

## Mark 16 – The Great Commission

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The Great Commission of the bible must be understood to be that which each and every believer, in his pilgrimage, fulfills as he becomes the instrument of the Lord to bring about all that He has purposed from old. The all-reaching effects of this commission includes not only the peoples of the world, but to the world itself as well (Rom. 8:19-22. contrast Col. 1:23, where “creation” is qualified by that “under the heaven,” i.e., the people who heard the Gospel).

That The Commission does not refer to the organized, institutional activity of a certain church or a body of believers is revealed in the carefully crafted words of Christ. The word “Go,” in “Go ye,” is a word that has everything to do with the believer’s sanctified, “instant” (2 Tim. 4:2) *way of life*. This imperative of the Lord can be read in Jn. 8, where the “woman taken in adultery” (vs. 3), *after* being forgiven of the Lord, is commanded, “...go, and...” yell it on the mountains? No; rather, “...sin no more” (vs. 11). The impact of this command is that as passive as a life of progressive repentance, that of ongoing sanctification may appear to be in comparison to an actively salient life of a well-known evangelist such as the apostle Paul, it is nevertheless the command of the Savior to the forgiven woman - a life which clearly demonstrates the miracle of salvation. This is completely parallel to the command given to the believing wife of an unsaved man in 1 Pt. 3:1. There we read of God’s commission for such women: “...ye wives, be in subjection to your...husbands” - for what purpose? That “they also may without the word be won by the conversation...” Here God lays down the principle that the purpose for which the believer was redeemed is the possible conversion of the unsaved (“that...they...may...be won”), and that this purpose can be accomplished *without* the verbalized preaching of the Word. This confirms the above reading of Jn. 8, that the *going* in “Go ye” defines a way

of life. This important point is further seen in passages where “go” is rendered *walk*. 1 Pt. 4:3 refers to the sinful, the past way of life of the now-regenerate believer: “...when we walked in....” The unsaved also “go,” in the sense that they “walk after the flesh in the lust...” (2 Pt. 2:10, comp. also 3:3; Jud. 11, 16, 18). None can argue that the way of the dominion of Satan is inactive. Thus “Go,” which implies the “walk” of a man, is a most powerful word.

It is thus entirely understandable that the Lord would use this word to describe His own mission - that of going to the cross. Jn. 14: 2 declares, “...I go to prepare a place for you.” Was Christ’s journey to the cross one of passivity? Of comfort? Certainly not. It was the epitome, the essence, of work. The very reason why He is “that rest” spoken of in Heb. 4, typified by the seventh day, the reason why He can so boldly promise that “all that labor and are heavy laden” can have “rest” in Him (Mt.. 11: 28), is that He has borne the “heavy burdens...grievous to be borne” (Mt. 23:4) on behalf of His elect. Just as He did indeed “go” to redeem the elect, so in this self-giving manner also, the believer is to fulfill The Commission. Thus the believer is to “bear the infirmities of the weak,” to the intent that the neighbor is edified; “For even Christ pleased not Himself” (Rom. 15:1-3). Paul, typifying Christ as well as every true believer, states: “...I please all men...not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved” (1 Cor. 10:33. comp. Mk. 10:45).

Thus we are to “go,” not only in Pharisaically hypocritical verse quoting, but as we “sin no more,” in genuine repentance, in growing in grace, in the non-verbal demonstration of the selfless fragrance of Christ - indeed, in our manner of life, in our walk. This coupled with the publishing of the verbal Word, surely, is what the Lord commands the believer: “...go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mt. 10:7). The result which the Lord will bring about? The sick are healed, the lepers cleansed, the dead raised, devils cast out (vs.. 8). Indeed, the salvation of His people.

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