

WORD

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **MATTHEW 28:18-20**

(Read also **JOHN 21:15-19**.)

Jesus commanded His disciples to go and make disciples. In John 21, He asked Peter, "Do you love me?" Peter answered Him, "You know that I love you." Jesus then told him, "Feed and tend my lambs and sheep." Jesus had first called Peter to be a fisher of men (Matthew 4:19). This time, even though Peter had denied Jesus, He restored Peter and was calling him to be a shepherd of the church. Because they loved Him, Jesus' disciples were not only supposed to call people to follow Him (preach the gospel); they were also to care for those who had made the decision to follow Him (make disciples). Today, we will look at the command, instruction, and promise of Jesus' discipleship mandate in Matthew 28.

1 Command

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . ." **MATTHEW 28:18,19**

The discipleship mandate is not a suggestion or a conditional response. Jesus did not say to *go and make disciples of all nations* if they "felt like it," or "whenever they thought they were ready." This mandate was a command to go into all the earth and disciple the nations. Jesus did not exclude any person or race from the list of those who should be discipled, just like no disciple was excluded from making disciples. How does Jesus' command reflect the love He has for all nations?

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2 Instruction

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, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you . . ." **MATTHEW 28:19,20**

Jesus gave them instructions on what to do. He told them to *baptize* His disciples, as an external demonstration of their internal heart change. Then, they were to teach these new disciples to *observe all that [He] had commanded [them]*. No new believer could know how to follow Christ alone. To make disciples, Jesus' disciples would have to take time to share their lives with these new believers, *teaching* them how to follow Him. How did you learn to follow Christ with other believers? How did this help you grow?

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3 Promise

". . . And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
MATTHEW 28:20

We are disciples of Christ because someone preached the gospel to us and taught us how to follow Christ. Now, our mandate is to make more disciples. And, because of our love for Christ, who loved us first, we can confidently obey His command and follow His instructions. The beauty of it all is that He promised that He will always be with them, and this promise applies to us as well. It is an assurance that no matter what we face, we can preach the gospel, make disciples, and trust Him to take us through challenging circumstances. How does this promise enable us to fearlessly preach the gospel and make disciples?

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