

## What Should the Church Be Doing?

January 5, 2025

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:18-20

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

**Goal:** To understand the mission of the Church as commanded by Jesus and how we can confidently fulfill it.

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*What should the Church be doing today?* This question shapes how we live as individuals and as the body of Christ. Jesus, in His final instructions, answers this question with clarity: *Make disciples.*

**Reflect:**

- Why is it important to know what Jesus commands His Church to do?

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**Authority: The Prerequisite for the Mission**

**Key Idea:** *All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus.*

- **Where is that authority effective?** Everywhere—heaven and earth.
- **Who has the authority?** Jesus, the risen Lord.

**Commentary:**

This foundational statement asserts Jesus’ universal authority. This authority is granted to Him because of His completed work of redemption (Philippians 2:9-11). Without this authority, the mission would lack power and significance. Jesus’ dominion over heaven and earth means that wherever the Church goes, His authority goes before them.

**Reflect:**

- How does knowing Jesus holds all authority change how we approach His commands?
  - How does Jesus delegate His authority to His followers, and what responsibilities come with that assignment?
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## The Main Verb: Make Disciples

### Key Questions:

- **Why do we make disciples?**
  - Jesus commands it, demonstrating the priority of discipleship in His Kingdom.
  - His authority underpins the mission, making it an extension of His work.
- **Who makes disciples?**
  - All believers participate. Disciple-making isn't limited to professional ministers but is a shared responsibility of the entire body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- **Where do we make disciples?**
  - *All nations* reflects the universal scope of the Gospel, which extends across cultural, ethnic, and geographical boundaries.

### How do we make disciples?

1. **Go:** Intentional action is required. This implies leaving comfort zones, whether geographically, relationally, or spiritually.
2. **Baptize:** Baptism signifies entry into the covenant community of the Church. It reflects a new identity in Christ (Romans 6:3-4).
3. **Teach obedience:** Discipleship involves more than imparting knowledge; it's about cultivating lives that mirror Christ's commands. Teaching must be both theoretical and practical, equipping people to think and live faithfully as citizens of Christ's Kingdom.

### Commentary:

Discipleship is the main task of the Church's mission. It's not about producing mere converts but forming individuals who embody and reproduce Christ's life and teachings. This is a lifelong process requiring intentionality, patience, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

### Reflection Prompts:

- In what ways can we "go" in our local communities?
- What role does baptism play in making disciples today?
- How do we teach obedience in practical, loving ways?

## **Koinonia and Edification**

**Key Idea:** *Discipleship happens in community.*

- **Koinonia (Fellowship):** Authentic discipleship flourishes in a context of shared life and mutual encouragement (Acts 2:42-47).
- **Edification (Building Up):** The Church equips believers for works of service, fostering spiritual maturity and unity (Ephesians 4:12-16).

### **Commentary:**

The Church is a spiritual family, not a collection of individuals. True discipleship requires belonging and accountability. Through fellowship, we spur one another toward growth, while edification ensures that every member contributes to the body's health and mission.

### **Reflect:**

- What role does vulnerability, accountability, and confession play in fostering deeper fellowship in the Church?
- In what areas of your life might you need to be more open to receiving support and encouragement from fellow believers?

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## **Confidence to Make Disciples**

**Key Idea:** *We can confidently make disciples because:*

1. **Jesus is with us:** His presence sustains and guides us (Matthew 28:20).
2. **Jesus commands us:** His command carries divine authority, demanding our response.
3. **Jesus will build His Church:** Our role is obedience; the outcome is His responsibility (Matthew 16:16-19).

### **Commentary:**

Jesus' promise of His presence is a source of comfort and courage. This mission isn't dependent on human effort alone but on the power and faithfulness of Christ. The assurance that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" reminds us that the Church's mission is unstoppable, regardless of external opposition.

### **Reflect:**

- How does Jesus' promise of His presence encourage you?
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## **Conclusion**

### **Summarize:**

The Church's mission is to make disciples, grounded in Jesus' authority, carried out in His presence, and sustained by His promise to build His Church.

### **Response:**

Consider your role in fulfilling the Great Commission. Here are some specific steps:

- Pray about how God is calling you to disciple others.
- Commit to being disciplined and discipling someone else.
- Partner with another believer to pray and hold each other accountable for making disciples.
- Evaluate how you are using your gifts and talents to contribute to the mission of making disciples in your church or community.
- Set aside regular time to study Scripture and grow in your understanding of Jesus' teachings, so you can effectively teach others.

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### **Prayer:**

- Pray for courage and humility to be accountable to others in your walk with Christ.
- Ask God to help you build trust and vulnerability within your church family.
- Pray for discernment in choosing someone to disciple or mentor.

### **Memory Verse:**

Matthew 28:19–20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

### **Catechism:**

The Baptist Catechism

Q. 2. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. (1 Corinthians 10:31; Psalm 73:25-26)