

**The Great Commission**  
**Matthew 28.18-20**  
**Series: We Value...**  
**February 13, 2022**  
**The Village Church at Shell Point**

I. Introduction

- A. This is the time of the year when we elect officers and ministry chairs
1. That's the primary purpose of our annual meeting this evening at 6 p.m.
    - a. Which I hope you will all attend!
    - b. Especially if you are a member
    - c. But for those of you who aren't members, it's a wonderful glimpse into the life and ministry of TVC
    - d. We get to see highlights of a remarkable ministry here in 2021
  2. But back to electing ministry leaders
    - a. I find it to be a spiritually rewarding time of the year
    - b. In the past month or so the Elders and the Nominating Committee have asked various people to take on certain roles and responsibilities
    - c. And in most cases it has increased the prayer life of the one being asked
    - d. Usually, our brothers and sisters wonder, "Am I really gifted for that kind of ministry?"
    - e. Or, "Can I manage that ministry along with the other responsibilities I'm called to fulfill?"
    - f. Or maybe they even pull a Moses: "Not me Lord. I can't speak. Get someone else."
    - g. Only to hear God say, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?"
    - h. Whereupon, in faith, the brother or sister say, "Ok, Lord, by Your grace and strength, I'll trust you and do it."
  3. So it can be a very profitable time spiritually
    - a. For individuals
    - b. And for the church
- B. It's interesting
1. When we ask folks to take on some ministry responsibility, one of the things we don't say is...
    - a. "You know, if you take on this ministry, I can guarantee you will be successful!"
  2. Life doesn't usually work like that
    - a. There are few guarantees in life
    - b. Or in ministry for that matter
- C. But there is one ministry that Jesus Himself asks us to take on
1. One ministry that, in fact, He commands us to take on
  2. Where He guarantees success

3. And who wouldn't want to take on a ministry that is guaranteed to be successful?

## II. Core Values

- A. We are in a series on the Core Values of TVC
  1. As I shared in the introduction to the series, a number of years ago, after a thorough examination of our community, our gifts, our resources
    - a. We developed a TVC mission statement
    - b. As statement that has resonated with our community and our congregation
  2. We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
    - a. I unpacked the background of that statement a couple of weeks ago; worth going back and watching it again
    - b. Suffice it to say our mission statement gives direction and priority to our ministry here at TVC
    - c. And that our ministries are constantly asking "How can our ministry help to build a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ"
    - d. It's remarkable how many of our leaders know that statement and can rattle it off in a moment's notice
  3. But we also recognized that, as helpful as that mission is, we needed to put flesh on those bones
    - a. We needed to know what kind of people we are (or aspire to be) here at TVC
    - b. We needed to define our core values – those non-negotiables, those issues to which we are committed regardless of our changing circumstances
  4. So we identified seven core values
    - a. The Glory of God
    - b. The Word of God
    - c. The Ministry of the Holy Spirit
    - d. The Sufficiency of Christ
    - e. The Body of Christ
    - f. Prayer
    - g. And the one we're examining this morning – The Great Commission
- B. The Great Commission
  1. That's the ministry that Jesus calls the Church to fulfill
    - a. The global ministry
    - b. That takes the good news, the gospel, of Jesus Christ
    - c. To every corner of the globe
    - d. To every people group on the planet
- C. It's also the ministry the Jesus guarantees will be successful!

### III. The Great Commissions

- A. It's actually a bit misleading to call it The Great Commission
  - 1. Because actually there are five Great Commissions
    - a. Five times Jesus, in meeting with His disciples following the resurrection
    - b. Commands the Church to take the gospel across cultures, to every people
  - 2. While all the Great Commissions have in mind the same basic ministry
    - a. Each one has its own emphasis
- B. **Acts 1:8** (ESV) — 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
  - 1. Emphasis on power and geography
- C. **John 20:21–23** (ESV) — 21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”
  - 1. Emphasis on act of sending
  - 2. And the power of the Holy Spirit
  - 3. And forgiveness of sins that comes from receiving the good news
- D. **Luke 24:45–49** (ESV) — 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”
  - 1. Emphasis on preaching – especially repentance and forgiveness of sins
  - 2. Also on the power of the Holy Spirit
- E. **Mark 16:15–18** (ESV) — 15 And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents with their hands; and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”
  - 1. More remarkable of the commissions
  - 2. Emphasis, again, is on preaching
  - 3. Preaching for faith, for believing; consequences for believing or not believing
  - 4. And what is unique to Mark is the accompanying signs which were to accompany the apostles – all of which are recorded in the annals of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century church

- F. But usually, when Christians think of the Great Commission, they think of the Matthew version
  - 1. The passage that concludes that gospel
- G. **Matthew 28:18–20** (ESV) —
  - 1. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
  - 2. 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,
  - 3. 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- H. What is striking about the Matthew Great Commission is its comprehensive scope
  - 1. How Jesus’ command to take the gospel across the world is so expansive in its power, in its extent, in its universal effect
  - 2. And in its comprehensive, encompassing power, Jesus promises that his last Great Commission will in fact be fulfilled
    - a. He guarantees it!
- I. You’ll notice that the text is actually easy to outline on that basis
  - 1. The outline follows the use of the word “all”
  - 2. **“All authority in heaven and on earth...”**
  - 3. **“Make disciples of all nations...”**
  - 4. **“Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...”**
  - 5. **“I am with you all-ways...”**
- J. Only Jesus Christ could command such universal proclamations

#### IV. **All Authority**

- A. **Matthew 28:18** (ESV) — 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”
  - 1. All authority in heaven and on earth
    - a. Is there any other authority that is not encompassed by the authority given to Jesus?
    - b. No – He alone possesses all authority
    - c. And that, in and of itself, guarantees the outcome of the Great Commission
  - 2. But what exactly does His authority include
    - a. It’s easy to say “all”
    - b. But let’s get specific
    - c. So we can recognize why our success is guaranteed
- B. **Over Principalities and Powers**
  - 1. The teaching of the NT is that this world is under the control of the evil spiritual realm – the realm of principalities and powers
    - a. **1 John 5:19** (ESV) — 19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.
  - 2. And we also know that our struggle, in the final analysis, is not against human forces, but against the forces of wickedness in the spiritual realm

- a. **Ephesians 6:12** (ESV) — 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
  3. But we also recognize that Jesus has authority over power of the enemy of our souls
    - a. Indeed, that in His death He conquered the wicked realm of Satan
    - b. **Hebrews 2:14–15** (ESV) — 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
  4. **Ephesians 1:20–23** (ESV) — 20 ... Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
  5. Whatever spiritual forces are arrayed against the Church and against the fulfillment of the Great Commission, they are all just so much in consequential refuse in the dust bin of history
  6. **Matthew 16:18** (ESV) — 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
    - a. Is there any more definitive promise that guarantees the success of the Great Commission
- C. **Over His People**
1. But not only is authority given to Jesus over principalities and powers, His authority extends to His own people
    - a. Now this should be no surprise to you
    - b. The first confession of the early church was quite simple
    - c. **“Jesus is Lord!”**
  2. If you come to Jesus as Savior, you come to Him as Lord
    - a. You can’t have one without the other
    - b. You can’t divide Christ
    - c. **Romans 10:9** (ESV) — 9 ... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
    - d. You cannot separate Christ as Savior and Christ as Lord
  3. “Lord” – the Greek equivalent of **Adonai – the sovereign One**
  4. You see, the Great Commission is the commission of the Church
    - a. The people of God are to fulfill the Great Commission
  5. How can that happen?
    - a. The Church is weak
    - b. The Church often fails
  6. But Christ never fails

- a. He will build His Church
  - b. He will sustain His Church
  - c. His Church – ultimately, will obey Christ
  - d. His Church will go into all the world
7. Why?
- a. Because Jesus has all authority
  - b. Even over His own people

D. **Over Unbelievers**

- 1. But now comes the coup de grace – the ultimate reason why the Great Commission will be fulfilled
- 2. Christ has authority over those who have not yet believed
- 3. How do you know, when you tell someone about Jesus, that they will believe?
  - a. Well, you don't
  - b. But you can be assured of this – that Jesus Christ, by the convicting work of the HS, by the regenerating work of the HS – has the capacity and authority to change the hearts of unbelievers
  - c. So your gospel message will bear fruit
- 4. Do you believe in Jesus?
  - a. How did you come to believe?
  - b. Was it because you were so smart?
  - c. Was it because you were so wise?
  - d. Was it because you were so righteous?
  - e. Heavens no!
  - f. It's because God changed your heart
- 5. **John 17:1–2** (ESV) — 1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

E. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth

- 1. Over principalities and powers
- 2. Over His Church
- 3. Over those who have yet to believe
- 4. His authority guarantees that the Great Commission will succeed
- 5. And that heaven will be populated by those from every people, and tongue and tribe, and nation (**Revelation 5.9**)

V. **All Nations**

A. **Matthew 28:19** (ESV) —

- 1. 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...

B. **Make Disciples**

- 1. What are we to do with “all nations”
  - a. We are to “make disciples”
- 2. What's a disciple?

- a. A disciple is a follower
- b. A student in Jesus peripatetic school
- 3. What? Peripatetic school?
  - a. Yes, you see, Jesus walked around all over Galilee and Judea
  - b. That's what peripatetic means – has to do with walking
  - c. And He taught as He went
  - d. And people followed Him; and they committed to memory what He taught
  - e. Many of them left everything to follow Jesus
- 4. So the Church, in fulfilling the Great Commission, are not just about making converts
  - a. About getting people to pray the sinner's prayer
  - b. About leading people to make a decision to believe Jesus
- 5. No – the Church fulfills the Great Commission by helping people become wholehearted followers of Jesus
  - a. Whose affections, dispositions, and lifestyles change
  - b. Whose whole orientation becomes God-centered rather than self-centered
- 6. Making disciples implies a strong teaching ministry as we'll see in a moment
- C. **Make them Public**
  - 1. But part of making disciples is bringing people to be public about their commitment to Jesus
  - 2. "Baptizing them..."
  - 3. That's what baptism does
    - a. Believers in Jesus make a public profession of faith
    - b. And baptism is a public recognition that a person has been taken out of the world and brought into the fellowship of God's people
    - c. That they have died to sin in union with Christ and have been raised in newness of life (**Romans 6.1-4**)
  - 4. If you've not been baptized, and missed out on this opportunity to publicly declare your union with Jesus Christ – see Pastor Don or me
    - a. Don't be a closet disciple!
- D. **Make them Orthodox**
  - 1. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
  - 2. Following Christ, becoming a disciple of Jesus, means being a follower of the Triune God
    - a. God is Triune – One God in three persons
    - b. Doctrine of the Trinity
    - c. God the Father
    - d. God the Son
    - e. God the Holy Spirit
  - 3. Flowing from the Triune nature of God is all of orthodox theology
    - a. Nature and character of God

- b. Person and work of the Son, including the incarnation, His life, death and resurrection
    - c. Person and work of the Holy Spirit
  - 4. Every doctrine from creation to providence to redemption flows from the Trinity
    - a. Without the Trinity, Christianity dissolves
  - 5. So making disciples of all nations involves making followers of Jesus who understand and apply the fundamental truths of biblical Christianity
- E. So the Great Commission is about
  - 1. Making disciples
  - 2. Who are public about their commitment
  - 3. And who are committed to biblical truth – orthodox in faith and practice

## VI. All Commandments

- A. **Matthew 28:20** (ESV) — 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...
  - 1. The Great Commission is a teaching ministry
    - a. Teaching what?
    - b. Everything Jesus taught – all of it
  - 2. What did He teach?
    - a. First of all, He taught everything we read in the gospels
    - b. The gospels are the records of Jesus' teaching
    - c. And then when we read the gospels we recognize that Jesus taught the scriptures
    - d. What scriptures did He have?
    - e. Well, He had the OT – the Jewish Bible
  - 3. For us to teach all that Jesus commanded, we teach the whole counsel of God
    - a. OT and NT
  - 4. What does that involve?
- B. **God's Word**
  - 1. Jesus taught that the Word of God given in the scriptures is authoritative, inerrant and infallible
    - a. Why are there people in the Church today who deny the doctrine of inerrancy?
    - b. Jesus taught it!
    - c. Do you believe in Jesus?
    - d. Jesus taught inerrancy
    - e. In fulfilling the Great Commission, we teach what Jesus taught about the scriptures
- C. **God's Character**
  - 1. Jesus taught the supremacy of God
    - a. The omniscience of God
    - b. The omnipotence of God
    - c. The omnipresence of God



- d. The righteousness of God
      - e. The holiness of God
      - f. And more
    - 2. Jesus taught the nature and character of God
      - a. We teach the same in fulfilling the Great Commission
  - D. **God's Son**
    - 1. Jesus explained and lived the life of the incarnate Son of the Father
    - 2. His nature and character are on display in the gospels
    - 3. His nature and character are explained in the epistles
    - 4. In fulfilling the Great Commission, we teach the person and work of Jesus
  - E. **God's Plan**
    - 1. Jesus taught the nature of our fallen humanity
    - 2. **2 Corinthians 5:19** (ESV) — 19 ... in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.
    - 3. God promised redemption for His people from the very moment of the fall in **Genesis 3.15**
      - a. That through the offspring of the woman the head of the serpent would be crushed
    - 4. The whole OT foreshadowed and prophesied the coming of the saving Messiah Jesus
    - 5. The gospels reveal what was described in shadows in the OT
    - 6. As we fulfill the Great Commission we teach God's plan
  - F. **God's Future**
    - 1. Jesus promised His return
    - 2. The Bible promises that His return will bring the consummation of the Kingdom of God that was initiated when Jesus came in His first advent
    - 3. That we look forward to the millennial kingdom of peace, justice and righteousness
    - 4. And to an eternity of glory in the presence of God
    - 5. And assurance that can only be experienced by those who believe in Jesus
    - 6. So when we fulfill the Great Commission we teach what Jesus taught about our glorious future
- VII. **All-Ways**
- A. Finally, the Great Commission promises the presence of Jesus
    - 1. **Matthew 28:20** (ESV) — 20 ... And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
  - B. **His Presence**
    - 1. “I am with you always...”
      - a. Jesus never sends His Church out to fulfill His Great Commission alone
      - b. He's not the kind of commander who sits in His desk in the celestial Pentagon while the troops are floundering on the other side of the world

- c. No!
- d. He's right out there leading the charge!
- 2. Remember when we studied the glory of God a couple of weeks ago
  - a. How important the presence of God was in going with Israel through the wilderness and into the promised land?
  - b. Moses: "If You don't go with us, don't send me!"
  - c. That was just a foreshadowing of the presence of Jesus with His Church in taking the gospel to the ends of the earth
  - d. The Church can't do it without Him
  - e. And His presence is yet one more guarantee of the success of the Great Commission

C. **His Perpetuity**

- 1. And not just for a moment – but in perpetuity
- 2. "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- 3. However long it takes to fulfill the Great Commission, you can rest assured that Jesus will never retire, never resign, never get distracted, never tire of pursuing its fulfillment
- 4. The Church can commit itself to the Great Commission because the Lord of the Church is committed to the Great Commission
  - a. Committed wholeheartedly
  - b. Committed for as long as it takes
- 5. This is Winston Churchill on steroids
  - a. "Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never—in nothing, great or small, large or petty..."
  - b. That's just a man; even Churchill had his limits
- 6. Not Jesus!
  - a. He's the God-man; the eternally begotten Son of God
  - b. He will never give in, never give up
  - c. Until there are disciples from every people, tongue, tribe and nation

VIII. **The Great Commission**

- A. It's part of the DNA of TVC
  - 1. Because it flows from the heart of Jesus Christ
- B. The all-encompassing command of Christ for His Church
  - 1. To make disciples of all nations
  - 2. Teaching them to observe all His commandments
  - 3. Because all authority has been given to Jesus
  - 4. And because He promises His presence until the job is finished
- C. Our greatest purpose in TVC is to fulfill the Great Commission
  - 1. And our greatest privilege
  - 2. And we have every confidence in doing so
  - 3. Because Jesus guarantees its fulfillment