

Chapter 2: The Task of the Great Commission: The Meaning of Discipleship

“we must draw our view of the missionary task from the biblical text, not impose upon it.”¹

I. The Setting of the Commission (16-17)

II. The Communication of the Commission (18-20)

a. The Authority for the Program

b. The Activity of the Program

i. Whom are we to Discipline?

“...churches must pray for and determine how to work for the progress of the gospel in both their hometown (localized church ministry) and among people and places where Christ is not known (missions). Both are important. If we say, ‘Gospel work is for everywhere, including my hometown,’ then we might never go to the unreached because we might think doing ministry nearby will satisfy the mission mandate of Scripture. But if we say, ‘Gospel ministry is only for the unreached,’ then we might discourage Christians from also ministering in their hometown. We should resist simplistic, all-or-nothing definitions. The Bible shows that God will settle for nothing less than the spread of Christ’s fame in ‘all’ places – near and far. Church members must pray for the spread of the gospel among ‘all’ nations.”²

ii. What does it mean to Discipline?

“Disciple-making begins with gospel preaching.”³

“We cannot make disciples without announcing the good news (Rom. 10:14-17), but that is where the Great Commission starts, not stops.”⁴

More than Professions:

“...one of the sad evidences of a defective and unbiblical missions strategy is being satisfied with evangelistic decisions that yield no lasting fruit or transformation in the lives of those who have supposedly received Jesus Christ.”⁵

¹ David M. Doran, *For the Sake of His Name.*, p. 21.

² John Folmar, *Prioritizing the Church in Missions*, 1st ed, with Scott Logsdon et al., 9Marks Church-Centered Missions Series (Crossway, 2025)., pp. 77-78.

³ Aaron Menikoff, *Prioritizing Missions in the Church*, 1st ed, with Harshit Singh et al., 9Marks Church-Centered Missions Series (Crossway, 2025)., p. 61.

⁴ David M. Doran, *For the Sake of His Name.*, p. 26.

⁵ David M. Doran, *For the Sake of His Name.*, p. 27.

For the Sake of His Name

- **Baptizing**
- **Teaching**

“Baptism is not the be-all and end-all; it is no more than the beginning. The new disciple is to be baptized, but he or she is also to be taught “to observe all the things I have commanded you.” The church’s teaching function is thus of great importance. We teach because Jesus commanded us to teach, and there is no way of diminishing the importance of an activity that owes its origin to the command of our Lord himself. But Jesus is not speaking about education for education’s sake. He speaks of the taught as “observing” what Jesus has commanded. In other words, Jesus is concerned with a way of life”⁶

c. The Assurance During the Program

J.C. Ryle – Expository Thoughts on the Gospels - “It is impossible to conceive words more comforting, strengthening, cheering, and sanctifying than these. Though left alone, like orphan children in a cold, unkind world, the disciples were not to think they were deserted. Their Master would be ever “with them.” Though commissioned to do a work as hard as that of Moses when sent to Pharaoh, they were not to be discouraged. Their Master would certainly be “with them.” No words could be more suited to the position of those to whom they were first spoken. No words could be imagined more consolatory to believers in every age of the world. Let all true Christians lay hold on these words and keep them in mind. Christ is “with us” always. Christ is “with us,” wherever we go.”

“Let us never forget that this solemn injunction is still in full force. It is still the bounden duty of every disciple of Christ to do all he can in person, and by prayer, to make others acquainted with Jesus. Where is our faith, if we neglect this duty? Where is our charity? It may well be questioned whether a man knows the value of the Gospel himself, if he does not desire to make it known to all the world.” - J. C. Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels by J. C. Ryle

“If we mean business about fulfilling the Great Commission then we need to stand without apology for a transforming gospel that calls people to repentance and faith. We must proclaim a gospel that calls people to turn from sin to a Savior, from dead works to Christ’s righteousness, and from vain idols to the one true and living God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Christ commanded us to make disciples who would follow Him in baptism and obey all that He commanded. Our mission efforts must settle for nothing less.”⁷

“The Great Commission drives toward a foreordained, glorious end: the worship of Jesus Christ among all peoples of the world.”⁸

⁶ Morris, Leon. 1992. [The Gospel according to Matthew](#). The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

⁷ David M. Doran, *For the Sake of His Name.*, p. 41.

⁸ Thomas Nelson and John MacArthur, *Biblical Missions: Principles, Priorities, and Practices*, ed. Chris Burnett and Mark Tatlock (Thomas Nelson, n.d.), p. 108.