



# Church of God Sunday School

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:45-53; Acts 1:1-11

It had been forty days since Jesus rose from the grave. Jesus spent many of those days talking with His disciples, teaching them about the Kingdom of God. He had many things to tell them, and His time on earth was almost over.

Soon Jesus would return to Heaven where God lives. He would not walk with His disciples and teach the multitudes as He did before. He had prepared His disciples for this! They had heard Jesus' teachings, and they had seen the great miracles He had done. Now, they were to carry on this great work started by Jesus.

Jesus met with His eleven disciples one last time in Galilee. He told them to not leave Jerusalem but to wait for "the promise of the Father" (the Holy Spirit). Jesus had to go away first, and then God would send the Holy Spirit to live in the hearts of saved men and women (John 16:7). Jesus could not stay with them forever, but His Spirit would (John 14:16).

The disciples would need God's Holy Spirit, for there was a great work for them to do. They could not do it in their own strength. They needed God's power working through them, giving them the strength needed for such a difficult task.

What was this great work? When Jesus sent His twelve disciples out the first time, He gave them a *commission* (authority and power for a task). Jesus told them to preach, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 10:7). When Jesus sent them out, "he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (Matthew 10:1).

Once again Jesus was giving His disciples a commission, but this time it was different. The first time the disciples were only sent to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:6), not to the Gentiles. Now Jesus was telling His disciples that they must "Go ye into all the world."

Jesus told His disciples to be "witnesses" (tell others all that they had seen and heard). He said that they were to "preach the gospel" (the good news of salvation) and to baptize people who believed in Jesus. They were to begin this commission in Jerusalem (the nation's capital), then in all Judea (the southern kingdom), next in Samaria (the northern kingdom), and lastly in "the uttermost part of the earth" (the rest of the world).

Jesus said that signs would follow His disciples to let people know that Jesus was leading them. Some of the signs were that they could cast out devils, they would speak in languages that they had never learned, and they would lay hands on the sick and they would get well.

After Jesus was finished speaking, He began to rise up into the clouds. A cloud received Him, and He was taken up into Heaven to sit on the right hand of God. The disciples could not quit staring up into the sky where Jesus had disappeared. Suddenly, two men in white clothing (angels) stood by the disciples and asked why they were standing, looking "up into heaven?" They said that "this same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

So the disciples went back to Jerusalem to wait and pray as Jesus had commanded them. Once the Holy Spirit was given, they began preaching the Gospel. Just as Jesus promised, signs followed, confirming that their preaching was of the Lord.

This Great Commission was not given to the disciples only. God wants every saved man, woman, boy, and girl to be "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:20). When Jesus was here on the earth, He was God's ambassador to mankind. He represented God and God's message. But since Jesus has returned to Heaven, God needs us to be His ambassadors to people who have not heard the Gospel message. It is up to



us to tell them.

How can you be an ambassador (or a missionary) for Christ? First, you must become a Christian by asking Jesus to forgive your sins and come into your heart to live. Then, you can be a good Christian example in your home, at your school, and in your neighborhood. Be obedient to your parents. Invite your friends to Sunday school and to church. Visit people who are sick. You can also support foreign missionaries by praying for them and saving your money and putting it in the mission offerings.

But it is most important to keep your own heart

open to God. He will talk to you about where He wants you to witness for Him. Someday God may call you to be a Sunday school teacher, a pastor, or even a missionary to a foreign country. Are you willing to do whatever He calls you to do? There are many people who yet do not know about Jesus. You might be the only way they will hear the good news of salvation!

**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."*  
 —Mark 16:15

# Where Were the Disciples to Go?



**Earth**

**"... and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in \_\_\_\_\_, and in all \_\_\_\_\_, and in \_\_\_\_\_, and unto the uttermost part of the \_\_\_\_\_"**  
**(Acts 1:8).**

# What Are Some Ways You Can Share the Gospel?



Be obedient to your \_\_\_\_\_



Be a good Christian



Invite someone to \_\_\_\_\_



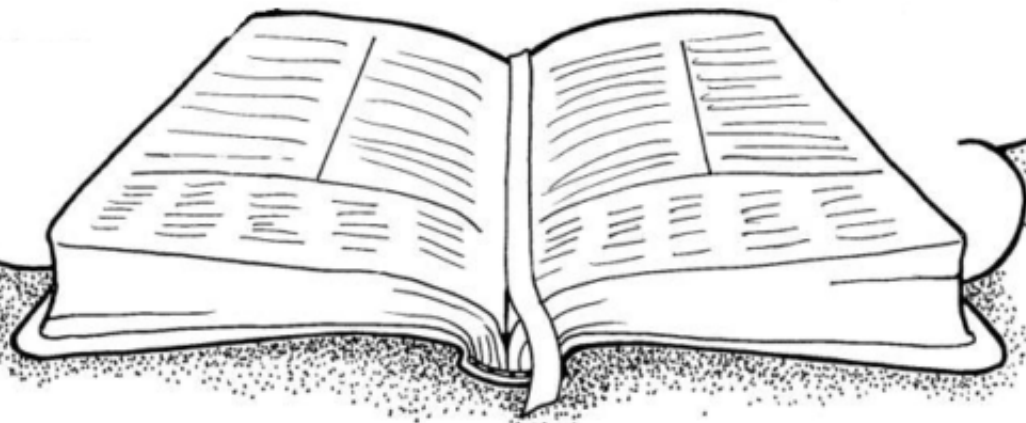
Give to mission



Share a \_\_\_\_\_ verse



Visit the \_\_\_\_\_



**T**HEREFORE GO AND  
MAKE **DISCIPLES**  
OF ALL NATIONS,  
**BAPTIZING** THEM  
IN THE NAME OF THE  
**FATHER** & OF  
THE **SON** & OF THE  
**HOLY SPIRIT...**



# The Great Commission