of responses. Some said Yes let's go, others said Yes but when they got to the edge panicked, others were tentative and some just said no way. But whatever the initial response they all had a great outcome an exhilarating ride once they felt the security of the harness after the initial drop.



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Four responses

- **The Great Obligation** – I am not thrilled at all by this but I will if I really have to. I am not filled with any sense of joy.
- **The Great Option** –not convinced this is for me. This is for extroverts – it is a gifting for some one else.
- **The Great Ordeal** –my heart just sank when I heard of this series. Please no its hard enough juts living as it is. This brings me out in a cold sweat.
- **The Great Opportunity**- this is the great adventure. Sharing the gospel is the greatest conversation you can have. What a great opportunity this is to join with God in this mission.

No one can do this on their own – without the Holy Spirit

Please be encouraged that even after Jesus was risen and the disciples worshipped Him the scripture said and 'some doubted'. Aren't we just like that – a mixture of love, adoration, love and doubt?

Who is up for the task? Jesus knew that no-one was able to obey this command and be fruitful – that is why the Holy Spirit was sent.

By the year 250 AD the church had spread everywhere

Within 200 years or so after Jesus gave this command and the church received the empowerment of the Holy Spirit the church had spread to the ends of the known earth.

There is no record of great evangelists or missionary societies – the growth is down to ordinary Christians being seen as so different by the pagans they met. Church growth was a normal outcome of a people being filled with the Holy Spirit and shining bright in their communities. When you couch mission in the context of church life and personal growth it doesn't sound so scary.

In 2018 it is estimated that there are 7,000 unreached people groups – billions of people who are still to hear about Jesus. We can be overawed by this but in Revelation 7 we know that every tribe in every tongue will bow down and worship Jesus. We know how this ends.

Let us Go with this confidence to the ends of our drive, the ends of the school gates or the end of a phone call.



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Our hearts would change

As a leadership team we want to see a change of heart throughout the body and a greater freedom through partnering with the Holy Spirit in a deepening relationship with Him when it comes to mission.

Ask the Holy Spirit to grow your heart for the lost – this is the main application for this week.

Go back to the time when you were first saved and remember your delight and thankfulness for your salvation through Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross.

Series Aims

- Grow in closeness with Jesus
- Feel more spiritually alive
- Grow in compassion for the lost
- Grow in appreciation for the gospel in your own life
- Grow in wonder at the privilege of partnership
- Learn to live in greater dependence on God
- Experience greater intimacy with the Holy Spirit
- Get a heart for God's global mission
- See the power and authority of God manifested in your everyday life
- See people come to saving faith in Jesus and discipleship in the church
- Get a renewed vision for eternity that shapes the way you live today

'I have found that there are three stages in every great work of God; first, it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done.' Hudson Taylor.