

The Great COMMISSION: A CALL TO WITNESS
Matthew 28:16-20 NIV

I. They Understood The Assignment Because They Were Obedient to His Command(16)

16 *“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.”*

A. Matthew calls them the Eleven, without explanation, but we know that Judas is the one who is missing;

1. We know that this community has suffered loss and betrayal...;
2. But In spite of their brokenness, in spite of their doubts, they **obeyed** the instructions to go to Galilee...

B. Obedient to the women’s command, the disciples have gathered.

1. The phrase *“the eleven disciples”* (28:16) instead of the customary “the Twelve,” reminds the reader of not only Judas ’betrayal, but also Peter’s denials and that all were scattered, scandalized by Jesus ’death (26:30-35).
2. The 11 went where Jesus commanded them to go.

II. They Understood The Assignment was Greater Than Their Doubts (17)

17 *“When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.”*

A. The Doubters were Jesus ’disciples.

1. The context suggests that these doubters were part of the eleven.
2. Friends, Just because you struggle with doubt, doesn’t mean you aren’t a follower of Jesus...;

B. Doubters can worship.

1. Notice the text here doesn’t say, some worshiped, others doubted.
2. ***If you doubt, keep worshipping...***

C. Doubters obeyed.

1. A few verses earlier, Jesus had told Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to tell the disciples to come to Galilee.
2. Even If you have doubts, just keep obeying.

III. They Understood The Assignment Is Based on The Lords Authority and Power (vs. 18)

18 *“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*

A. Jesus started by declaring, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”;

1. We see this all throughout the gospel of Matthew;
2. Jesus said, *“...so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....”*;

3. By the time that we get to the end of the book in Matthew 27, we learn that Jesus has died and has been buried in a tomb, but then we read Matthew 28 and discover that three days later Jesus rose again, from the grave;
4. The proof of His power and authority comes to a climax in Matthew 28:18 as Jesus says, "*All authority has been given to Me.*";
5. Jesus has absolutely ALL authority;
6. The disciples had lost confidence after Christ was arrested and hung on the Cross of Calvary;

B. Jesus' Power and Authority must be the driving force of the mission he gives to his disciples because we are incapable of accomplishing it on our own.

1. I'm sure that the disciples were excited by the Lord's many visits that took place after His resurrection;
2. But Jesus knew that what He was **calling them to do** was greater than them;
3. And Friend, you need to be reminded that you can't do anything apart from the Lord...
4. So they would not only need His Authority but they would also need His Power to witness to others;
5. Can I tell you that the reason why so many church's are struggling with making disciples... they lack HIS **authority** and HIS **power**.

IV. They Understood The Assignment Involved A Great Commission (vs. 19a)

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,;

A. Because He is the sovereign Lord of the Universe He has both the authority to command us and the power to enable us to fulfill His commission to make disciples.

1. The word "**commission**" is a military term meaning "**an authoritative order.**";
2. This was a divine mandate that is a requirement of every Christian! That is to make disciples;
3. **Mark it down:** disciples kept many church doors open in the pandemic because they understood the assignment....;

B. The Assignment Required Obedience

1. Fulfilling the Great Commission requires obedience.
2. The Greek verb translated go, is actually not a command but a present participle (going);
3. This requirement is not so much a command as an assumption or an expectation...;
4. That is true of all genuine believers.
5. Jesus 'method for evangelism/discipleship wasn't a program or a crusade – it was men and women sharing their lives with other people;
6. Jesus 'final message to his followers was, "As you go throughout your life, live with gospel intentionality...."