

What Do We Do Now?
May 28, 2017
Allen Power

Matthew 28:16-20

When someone finds out what you do for a living, or what you do for fun, what generally comes next in the conversation?

When people are intrigued by something in your life, they ask questions. When it's a passion for you, you are excited to share. In a sense that makes you an "evangelist" for that subject. [Merriam-Webster dictionary's third definition of "evangelist": "an enthusiastic advocate *i.e.* an evangelist for physical fitness"¹]

The big idea: Jesus expects His followers to seek to be disciple-makers of all people. We call that The Great Commission. The point of our opening example is that the Great Commission doesn't have to be so intimidating. We share our passion for certain things all the time. In this case it's simply sharing your own story of how Jesus has changed our lives.

Matthew 28:16–20 (ESV)

The Great Commission

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

- Verse 17: The first thing that happens, "they worshiped him," **What does it mean to worship? Why was that important for them and for us?**
- A Bible dictionary definition: "**WORSHIP** Term used to refer to the act or action associated with attributing honor, reverence, or worth to that which is considered to be divine by religious

adherents. Christian worship is often defined as the ascription of worth or honor to the triune God.”²

- My definition: “Lord, let me start by reminding myself who You are, who I am, Who is IN CHARGE, and why You are worthy to be in charge!”
- “But some doubted” raises questions.” Craig Blomberg writes: “Is this a different group than those who worshiped? Was a larger gathering than just the eleven present? What kind of “doubt” does Matthew have in mind? The latter question is more easily answerable. [the word] Distazo refers more to hesitation than to unbelief. Perhaps, as elsewhere, something about Jesus’ appearance makes him hard to recognize at first. Perhaps they fear how he may respond to them. Perhaps their Jewish scruples are still questioning the propriety of full-fledged worship of anyone but Yahweh. Or (most likely?) they may simply continue to exhibit an understandable confusion about how to behave in the presence of a supernaturally manifested, exalted, and holy being.” [he summarizes] Some of the disciples worshiped Jesus at once; some were less sure how to react.”³
- Verse 18: “All authority” belongs to Jesus. **What does that mean? What does that mean for a follower who He’s calling to fulfill the Great Commission?**
- Authority means power; submission to that authority is required in order to have access to that power.
- Jesus said “therefore” in other words, because He has all authority we are to “go” and “...make disciples...of all the nations...” **Why was this a big shift in thinking for Jesus’ eleven closest disciples?**
- The Lifeway leader’s commentary: “The term nations is the same word from which we get “ethnic,” referring to the various people groups that make up the nations. The disciples were mainly concerned with their own people—Israel. Even at the ascension, they asked if Jesus was going to restore the kingdom to their nation. Jesus certainly came to be the Savior of the Jews first but also of the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16). The term Gentiles included everyone who was not a Jew. Jesus wanted His followers to bring the gospel to every part of the world.”⁴

- The central message of the Great Commission: Making Disciples
- The tactics or action steps are also “ing” words: Going, Baptizing, Teaching. A present participle is created by adding “ing” to an infinitive form of a verb. ⁵
- GoING – *“The Greek verb translated go is actually not a command but a present participle (going).”*⁶ That means “as you are going” make disciples.
- As we are going about our normal lives we are to be making disciples.
- Example: Wherever you go, people ask you, “How did you do it?” They ask because they see a difference and it provides an opening.
- To be clear, I’m not saying wait for someone to ask you to tell him or her about Jesus! However, sharing your own story can give you that opening.
- BaptIZING – **Why is this important?**
- We live in a world where people hide as “anonymous sources.” Baptism is “going on the record” that you have submitted to the authority of Jesus.
- A doctrinal point. The Life Application Study Bible notes: *“He did not say baptize them in the names, but in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The word Trinity does not occur in Scripture, but it well describes the three-in-one nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”*⁷
- TeachING – Using God’s word to help that person become more like Christ. That’s my job description as your Sunday School teacher.
- Specifically, verse 20 says teaching them to “observe [obey] all that I have commanded you.” Anyone who seriously and sincerely obeys what Jesus has commanded in scripture will become more like Him.

2 Corinthians 3:14–18 (NLT)

¹⁴ But the people’s minds were hardened, and to this day whenever the old covenant is being read, the same veil covers their minds so they cannot understand the truth. And this veil can be removed only by believing in Christ. ¹⁵ Yes, even today when they read Moses’

writings, their hearts are covered with that veil, and they do not understand.

¹⁶ But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

¹⁷ For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

- Verse 20 gives us a final, important promise. As we are going and making disciples, Jesus promised: “I am with you always.” **How was this yet another new concept for the disciples? Why do you think He said, “behold” before He made that promise?** Note: Not “I will be” but “I am.”
- We get so distracted by life that we sometimes need to hear the voice of Jesus saying, “pay attention to this: I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS.”

So, What's the Takeaway?

- We just summarized the Great Commission with the commands: making, going, baptizing, and teaching.
- To help us remember those commands, I have labeled them the “INGs” of fulfilling the Great Commission. Here is what I mean:
- Imagine three letters on every forehead you see: I.N.G.
- Those three letters (I.N.G.) stand for “I Need God!”
- On the forehead of the non-believer – “I Need God!” Tell them about Him as you are going – that is evangelism.
- On the forehead of the follower – “I Need God!” Teach them to obey Him – that is discipleship of others.
- Before I look at other people's foreheads, I need to see I.N.G. (“I Need God!”) on the forehead I see in the mirror every morning.
- That means daily submitting to Him and obeying Him in order to be more like Him. That's a commitment to my own personal discipleship.
- The Great Commission can be intimidating to us. We can become nervous and fearful that we'll say the wrong thing or push people away.

- Living in submission to the authority of Jesus makes an impression that can lead to an opportunity to share how He has changed your life.
- Sharing what Jesus has done in your own life opens the door to sharing a simple gospel message: *“When I became convinced that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died for my sins, and that He rose from the grave, I made Him the boss of my life. Since then my life has been changed for the better and I know I’m going to Heaven when I die.”*
- If the Holy Spirit is at work in their heart, they will ask how they could do that too. At that moment that soul is just one sincere prayer away from salvation.

¹ "Evangelist." Merriam-Webster.com. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 27 May 2017.

² Nelson, D. P. (2003). Worship. In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 1686). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

³ Blomberg, Craig L.. *Matthew: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture (The New American Commentary)* (p. 430). B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

⁴ Lifeway. (n.d.). *Explore the Bible Leaders' Commentary*.

⁵ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/spelling/verb-tenses-adding-ed-and-ing>

⁶ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 107). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁷ Tyndale. *Life Application Study Bible NKJV (LASB: Full Size)* (Kindle Locations 161558-161560). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.