

Go and Teach All Nations

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

“Upon all the inhabitants of the earth, high and low, rich and poor, was the light of heaven to shine in clear, strong rays. The disciples were to be colaborers with their Redeemer in the work of saving the world.”—*The Review and Herald*, October 9, 1913.

Suggested Reading: *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 818–823.

1. The Meeting In Galilee

- a. During the Last Supper, what instruction did Jesus give the disciples about a future meeting with all the believers? Matthew 26:32; 28:16.
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a. Matthew 26:32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

Matthew 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

1. The Meeting In Galilee

b. How many were present in that meeting? 1 Corinthians 15:6.

“At the time appointed, about five hundred believers were collected in little knots on the mountainside, eager to learn all that could be learned from those who had seen Christ since His resurrection. From group to group the disciples passed, telling all they had seen and heard of Jesus, and reasoning from the Scriptures as He had done with them. Thomas recounted the story of his unbelief and told how his doubts had been swept away. Suddenly Jesus stood among them. No one could tell whence or how He came. Many who were present had never before seen Him; but in His hands and feet they beheld the marks of the crucifixion; His countenance was as the face of God, and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 818, 819.

b. 1 Corinthians 15:6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

2. A Secret Commission

- a. As the disciples were called to be colaborers with Christ in the work of saving souls, what commission did He give them? Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16.
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a. Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

2. A Secret Commission

- b. How was this commission opposed to the exclusivism of the Pharisees? Acts 13:46; 22:21, 22; Galatians 3:28.
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“The Jewish people had been made the depositaries of sacred truth; but Pharisaism had made them the most exclusive, the most bigoted, of all the human race. Everything about the priests and rulers—their dress, customs, ceremonies, traditions—made them unfit to be the light of the world. They looked upon themselves, the Jewish nation, as the world. But Christ commissioned His disciples to proclaim a faith and worship that would have in it nothing of caste or country, a faith that would be adapted to all peoples, all nations, all classes of men.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 819, 820.

b. Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Acts 22:21-22 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. 22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

2. A Secret Commission

- c. Why did the disciples have to begin the work at Jerusalem? Acts 1:8.
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“There were in Jerusalem many who had secretly believed on Jesus, and many who had been deceived by the priests and rulers. To these also the gospel was to be presented. They were to be called to repentance. The wonderful truth that through Christ alone could remission of sins be obtained was to be made plain. While all Jerusalem was stirred by the thrilling events of the past few weeks, the preaching of the gospel would make the deepest impression.

“But the work was not to stop here. It was to be extended to the earth’s remotest bounds. . . . All who will, may be reconciled to God and receive everlasting life. To you, My disciples, I commit this message of mercy. It is to be given to Israel first, and then to all nations, tongues, and peoples. It is to be given to Jews and Gentiles. All who believe are to be gathered into one church.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 820, 821.

- c. Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

3. The Promised Gift

- a. How would the disciples be enabled to preach among other nations without taking time to learn their languages? 1 Corinthians 12:7, 10.
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“The disciples were to have the same power which Jesus had to heal ‘all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.’ By healing in His name the diseases of the body, they would testify to His power for the healing of the soul (Matthew 4:23; 9:6). And a new endowment was now promised. The disciples were to preach among other nations, and they would receive power to speak other tongues. The apostles and their associates were unlettered men, yet through the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, their speech, whether in their own or a foreign language, became pure, simple, and accurate, both in word and in accent.

“Thus Christ gave His disciples their commission. He made full provision for the prosecution of the work, and took upon Himself the responsibility for its success. So long as they obeyed His word, and worked in connection with Him, they could not fail. Go to all nations, He bade them. Go to the farthest part of the habitable globe, but know that My presence will be there. Labor in faith and confidence, for the time will never come when I will forsake you.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 821, 822.

- a. 1 Corinthians 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

1 Corinthians 12:10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

3. The Promised Gift

- b. What miracles would be wrought by the representatives of the gospel through the gift of the Holy Spirit? Mark 16:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 12:11.
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“The gospel still possesses the same power, and why should we not today witness the same results?

“Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend a human frame, Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now as when He was personally on earth. Christ’s servants are His representatives, the channels for His working. He desires through them to exercise His healing power.”—Ibid., pp. 823, 824.

b. Mark 16:17-18 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

1 Corinthians 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

4. The Solemn Duty of Christ's Church

- a. What obligation, and what prohibition, was put on the leaders of Israel since their government had been established in the name and by the authority of God? Deuteronomy 4:1, 2.
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“The government of Israel was administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation. This was, and continued to be, the condition of Israel’s existence as a nation. From age to age men inspired by God were sent to instruct the people and to direct in the enforcement of the laws.”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 603.

a. Deuteronomy 4:1-2 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. 2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

4. The Solemn Duty of Christ's Church

- b. How are we to understand our obligation to teach the people to “observe all things” as Christ commanded? Matthew 28:20.
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“In the commission to His disciples, Christ not only outlined their work, but gave them their message. Teach the people, He said, ‘to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you’ (Matthew 28:20). The disciples were to teach what Christ had taught. That which He had spoken, not only in person, but through all the prophets and teachers of the Old Testament, is here included. Human teaching is shut out. There is no place for tradition, for man’s theories and conclusions, or for church legislation. No laws ordained by ecclesiastical authority are included in the commission. None of these are Christ’s servants to teach.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 826.

- b. Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

4. The Solemn Duty of Christ's Church

- c. What is the duty of the church toward those who fall into sin?
2 Timothy 4:2.
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“Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. ‘They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God’ (Galatians 5:21). If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God’s word is pronounced upon them in heaven.”—*Ibid.*, p. 806.

- c. 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

5. A Basic Question for Every Soul Winner

- a. What question should every prospective worker for Christ answer?
John 21:15-17.
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a. John 21:15-17 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

5. A Basic Question for Every Soul Winner

- b. How only can we be instruments in the work of Christ? 1 John 4:7–12.
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“The power of love was in all Christ’s healing, and only by partaking of that love, through faith, can we be instruments for His work. If we neglect to link ourselves in divine connection with Christ, the current of life-giving energy cannot flow in rich streams from us to the people. . . .

“It is in doing Christ’s work that the church has the promise of His presence. Go teach all nations, He said; ‘and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world’ (Matthew 28:20). To take His yoke is one of the first conditions of receiving His power. The very life of the church depends upon her faithfulness in fulfilling the Lord’s commission. To neglect this work is surely to invite spiritual feebleness and decay. Where there is no active labor for others, love wanes, and faith grows dim.

“Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the church in gospel work. They are to teach the people how to seek and save the lost. But is this the work they are doing?”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 825.

b. 1 John 4:7-12 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is Christ's commission to each of His followers?
2. How are we warned against Pharisaical-style exclusiveness?
3. What specific gift enabled the disciples to take the message of salvation to other nations—and what must we understand about this?
4. Why does the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:20 exclude human teachings?
5. What is the first quality that should characterize every soul winner?