

**CALMS Mission Bible Study
November, 2008**

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

1. **Purpose** – "Make Disciples" The word "Purpose" answers the question, "what?" What are we to do in God's mission?
2. **Program** – This P-Word answers the question, "How?" How do we accomplish God's mission? We "make disciples" by "going, baptizing, and teaching." The Greek here shows that "make disciples" is what we call in English an imperative verb while the other verbs are what we would call gerunds. Going involves a change of attitude. We are willing to go out of our way to share the Good News with someone or help them with a human need. Baptizing someone is God's way of putting his name upon them so that they belong to Him and His family, the church! Teaching involves more than intellectual assent to certain truths as the context implies. ("teaching them to obey all things I have commanded...") In the end it involves obedience and includes a relationship with Christ!
3. **People** – This P-Word answers the question, "How?" The words from the text that should be underlined or written here are: "all nations." In Greek, the word "nations" is "ethnos" from which we get the well-known English word, "ethnic" and its derivatives. Thus we see that the focus is not on political entities like the United States, but "people groups." There are over 20,000 different people groups in the world, each with their own unique culture and language. Chachiquel Indians in Guatemala would be an example of a people group. Only about 1/2 of all the people groups in the world have been reached at this point. That is why we still need to send missionaries! Each group has its own way of looking at the world and will respond differently to the Gospel—and through a different set of filters. For this reason, we need to learn about each culture and respond with sensitivity in order to understand them and help "make disciples." God is not just interested in individuals but also whole people groups. ("ethnos")

4. **Power** – “This P-Word answers the question “How?” as in “How will God accomplish His mission?” “All authority...” and “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” are the words that reflect power. The same authority that God has given to His Son, Jesus, is now given to each of us baptized believers. So when we help “make disciples,” we do so with God’s authority and power! We also carry out the mission in the name of the Triune God, who created the heavens and the earth, saved us and sanctifies and keeps us.

5. **Promise** – This P-Word answers the questions, “when?” and “how long?” The key words in the text are, “And surely I will be with you always to the very end of the age.” When will Christ be with us to help us in His mission work? ALWAYS! And, “how long” can we expect Him to be with us? He will be with us as He promised, “until the very end of the age” or until He comes back again to receive His own and judge all people. How should that make us feel? Very confident and expectant! That’s why we pray in the Lord’s Prayer, “Come Lord Jesus!” We want Him to come soon! And, so we labor with Him in His mission to hasten the day! Being involved with God in His mission is an amazing thing! What a privilege!