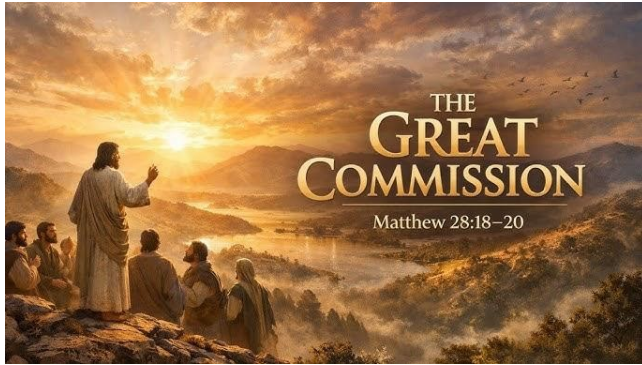


Worship at Home

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Jesus said:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28: 18-20

StF 24: Come, now is the time...

Come, now is the time to worship.
Come, now is the time to give your heart.
Come, just as you are to worship.
Come, just as you are before you God, come.

One day every tongue will confess you are God,
one day every knee will bow. Still the greatest
treasure remains for those who gladly choose You
now.

Come, now is the time to worship ...

Brian Doerksen (b. 1965)

Prayer

We thank you, O God, for your great love, which you pour into our lives day by day, and for the fellowship we enjoy with one another, and with you.

We thank you for the world you have so lovingly created, and for the beauty of everything in it, including us.

We thank you for the way in which you sustain us, and provide for our every need, spiritual and physical.

And we thank you that we are able to worship you today, and every day, and offer you our thanks and our praise.

Bless us now, Father, we pray, that we may be more like Jesus in every way.

In his name, we pray. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

StF 407: Hear the call of the kingdom

**Hear the call of the kingdom
lift your eyes to the King;
let his song rise within you
as a fragrant offering
of how God rich in mercy,
came in Christ to redeem
all who trust in his unfailing grace.**

**Hear the call of the kingdom
to be children of light
with the mercy of heaven the humility of Christ;
walking justly before him,
loving all that is right,
that the life of Christ may shine through us.**

*King of Heaven, we will answer the call.
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,
filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim
salvation in Jesus' name.*

**Hear the call of the kingdom
to reach out to the lost**

**with the Father's compassion
in the wonder of the cross,
bringing peace and forgiveness,
and a hope yet to come:
let the nations put their trust in him.**

*King of Heaven, we will answer the call.
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,
filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim
salvation in Jesus' name.*

Keith Getty (b.1974), Kristyn Getty (b.1980)
and Stuart Townend (b.1963)

Reading: Matthew 28 verses 16-20

Reflection

Today, we're thinking about what is commonly referred to as the 'Great Commission'. It contains some of the last words spoken by Jesus before his ascension, and although it was addressed specifically to the disciples, this commission has been passed down to believers in every generation, right up to the present day. That means that it now rests with us.

So what did Jesus actually say?

Firstly, he made it clear that what he was telling his disciples to do, was based on the authority given to him, *“in heaven and on earth”*. He wasn't making a suggestion about what his followers might do when he was no longer with them: it was a commandment, based on that authority. Not *“something you might like to do in your spare time”*, nor *“a nice idea”*, but a specific instruction for his followers to carry out.

I'm sure you've heard it said that whenever you come across the word *therefore* in Scripture, you should pause, and ask what it's there for! In this case, Jesus makes it clear that the instruction that follows, arises *because of* the authority given to him. It is for that reason that he tells his disciples to *“go and make disciples”*.

Secondly, he gave clear instructions about *what* they were to do, and *how* they were to do it. The *what* was not to *go*, as some people have suggested, but to *“go and make disciples.....”* In other words, the task he was giving them, and by extension, to us, was to

make disciples. The *how*, was by **going**, anywhere and everywhere, **baptising** people, and **teaching** them to obey And all of this should be done in the course of our everyday lives. Not on special occasions, nor by special people, but by each and every believer, all of the time. And as for the **who** we are to “*make disciples*”, the answer is “*all nations*”.

No-one is excluded.

It’s sad that at times believers have been led to think that only certain people can fulfil this commission, and that it can only be carried out at certain times, in the form of a *mission*. That is not true and would make no sense at all. **It is for all of us.**

An important question to ponder is why believers are sometimes shy of telling others about Jesus, and making disciples, as Jesus called us to do. I wonder if you can recall rushing home from school, as fast as your legs could carry you, full of excitement, and bursting to tell your parents some **good news**.

Perhaps you had been chosen to play in a sports team, or won a prize for good behaviour, or been given some better-than-expected exam results. If we were excited about such day-to-day things, surely we should be excited about telling others of the love of God in Jesus.

The commission Jesus has given us is not something he calls us to do alone. And I don’t just mean apart from other people, although sharing the task with others is extremely worthwhile.

The commission concludes with the promise of Jesus, “*I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*”

What better *mission partner* could you have, than Jesus himself?

Let’s all “**Go and make disciples**”.

Amen

Prayers

Father, as we come to you now, we bow in awe. We kneel before you, as we acknowledge you to be the Lord of life. The Lord of all that is, and of all that is to come. And we acknowledge our own unworthiness.

But we thank you, Father, that we can come into your presence because Jesus has opened up the way for us to come, and to be brought into a living relationship with you. We know too, that it is by grace, through faith, that we come. Not through any merit of our own. And so we come.

We come, aware of your love for us, and our need of you, recognising that it is only through the power of your Holy Spirit working in us, that we can see and experience your hand at work in our lives, and in the life of the world.

As we look around us, we see

- so much that is wrong
- so much that is unholy
- so much that is unjust
- so much that is far from what you desire.

And so in true humility, we ask for your forgiveness, and for your power to change.

- To change us
- To change communities
- To change your world

We pray for the world, in all its brokenness. For the leaders of nations, that they may seek after ways of justice and peace. For our own government, that it may act in ways that bring help to those who need it most. That it may support the weak and needy, strengthen the weary, and uphold the poor. And give to all those who need help, both here, and throughout the world.

We pray for our local communities, thanking you for all the good that is being done, and that has been done, in difficult times. May we not neglect the needy, but may we continue to do for others all the good we can, in all the ways we can. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen**

StF 410: Lord, your Church on earth...

Lord, your Church on earth is seeking your renewal from above Teach us all the art of speaking With the accent of your love We would heed your great commission Go forth into every place Preach, baptise, fulfil my mission Serve with love and share my grace

Freedom give to those in bondage Lift the burdens caused by sin Give new hope, new strength, and courage Grant release from fears within Light for darkness, joy for sorrow Love for hatred, peace for strife These and countless blessings follow As the Spirit gives new life

In the streets of every city Where the bruised and lonely dwell Let us show the Saviour’s pity Let us of His mercy tell In all lands, and with all races Let us serve and seek to bring All the world to render praises Christ, to you, Redeemer King

Hugh Sherlock (1905-1998)

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Amen

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