

1. **“The Great Commission”** – the title given to Matthew 28:19-20.

- Commissionings happen throughout the Bible every time God “commissions” someone to do something in support of His plan of redemption:
 - **Moses** (Exodus 3:9-15); **Joshua** (Deuteronomy 31:7-8, Joshua 1:1-9); **Gideon** (Judges 6:11-24); **Isaiah** (Isaiah 6:1-9) [note: notice that in Isaiah’s commission, God is portrayed as the king on His throne. This is intertwined with our lessons on the Good News, which is a message about the kingdom reign of God].
- Matthew 28:19-20 is a commission to ‘*make disciples.*’

2. **“How do you read it?”** – Luke 10:26

- We all have a conceptual lens through which we read scripture. Since conceptual lenses vary, we have varying interpretations of the exact biblical text.
- Our approach to the Bible must consider that it is possible to misread the text.
- In humility, we must continuously strive for the most accurate scripture reading.

3. **The Great “Commission” or the Great “Omission?”**

- Many scholars note that we have largely ignored the command to ‘make disciples.’
- See Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’s Essential Teachings on Discipleship.*¹

4. **Topics Covered throughout this Series:**

- **History** of the term ‘the Great Commission.’
- **Command/Imperative** - where is the command in the verse?
- **Disciple or Convert?** – what is Jesus’s conception of a disciple?
- **Baptizing/Immersing** – how do we understand the *ongoing* process of baptizing?
- **“into the Name of”** – what does this phrase mean, and how does it support making a disciple?
- **Teaching to Obey** – the overall goal is to create an individual who naturally obeys God’s command and those specific to following Jesus.
- **Mark 16:9-20** – how does this addition to Mark affect how we understand the Great Commission?

Mark 16:9-20 was a later addition to the Gospel of Mark. See the note below in the New International Version (NIV) preceding these verses.

[The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have verses 9–20.]²

¹ Dallas Willard, 2006. *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’s Essential Teachings on Discipleship*, New York: Harper Collins.

² [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 16:8.

5. Recent History and the title “The Great Commission:”

- Justinian von Welz (1621-88)
- Hudson Taylor (1832-1905) – a missionary to inland China.
- Western churches have been heavily influenced by the term the Great Commission.
- Some denominations hold this command in Matthew 28 as the penultimate obligation for Christians, structuring their organizations around missions to spread the Good News.

6. Deriving Meaning from Scripture:

- During the process of translation and interpretation, these steps happen almost simultaneously.
1. **Greek text** – we begin with the Greek text for the New Testament or Hebrew text for the Old Testament.
 2. **Translation** into English
 3. **Interpretation** – based on rules of grammar and syntax.
 4. **Meaning** – what does that verse mean?
 5. **Conceptual Framework** – we all have a conceptual framework through which we interpret the meaning of scripture.
 6. **Original Context** – does our interpretation align with the original context?

7. Grammar – Imperative

- Denoting the mood of a verb that expresses a command or exhortation, as in *come here*.³

8. Matthew 28:19-20 (NHEB)⁴ –

therefore, go	Verb, aorist, passive, participle , plural
make disciples	Verb, aorist, active, imperative , second person, plural
baptizing	Verb, present, active, participle , plural
teaching	Verb, present, active, participle , plural

9. Translation Variations:⁵

New International Version (NIV) – “Therefore go and make disciples”

New Living Translation (NLT) – “Therefore, go and make...”

English Standard Version (ESV) – “Go therefore and make...”

³ Google search for Imperative definition - <https://tinyurl.com/yc8rpc23>

⁴ See the Greek underlying the English - <https://biblehub.com/text/matthew/28-19.htm>

⁵ <https://biblehub.com/matthew/28-19.htm>

Berean Literal Bible (BLB) – “Therefore having gone, disciple...”

GOD’S WORD Translation – “So wherever you go, make...”

International Standard Version – “Therefore, as you go, disciple people...”

Young’s Literal Translation – “having gone, then, disciple...”

10. **The Great Commission** – a variation to consider

“Therefore, **go [from here]**
and **make disciples** of [people from all nations],
[immersing] them
into the [reality⁶ of]
the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and
teaching them to obey everything I have commanded.
[And if you do this], I will be with you until the end of the age.”

- *Immersing* and *teaching* are ongoing in support of the main verb, to make disciples.

⁶ See David H. Stern, (1992), Jewish New Testament Commentary, pg 85.