

SERMON STARTERS

THE CHRISTIAN'S COMMISSION

Matthew 28:18-20

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 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.” Amen.

We will never have a greater, grander or more glorious purpose in life than that which is presented here in these verses. Here Jesus articulates the Christian's Commission. There are five aspects to our commission. They are as follows:

RECOGNIZE. v.18 – *“Go therefore.”* The Christian's Commission begins in Matthew 28:18, not in 28:19. Why? Notice the statement, *“Go therefore.”* What is the *“therefore,”* there for? Everything Jesus said beginning in verse 18 through verse 20 is predicated upon what He said in verse 18. He said, in essence, “I am The Authority. Since I am The Authority, *therefore*, you go”! Submission to the authority of The Sender must precede one's desire to “go”. Some go out of personal desire, some for adventure, some because they are lured by the “need” in some far-off place. But unless the paramount reason one “goes” is because they are obeying the command of the Captain of their salvation, they do not go under authority – the Supreme Authority. The Christian's first and foremost challenge, therefore, is to recognize and submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and unless and until he does, he may “go” but not be totally surrendered to the One in charge of the mission upon which he embarks.

MOBILIZE. v.19 *“Go”!* Go with the Gospel! Go where you live. Go where God sends. Do you remember Jesus' first miracle? He turned water into wine. At that wedding feast Jesus' mother said to the servants, *“Do whatever He tells you.”* (Jn. 2:5). That is good advice for present day servants of Christ! The mobilization order is for churches as well as individual members of Christ's church. When individuals announce their willingness to go, churches should become involved in the mobilization process. Pray! Pay! Don't delay! Do not make them wait a year until the next annual church business meeting to vote on supporting them. The King's business requires haste!

EVANGELIZE. v.19 *“make disciples of all the nations”.* “Evangelize” means the act of disseminating and propagating the Gospel. *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* (Mark 16:15) The implication is that a disciple is made when the gospel message is believed. Are you involved in the work of evangelizing?

The best place to begin evangelizing is right where you are. I have sat in mission agency board meetings examining missionary candidates. I have asked and have heard the question asked of new candidates, “When was the last time you were instrumental in leading a person to faith in Christ as Savior?” Occasionally the answer was, “I've never led a soul to Christ.” The next question usually was, “Why, then, do you want to go to another country to evangelize when you have not evangelized here at home?” Our commission does not begin

when we cross the border of another city, county or country. It begins in our “Jerusalem” and then to Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth.

“Give us a watchword for the hour,
A thrilling word, a word of power;
A battle-cry, a flaming breath,
That calls to conquest or to death.

To dying men, a fallen race,
Make known the Gospel of Grace;
The world that now in darkness lies,
Oh, evangelize, evangelize!”

BAPTIZE. v.19 *“baptizing them”* Baptism is to be the first step of obedience after one declares for Christ. Baptism is one of two ordinances given to the church to observe – the Lord’s Supper is the other. Scriptural baptism is the immersion of the new believer in water. It is a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Only baptized believers constituted the New Testament churches.

STABILIZE. v.20 *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”* We are to teach new disciples what Jesus had taught the original disciples. Pass it on. Be a channel, not a reservoir! Teaching the Word of God stabilizes believers in the Faith.

How can we carry out the Christian’s Commission?

(1) Some do it exclusively – that is they literally spend their lives engaged in all these activities. We refer to them as being in “full-time ministry.”

(2) Some do it opportunely – that is, in conjunction with their employment, daily activities and the routines of life, they witness where and when they have the opportunity.

(2) Some also carry out these ministries corporately - that is, they are involved in these activities through the corporate body of the church by praying, giving and witnessing, teaching, etc. The big question is: “Are you consciously involved in carrying out the Christian’s Commission?”

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