

# The Great Commission

Dub McClish

When Jesus told His apostles to preach the Gospel to all creation so that all men might have opportunity to be saved, He gave them what is commonly called, "The Great Commission." This commission is so important that it is found in three different places (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47). Consider the following reasons why it is called "great":

**It was given with the greatest authority.** Jesus prefaced the commission by saying, "All authority has been given unto me in Heaven and on earth" (Mat. 28:18). Never had men been charged with a task on such awesome authority. In one great statement, Jesus summarized the power and authority which He had been demonstrating during the last three years of His life. This embraced all the forces of both the physical and spiritual worlds. The apostles never forgot this authority. They frequently referred to it in their preaching (Acts 2:33; Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Pet. 3:2, etc.). They did not preach by their own authority, but "in the name (by the authority DM) of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38; 4:12; 10:48; Col. 3:17, etc.). The Gospel is an authoritative message. The Lord still possesses this authority and commands His people to take His Word into all the world.

**It embraces the greatest responsibility.** Man has the responsibility to take care of his own, to do good to his fellowman and to live a sober, righteous, and godly life (1 Tim. 5:8; Gal. 6:10; Tit. 2:12). However, those who call themselves Christians have no greater responsibility than to spread the saving Gospel to as many as they possibly can.

**It is the greatest in scope.** In the early ages of men, God dealt with mankind by families, such as those of Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc. When He gave the Law of Moses at Sinai, He began dealing with a nation, Israel. In "The Great Commission" the doors of salvation are opened for all men. Whereas before, only the Jews were God's chosen people, now God's grace is extended to "whosoever will" obey the Gospel (Rev. 22:17). The Gospel is God's saving power to Jew and Gentile alike (Rom. 1:16). The scope of this commission is universal.

**It bears the greatest news.** From time immemorial God had been working out His purpose that culminated in the issuing of this commission. By the preaching of the Gospel, men would be called out of the world. By obedience to it, they would be saved and added to the church. The very first occasion of fulfilling the commission was on Pentecost. The following things occurred:

1. The apostles preached the Gospel (Acts 2:14–36).
2. The people believed on Christ and asked what to do to be saved (Acts 2:37).
3. They were told to repent and be baptized in order to receive forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38).

These were the very things Jesus had told them to preach in “The Great Commission.” The result was that about 3,000 of them were baptized, saved (because they had been forgiven) and added by the Lord to His church (Acts 2:41; 47). Surely there is no greater news than that which tells one how to receive God’s forgiveness and how to inherit eternal life.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in the “Bible Thoughts” Column for the *Hood County News*, Granbury, Texas, March 23, 1980.]

**Attribution:** From *thescripturecache.com*; Dub McClish, owner and administrator.