

What is the Great Commission?

The phrase “Great Commission” does not appear in the actual text of Scripture, but these final words are known as The Great Commission, and are full of action: go, make disciples, baptize, and teach.

Matthew 28:19-20: “Go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Ruach HaQodesh, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

3100. Mathéteuó = disciple, instruct, teach. From mathetes; intransitively, to become a pupil; transitively, to disciple, -- be disciple, instruct, teach.

Yahusha called the disciples to testify to those in Yarusalym (Jerusalem) first, which was their current location. Then He called them to go to Yahudah (Judea), which was the region around them. Yahusha also instructed them to go to Samaria, where they were not welcome. Historically, tension and hatred had existed between the Hebrews and Samaritans. Finally, He charged them to go into every place on the earth.

We could look at Yahusha’s command to the disciples in this way:

1. He calls us to reach the people in our current sphere of influence or our family and our close friends.
2. He charges us to share the gospel with our neighbors and the people in our local community.
3. He commissions us to reach not only the country we live in but also to reach all the nations of the world.

Hence, we are called to share the gospel message with those people that are most close to us in location and relationship, as well as those people in the rest of the world.

A commission is an instruction or a command given to a person or a group of people, or it can refer to the group itself tasked with accomplishing a certain mission. When we talk about the Great Commission of scripture, we are talking about a specific instruction given by Yahusha to his disciples. A commission is a command. What specifically is this command? It is, according to **Matthew 28:18-20**, a command to “go and make disciples.”

Mark 16:15 “He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.’”

In **Luke 24:44-49** on the Road to Emmaus, Yahusha explained the Scriptures to a group of disciples and then:

“He said to them, ‘This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Musha (Moses), the Prophets and the Psalm.’ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, ‘This is what is written: The Mashiach will suffer and rise from the dead on the third (3rd) day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Yarusalym (Jerusalem). You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.’”

Acts 1:8, also written by Luke, serves as not only the outline for the book of Acts, but also as another way of explaining the Great Commission:

“[Yahusha said,] ‘But you will receive power when the Ruach HaQodesh comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Yarusalym (Jerusalem), and in all Yahudah (Judea) and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’”

As typical of the Gospel of John, the Great Commission sounds a bit different here than by the other gospel writers. John focuses upon the reception of the Ruach HaQodesh, but there is still a sending quality to Yahusha’s words to His disciples:

“On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Hebrews, Yahusha came and stood among them and said, ‘Shalum be with you!’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Master. Again Yahusha said, ‘Shalum be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Ruach HaQodesh. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.’”

Though each of these commissions sounds a bit different, they each have a central concern. And that central concern is the heart of the Great Commission.

What Is the Central Theme and Concern of the Great Commission?

Given all those different verses, what exactly are we commissioned to do? If you look at **Matthew 28** in the original Greek, you'll notice there is only one imperative, the other verbs are participles. What does that mean? It means something like this, "As you go, make disciples, and you do this by baptizing them and teaching them."

Baptizing is the initial action which brings a person into the kingdom. Baptism is the profession of Amunah (Faith) and initiation into the discipleship process. Teaching is the continual training that takes place throughout our lives as we increasingly learn and obey everything which Yahusha commanded. "As you go throughout your life, make other Yahusha followers," that's the gist of the command.

Let's use the other gospel accounts to fill out our understanding of the task that Yahusha has given to us. In the Gospel of Mark, we are commanded to "proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." That is the imperative in that sentence. Proclaiming the good news for the gospel of Mark would have been proclaiming that Yahusha is the Son of Yahuah.

In Luke/Acts the emphasis is upon "being witnesses." One could, perhaps, argue that the commission here was given explicitly to those who were eyewitnesses to Yahusha. But the pattern of the Brit HaDashah is that these witnesses would make other witnesses (**1 Peter 1:8**) who, even though not seeing with the physical eyes, still could say that Mashiach was crucified before their eyes (**Galatians 3:1**). Once again, the commission here is that the Ruach will enable disciples to proclaim Yahusha to the ends of the earth.

In John, the Ruach is given, and the disciples are sent just as Yahusha was sent by the Father. What does that mean? It means that the disciples were sent to proclaim to others, to share the good news to the vulnerable, to declare the goodness and greatness of Yahuah and to testify that Yahusha was the Masiach.

The central concern of the Great Commission is to proclaim, as we go and wherever we go, with our life and lips the work of Yahusha HaMashiach.

Are you going in the name of Yahusha? Are you proclaiming Yahusha with your life and lips? If so, then you are following the Great Commission.

As we see from Mark, Luke, Acts, and John, proclamation of Yahusha is a central component of this call. But we really aren't fulfilling the Great Commission unless we are involved in making disciples — and these disciples will be involved in making other disciples.

Go Make Disciples Scriptures

Mark 16:15 “He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’”

Mark's parallel account of the Great Commission adds that “the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Master worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it” (**Mark 16:20**).

Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Ruach HaQodesh comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Yarusalym (Jerusalem), and in all Yahudah (Judea) and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Here Yahusha calls the disciples to be witnesses, exhorting them to share the things they've seen and heard in his presence.

As we make disciples, we can share not only the accounts of what the disciples saw, but our own accounts of what we've personally experienced as we've followed Yahusha.

Romans 10:14-15 “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone proclaiming to them? And how can anyone proclaim unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”

The good news of Yahusha HaMashiach and the redemption he offers is for everyone who will believe. Shaul (Paul) highlights the importance of making

disciples by pointing out the obvious: you only believe in Yahusha because someone shared the gospel with you. Making disciples stems from our own Amunah (faith) which we only have because someone shared the gospel with us.

Romans 10:17 So then Amunah (faith) comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Yahuah.

Making disciples is about continuing the cycle of redemption, passing on the Amunah (faith) that was passed to you.

John 1:45 “Philip found Nathanael and told him, ‘We have found the one Musha wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote-Yahusha of Nazareth, the son of Yoseph.’”

When Philip encountered Yahusha and discovered who he was, he immediately wanted to share it with his friend. Our desire to make disciples should stem from obedience, but also love for others, if we believe Yahusha is who he says he is, why should we keep it to ourselves?

John 15:16 “‘You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit-fruit that will last-and so that whatever you ask in my Name the Father will give you.’”

As disciples, we are growing in maturity. This can only happen if we are spiritually empowered. Yahusha says he is the vine, and his disciples are the branches (**John 15:5**). He chose his disciples for a purpose, and in order to fulfill that purpose they had to remain connected to him, the vine **John 15:6**.

Matthew 4:19-20 “‘Come, follow me,’ Yahusha said, ‘and I will send you out to fish for people.’ At once they left their nets and followed him.”

Many of the original disciples were fishermen. Yahusha took something they were intimately familiar with-their profession-and made it new. He used a word picture they could identify with to call them away from their old lives.

When we invite others into discipleship, Yahusha can use what they know to accomplish things they never imagined.

Baptizing Them in the Name?

907. Baptizó baptize, wash. From a derivative of bapto; to immerse, submerge; to make whelmed (i.e. Fully wet); used only (in the New Testament) of formal ceremonial baptism.

מִקְוֵה *miqveh, mik-veh'*;

something waited for, i.e. confidence; also a collection, i.e. (of water) a pond:—abiding, gathering together, hope, plenty (of water), pool.

A mikvah in the Hebrew scriptures is a gathering or collection of water. The word came to refer to a pool of water used for ceremonial cleansing. One who is impure or ceremonially unclean before immersion will be pure or ceremonially clean after immersion in a mikvah. A person would have to be ceremonially clean before entering the temple. Ceremonial cleansing is prescribed in scripture on a number of occasions: women after childbirth or their monthly cycle and men after sexual discharge (**Leviticus 15:19–30**) and after contact with a dead body (**Numbers 19:18–19**). Clothing and utensils could also be cleansed by ritual immersion (**Leviticus 11:32**).

The use of the mikvah, or ceremonial immersion, seems to provide the background for Brit HaDashah baptism. When Yahokkanon (John) was baptizing and preaching repentance, those who responded were admitting that they were “unclean.” This seems to be why Yahokkanon (John) objected so strongly to baptizing Yahusha (**Matthew 3:13–14**) and why the Pharisees refused to be baptized (**Matthew 3:7**). Likewise, baptism would have been understood against this background. Those who responded in repentance and baptism were admitting that they were unacceptable to Yahuah and needed to be made clean (**Acts 2:37–38**).

A “Mikveh” of living water represents the bounty and resources of the new life that we can enjoy in Yahuah. Those who put their hope in Yahuah, choosing to align their lives with him, will never be dried out, but will always have fresh life in him. Next time you see someone being immersed in water to signify their new life in Yahusha, the hope of Yasharal (Israel), the mikveh of Yasharal (Israel), call to mind all that he said about being the

water of life, the well of living water that springs up to eternal life... because that's exactly who He is!

Matthew 28:19-20 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of **the Father** and of **the Son** and of **the Ruach HaQodesh**, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The Catholic Encyclopedia, states that "The baptismal formula was changed from the name of Jesus Christ to the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by the Catholic Church in the second century." Typically, the questioner makes the point that we do not have manuscripts of **Matthew 28.19** before 325 a.d when the church ratified the Trinitarian creed at Nicea and that they were all corrupted at that time. Furthermore, they refer to Eusebius, the famous historian, because he quotes an alternative version of **Matthew 28.19** (i.e. "Go and make disciples of all the nations in my name") in his writings.

Even though there is absolutely no textual variation whatsoever for **Matthew 28.19** in the manuscripts, some allege these manuscripts are ALL wrong and a corruption entered into the picture during or after the Council of Nicea in 325 a.d. when the Trinity became accepted.

For the sake of argument let's assume there really are no manuscripts before 325 a.d. that contain **Matthew 28:19**. Where does that leave us? We still have thousands of manuscripts, some of which date back to the fourth century (like Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus). These manuscripts contain the standard reading of **Matthew 28.19**.

Even if we cannot find or access early manuscripts before the fourth century to see if they contain **Matthew 28.19**, we can still consult the many authors who lived in the second and third centuries to see how they cited it. And without adding all their quotes to this study, they did quote **Matthew 28.19**. The traditional reading of **Matthew 28.19** was alive and well before 325 a.d. and people knew about it. So, I can not prove this to be true or not.

Baptizing in the name of Yahusha HaMashiah

Many believe it to be changed because it is stated differently than **Acts 2:38** Kepha (Peter) said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Yahusha HaMashiah for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Ruach HaQodesh.

Acts 8:16 For it [the Ruach HaQodesh] had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Master Yahusha.

Acts 10:47-48 “Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Ruach HaQodesh just as we did, can he?” And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Yahusha HaMashiach. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.

Acts 19:5-6 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Master Yahusha. And when Shaul (Paul) had laid his hands upon them, the Ruach HaQodesh came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.

1 Peter 3:21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to Yahuah for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Yahusha HaMashiach,

Colossians 2:12-13 Having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through Amunah (faith) in the powerful working of Yahuah, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, Yahuah made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,

Luke 3:16 Yahukannon (John) answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Ruach HaQodesh and fire.

Galatians 3:26-27 For in Yahusha HaMashiach you are all sons of Yahuah, through Amunah (faith). For as many of you as were baptized into Mashiach have put on Mashiach.

Romans 6:3-4 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Yahusha HaMashiach were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Mashiach was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life.

Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you

Titus 2:3 “Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.” Making disciples is about more than instructing others. In this verse Shaul is telling Titus to teach the older women in the Assembly—those who would be discipling younger women—and that their example matters. It’s important for us all to understand that people are following the precedent we’re setting.

2 Timothy 2:2 “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”

Colossians 1:28-29 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Mashiach. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Exodus 18:20 And you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do.

Deuteronomy 4:9-10 “Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children— how on the day that you stood before Yahuah your Alahym at Horeb, Yahuah said to me, ‘Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.’

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when

you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

Isaiah 49:6 He says: "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Yaqoob and to bring back the preserved of Yasharal (Israel); I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

All Scripture is breathed out by Yahuah and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of Alahym may be complete, equipped for every good work. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. **Titus 2:1**

And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Yahusha is Mashiach. **Acts 5:42**

Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **Matthew 5:19**

Let the word of Mashiach dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to Yahuah. **Colossians 3:16**

To this day I have had the help that comes from Yahuah, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Mosha (Moses) said would come to pass: that the Mashiach must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles. **Acts 26:22-23**

Psalms 119:1-176 Baruk (Blessed) are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the Turah (law) of Yahuah! Baruk (Blessed) are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways! You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!