

The Motivation for the Great Commission

Lesson for Students on May 3, 2026

Text: Matthew 28:18

INTRODUCTION: “*Because I said so*”

- ⇒ You’ve probably heard a parent or teacher say, “Because I said so,” when you asked, “Why do I have to do that?”
- ⇒ Usually, it’s not just a power move; it’s about their authority and your relationship with them – they love you, they’re in charge, and you’re supposed to trust them even when you don’t fully get it.
- ⇒ In a similar way, the Great Commission isn’t just a church slogan or a job for “super Christians.” It’s a clear command from Jesus to every believer.
- ⇒ Before Jesus says “Go,” He says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me,” which means the mission is based on who He is – the Lord over everything and the One who bought us with His blood.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The **Reality** of the Great Commission
 - a. We find the Great Commission five times in the New Testament. Have different students read: Matthew 28:18–20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46–48, John 20:21, Acts 1:8.
 - b. In all these passages, Jesus clearly calls His followers to join Him in His mission of sharing the gospel with the world.
 - c. These verses together are the marching orders for the church and for **every** Christian, not just pastors, missionaries and super-Christians.
 - d. Why do we call it the Great Commission? The exact phrase isn’t in the Bible.
 - i. “Commission” means to trust someone with a job and the authority to do it; the “co-” reminds us it’s a partnership between Jesus and His disciples.
 - ii. We call it “Great” because it’s a huge, global job – taking the good news of Jesus to all kinds of people, everywhere.
 - e. Why would God use us?
 - i. God could have chosen any way He wanted to spread the gospel – angels, writing in the sky, whatever – but He chose to use people like us to share it.
 - ii. That means if you are a follower of Jesus, you’re not on the bench; you are part of His plan to reach people.
 - f. Possible discussion questions:
 - i. When you hear “Great Commission,” what do you usually think of – mission trips, pastors, church stuff, or something else?
 - ii. If God can do anything, why do you think He chose to work through ordinary believers like you?
2. The Reason We **Obey** the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18)
 - a. When we talk about the Great Commission, we often jump straight to “Go therefore...” but Jesus starts with a statement about His authority.
 - b. He is claiming absolute, unlimited **authority** over the entire universe. He’s not kind of in charge; He is completely in charge.
 - c. What does Jesus’ authority mean?
 - i. Authority means having the right and power to command others and expect a response.
 - ii. Because Jesus is Lord and King of everything, He has every right to tell His followers what to do, including “Go and make disciples.”
 - iii. That means the main motivation for sharing the gospel is not guilt, pressure, or even emotion – it’s His command.

- d. The primary motivation is Jesus told us to do it.
 - e. Discussion questions:
 - i. Be honest: What usually motivates you more – someone’s need, your feelings, or the fact that Jesus commands it?
 - ii. How does remembering that Jesus has all authority change the way you think about sharing your faith at school, online, or with friends?
3. The Reasons We **Disobey** the Great Commission
- a. Ask: If Jesus’ command is so clear, why do many Christians still ignore it?
 - b. We get **distracted**.
 - i. Most of us are not busy with “bad” things; we’re just busy with everything from school, sports, work, hobbies, social media and even church activities.
 - ii. It’s easy to fill our schedules with good stuff and still totally miss the main thing Jesus told us to do which is to make disciples.
 - c. We **drift**.
 - i. If you aren’t walking closely with God, then the things that matter to Him (like people being saved) won’t matter much to you either.
 - ii. If you never think about the Great Commission or lost people, it may be a sign that your heart has drifted from the Lord.
 - d. We are **disobedient**.
 - i. When you strip away the excuses, sometimes the bottom line is that we are disobeying Jesus.
 - ii. If we are always “too busy” or “too tired” or “too nervous,” and never actually obey His command, we are outside of God’s will for our lives.
 - iii. Not sharing the gospel is not just a missed opportunity; it is active disobedience to our King.

EXTRA DISCUSSION: *Choose what you have time for...*

- ⇒ What are some “good things” in your life that can still distract you from thinking about sharing Jesus?
- ⇒ When is the last time you intentionally prayed for a friend who doesn’t know Christ?
- ⇒ How can you tell when you’re drifting from God (what changes in your habits, thoughts, or priorities)? What is one step you could take this week to move closer to Him again?
- ⇒ What fears or excuses keep you from speaking up about your faith?

APPLICATION: What Could This Look Like for You?

- ⇒ Your personal “Who’s Your One?” (Come & See List)
 - Every believer has a personal responsibility to reach “their world” – the people God has put around them (friends, teammates, siblings, classmates, coworkers).
 - Who are one to three people in your life right now who don’t know Jesus or don’t go to church? Write their names down as your “Come & See List.”
- ⇒ Take advantage of opportunities at church.
 - Could your class come and serve together on a Monday night – going door-to-door and inviting people to church?
 - Every youth activity is a chance to invite someone you know needs Jesus. Point out the next activity on the calendar and create a list of young people your class could invite.
- ⇒ What is one specific change you will make this week so you are obeying the Great Commission instead of just hearing about it?