

## **PICTURE THIS!**

### **The Big Picture of Our Faith in Pictures!**

*A study for all ages @ Gorrie Bible Fellowship!  
September – December 2016*

#### **Week #12 – The Great Commission**

**Picture It!**



#### **Caption It!**

*The Great Commission shows that Christianity is a discipleship faith! True believers are followers of Christ, seeking to bring others into discipleship with the Rabbi Jesus.*

#### **Save It!**

*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing 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.  
Matthew 28:19-20*

## Picture It!

### 1. God's Heart for the World!

- a. Since Creation God has always had a global perspective. That is why this week's picture includes the globe!
- b. God commissioned Adam and Eve: *"Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28).*
- c. Later, God sent a flood because of the wickedness of humanity. God gave another global commission to Noah: *"Be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it" (Genesis 9:7).*
- d. Later God made a global promise to Abraham when he was called out to be the father of Israel: *"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3).*
- e. In Isaiah 49:6 we learn that God intended the nation of Israel to have a global cause: *"I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."*
- f. It is no surprise that Jesus came, not only as the King of Israel but as the Savior of the world! John the Baptist said of Jesus, *"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).*
- g. Before Jesus ascended to Heaven, He gave His disciples a global commission: *"Go and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19).*
- h. God's promise for the future is this: *"the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).*

### 2. Christianity; A Discipleship Faith!

- a. The Great Commission is important, not only because it initiated the spread of Christianity throughout the world, but also because it helps us understand the nature of Christianity.
- b. In the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His disciples to make disciples; to call people to follow Jesus just as they had followed Jesus. This is why Jesus is at the top of this week's picture. Christianity invites everyone to follow Christ.

- c. True, saving faith in Jesus is demonstrated in a life that chooses to follow Christ as a disciple!

### 3. What is a disciple?

- a. In Bible times, a disciple was a student of a teacher called a 'Rabbi.' Have you ever noticed in the Gospels how often Jesus is called 'Rabbi'?
- b. When a Rabbi wanted to invite a young man to be his disciple, he would say, "Come follow me!" This is how Jesus invited the twelve into discipleship (Matthew 4:19). He even gave this invitation to people who were unwilling to accept it (Matthew 19:21).
- c. A disciple's goal was to be like a sponge and soak up the Rabbi's life and words. The disciple wanted to know all that the Rabbi knew, and live as the Rabbi lived. Jesus wants us to know His word, and imitate His life. This can only happen through the life-transforming reality of the new birth and through obedience to His teaching.

### 4. About Discipleship

- a. Since Christianity is a discipleship faith, it is a relational faith, not a religion. The disciple has a relationship with the Rabbi who provides salvation and direction for the disciple. As believers, this relationship with Christ is a wonderful resource, not only because He is always with us, but also because He is in authority over all things! These two truths are the 'bookends' of the Great Commission! Who could possibly stand against the disciples of Jesus in light of His authority and His presence! This is why the followers of Jesus in the picture have crowns inside them as a symbol of the presence and authority of Christ.
- b. Since Christianity is a discipleship faith, it means that disciples are a 'work in progress.' Notice how the Lord's disciples doubted (Matthew 28:17), even as He stood before them as their risen Savior. Jesus still commissioned them in spite of their need to grow in faith and maturity! Our picture shows big disciples and smaller disciples to illustrate that discipleship includes growing in Christ. Every follower of Jesus should

have a more mature disciple ahead of them and a less mature disciple behind them. This is part of the Great Commission.

- c. Discipleship requires counting the cost (Luke 14:25-33). This is why baptism is built into the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19). Baptism forces the 'would-be' disciple to be certain that they are serious about following Christ. It also provides a dramatic 'first step' for the disciple which helps root them in the Christian faith.
- d. Christian discipleship is meant to be ongoing! Notice how the Lord's first disciples were told to teach new disciples to obey everything Jesus had commanded them (Matthew 28:20). That includes the Great Commission! We are believers today because those first disciples obeyed, and disciples all through the centuries have obeyed! Now the Great Commission is our commission! It is our turn to make disciples!

#### 5. How to Make Disciples:

- a. You have to *be* a disciple in order to *make* disciples. You have to be following Christ in order to convince others to follow Him! Notice in the picture that the believers in the picture are on the move. They are following in the way of Jesus.
- b. We make disciples by living lives that put our Rabbi and His Kingdom on display as a contrast to the world we live in. This is also why the disciples in this week's picture have crowns inside them. They are putting the Kingdom of God on display.
- c. We make disciples by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus. In the picture, the Gospel is portrayed by the glory arrows that are in the shape of the cross. The cross is the reason we have Good News to share! It is every believer's responsibility to share the Good News. At any time, a follower of Christ should be praying for and sharing their faith with someone who needs the Savior! This is why the picture includes the broken sinners in the path of the disciples.
- d. We make disciples both locally and globally. We take every opportunity to proclaim and live the Gospel in our homes, our neighborhoods, our schools, our work place, our town, our country and to the ends of the

world! We do this through the witness of our lives and through the sharing of our resources with people who are making disciples in places that we cannot. Notice in the picture that the Gospel arrow points downward toward our part of Ontario. It also points in both directions horizontally to remind us that the Great Commission is global!

### **Panorama!**

As Creator, God has always had a heart for the world and for humanity. Because He loves the world, He sent His Son as a Savior for the world. The Great Commission is God's call for His people to go into all the world and make disciples from every nation! In eternity the people of God will be from every nation, tribe and language of the earth!

### **Selfie!**

I have been invited by Jesus Christ to follow Him and be His disciple. He wants me to know what He knows and live as He lives. I am a work in progress, becoming more like Jesus through the new birth and faithful obedience. Jesus wants me to be a disciple-maker; to follow Him and beckon others to follow Jesus through the Gospel proclaimed and displayed in my life.

### **Instagram!**

The greatest person who ever lived (Jesus!) wants to have a relationship with you! He has invited you into an abundant, supernatural life of transformation and cosmic purpose! You can experience this life through repentance and faith which will be displayed as you follow Christ with all your heart!

### **Key Story!**

Jesus gives the Great Commission to the disciples – Matthew 28:16-20

- The disciples were not perfect (some doubted).
- We can trust our Rabbi because He is the highest authority!
- We can accomplish the task because He is always with us!
- Baptism forces disciples to count the cost.
- The Great Commission has become our commission!

## Key Questions!

1. Why are the glory arrows pointing both vertically and horizontally in this week's picture? Why are they in the shape of a cross?
2. What makes the Gospel glorious?
3. Why do the disciples in the picture have crowns inside them? What do the crowns represent?
4. Can there be such a thing as a Christian who has chosen not to be a disciple of Jesus? How does following Christ demonstrate saving faith?
5. What are the 'bookends' of the Great Commission? Why are they so important for followers of Christ?
6. What part does Baptism play in Christian discipleship?
7. In light of the Great Commission, why is it wrong to think that becoming a Christian is simply a matter of 'praying a prayer' or 'asking Jesus into my heart'?
8. How can we be disciple-makers locally? What could/should we be doing?
9. How can we be disciple-makers globally? What could/should we be doing?