The Right Kind of Evangelistic Strategy
Scripture: Matthew 28
Code: BQ8111

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; (Matthew 28:19–20)

It was in light of His absolute, sovereign authority that Jesus commanded, **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations."** The transitional word is **therefore**. "Because I am sovereign Lord of the universe," Jesus was saying, "I have both the authority to command you to be My witnesses and the power to enable you to obey that command."

In light of the Old Testament teaching about Israel's mission to be God's light to the Gentiles and in light of Jesus' earthly ministry, it should not be surprising that His commission was to **make disciples of all the nations**.

Matheteuo (**make disciples**) is the main verb and the central command of verses 19–20, which form the closing sentence of Matthew's gospel. The root meaning of the term refers to believing and learning. Jesus was not referring simply to believers or simply to learners, or He would have used other words. *Matheteuo* carries a beautiful combination of meanings. In this context it relates to those who place their trust in Jesus Christ and follow Him in lives of continual learning and obedience. "If you abide in My word," Jesus said, "then you are truly disciples of Mine" (John 8:31). It should be noted that some disciples were not true (see John 6:66).

The Great Commission is a command to bring unbelievers throughout the world to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the term the Lord uses in this commissioning is **make disciples**. The true convert is a disciple, a person who has accepted and submitted himself to Jesus Christ, whatever that may mean or demand. The truly converted person is filled with the Holy Spirit and given a new nature that yearns to obey and worship the Lord who has saved him. Even when he is disobedient, he knows he is living against the grain of his new nature, which is to honor and please the Lord. He loves righteousness and hates sin, including his own.

Jesus' supreme command, therefore, is for those who are His disciples to become His instruments for making disciples of all nations. Jesus' own earthly ministry was to make disciples for Himself, and that is the ministry of His people. Those who truly follow Jesus Christ become "fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Those who become His disciples are themselves to become disciple makers. The mission of

the early church was to make disciples (see Acts 2:47; 14:21), and that is still Christ’s mission for His church.

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