

The Motivation for the Great Commission

Lesson for Sunday, May 3, 2026

TEXT: Matthew 28:18

INTRODUCTION: “*Because I said so!*”

- ⇒ Most of us heard that line growing up. A parent gives a command, we ask “Why?”, and when all the explanations are exhausted (or patience is), the answer comes: “Because I said so.”
- ⇒ It’s not a power trip; it’s a reminder of authority, relationship & trust. Even when we don’t understand, we are expected to obey because we know the position of the one speaking.
- ⇒ In the same way, the Great Commission is not first a suggestion, a spiritual hobby, or a project for the super-committed. It is a clear command from the risen Lord Jesus Christ.
- ⇒ Before He says “Go,” He says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.” In other words, He stakes the Great Commission on who He is. The One who saved us, bought us with His blood, and now reigns over all creation looks at His disciples and says, in effect, “Go make disciples—because I said so.”

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The **Reality** of the Great Commission
 - a. Choose volunteers and have them quickly read each account of the Great Commission:
 - i. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8.
 - ii. Point out that we will look at each of these in the coming weeks.
 - iii. In these passages the Lord Jesus extended the crystal-clear call for His followers to join Him in His mission of sharing the Gospel with the world.
 - iv. These five passages together constitute the missions imperative of the New Testament church and Christian.
 - b. The term “Great Commission” does not appear anywhere in the Bible. But the concept of commission is certainly evident.
 - i. What is the meaning of the word “commission?”
 - ii. It is the act of entrusting authority or a task to a person or group.
 - iii. Notice the “co-“ – it is a joint venture between the Lord and His disciples.
 - iv. We use the word “Great” because it is a big job!
 - c. Think about it: Of all the methods that the Lord could have employed to communicate the Gospel to a lost and dying world, God chose the method of human instrumentality to accomplish that task.
 - d. The term “Great Commission” indicates that the followers of Jesus Christ are expected to partner with the Lord in His mission of reaching the world with His message of salvation.
 - e. Question: *How involved are you in the mission?* It’s not just the responsibility of the pastor, staff and missionaries. *It is the responsibility of every born-again believer to partner with Christ in carrying out His mission.*
2. The Reason we **Obey** the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18)
 - a. Most of the time, our study of this well-read passage focuses on verses 19-20. But verse 18 provides all the motivation that the Christian ought to need in obediently carrying out our mission.
 - b. Jesus’s first words are not simply an opening statement. In this verse Jesus established His divine prerogative to issue it.
 - c. When studying this verse in the original language, it can be read like this: “All authority, all power of absolute rule has been given unto Me.”
 - i. Jesus declared that He possessed all authority in the universe.

- ii. He did not state that He possessed a little authority or even a large amount of authority.
 - iii. Jesus declared without equivocation that He possessed absolute authority, both universal and unlimited in scope.
 - d. With this statement Jesus revealed Himself as sovereign Lord & King of the universe.
 - i. Jesus was the omnipotent Creator in John 1:1-3, but He had laid aside His deity to become a man and die for the sin of the world (Phil. 2:5-8).
 - ii. Now, having become the Redeemer as well as Creator, He has again assumed all the attributes of God, as well as those of glorified man.
 - e. Here's the point of the entire lesson:
 - i. To possess authority means to have the right & ability to command others to respond.
 - ii. This reveals the major motivation for fulfilling the Great Commission: the command of Christ which necessitates the obedience of every believer.
 - f. Yes! We should...
 - i. Have **compassion** for the lost!
 - ii. Recognize the **condition** of the lost without Christ!
 - iii. Be concerned about the **coming** of Christ – the final judgment and the terrors of Hell!
 - iv. But the primary motivation for sharing the Gospel is the **command** of Christ which every believer should obey.
 - g. We ought to witness because Jesus told us to!
- 3. The Reasons We **Disobey** the Great Commission
 - a. Ask: Why do many Christians disobey such a clear command of Jesus?
 - b. Consider and discuss these three possibilities...
 - c. First, we are easily **distracted**.
 - i. Many Christians are occupied with good things, while ignoring the main thing.
 - ii. Church calendars are full of activity but empty of evangelism.
 - iii. Ask: Are you too busy to witness? How often do you think and pray about it?
 - d. Second, we are **distant** from God.
 - i. Simply stated: If you are not walking with God, you will not be concerned about the things of God.
 - ii. If you find yourself never thinking about the Great Commission, is it possible you are not as close to the Lord as you ought to be?
 - e. Third, we are simply **disobedient**.
 - i. When it all boils down, this is the bottom line.
 - ii. If we are too busy, too distracted, too _____, we are outside God's will for our lives.
 - iii. To fail to carry out the Great Commission is an act of disobedience.

APPLICATION: *Apply this lesson in these three areas...*

- ⇒ Hopefully, you are beginning to see that each of us have a personal responsibility to participate in Great Commission activity. What could that look like for us? Let's consider two possibilities that are both personal and corporate (as a class).
- ⇒ First is our class **Come & See List**.
 - Each of us have a personal responsibility to reach "our world."
 - Who has God placed in your life for you to influence?
 - While the answers vary according to the person, we can pray for each other (and we should).
 - Encourage the class members to add to your Come and See list so you can pray for one another.
- ⇒ Second is our church **Summer Evangelism Strategy**.

- This summer our church will do what we always do: hit the streets!
- We will make two types of visits: new moves and door to door in new neighborhoods.
- While you can come out any Monday night you are free, our class will come out together on these three Monday nights: (share the three nights you have chosen for the summer months).
- Ask the class members to reserve those nights so you can help carry out the Great Commission together.