

# Why Evangelize?

By Brandon Kiesling

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Study the comments related to Matthew 28:18 in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: What thoughts come to mind when you think about a person with authority over you? What makes a person an authority?

### Assignment Two

Study the comments related to Matthew 28:19-20a in the section **It's in the Book**. Also, think about some commands of Jesus that you find hard to follow. Prepare to share your answers to the following questions: Why do you have a difficult time following certain commands? Why should believers follow even the difficult commands of Jesus?

### Assignment Three

Study the comments related to Matthew 28:20b in the section **It's in the Book**. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: Why is Jesus' presence a comforting thought?

### Scripture to Memorize

*"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved."*  
Romans 10:1

### Session Goal

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit - by the end of this session, disciples will understand the goal of biblical evangelism as commanded by Jesus Christ.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

Imagine you know someone who claims to know and believe in Jesus Christ. However, their life doesn't reflect Christian values. They don't go to church, don't read their Bible or pray and often use bad language. They say they became a Christian when someone shared the gospel with them when they were younger. Do you believe they are a Christian? If they asked you that question, what would you say?

**Read** Matthew 28:16-20 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

Several things motivate disciples to share the gospel. Some of these motivations are good, while others are not good. For instance, sharing Christ out of genuine concern for nonbelievers is a great motivation for believers. However, sharing the gospel simply to show others how spiritual you are is a bad motivation for believers. This passage gives another good motivation for believers to share the gospel: Believers share the gospel because of who Jesus is and what He has done.

**Verse 18. all authority . . . given to Me.** When Jesus came to earth, He voluntarily set aside His authority as God, became human and eventually died on a cross for the sins of the whole world (Philippians 2:6-11). However, God raised Him back to life and granted Him all authority over heaven and earth. He now sits at the Father's right hand in heaven. In this passage Jesus reveals that the limitations that applied throughout His earthly ministry no longer apply to Him. He now has complete authority over the entire universe.

Jesus' authority is the basis for everything disciples do today. Because Jesus now has authority over everything, His followers must do what He commands. Christians often express that they made Jesus their personal Lord and Savior at the moment of conversion. Although someone submits to Jesus at the moment of conversion, that person cannot make Jesus Lord because He already is Lord of lords! Nothing a person does can make Jesus Lord. He is Lord regardless.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on what thoughts come to mind when thinking about a person with authority and what makes a person an authority.

### On Your Own

In the space below identify some authorities in your life. Write some practical ways you can obey and respect them this week. When everyone is finished, the group can share their responses.

## Studying the Passage

**Verse 19. therefore.** This simple word connects what was previously stated to what is about to be stated in Scripture. In light of the fact that Jesus has all authority over heaven and earth, disciples are to follow His commands. **make disciples.** The word *disciple* means “learner.” A disciple is more than a convert, although converting to Christianity is the first step in the process of becoming a disciple. As a matter of fact, a disciple is one who follows Christ and learns about Christ. The word *disciple* also carries the meaning of one who continually follows and continually learns. Evangelism not only leads to conversion, but it also leads to making disciples of new converts. Jesus commands a type of evangelism that does not stop after someone makes a profession of faith. Genuine biblical evangelism is the activity of disciples of Jesus Christ producing more disciples of Jesus Christ. **of all nations.** Jesus included a brief statement on the scope of His command. Believers are to make disciples of people from all nations. This includes family, friends, neighbors and strangers from around the globe. No person on earth is excluded from God’s love, and He desires all people to enter into a personal relationship with Him. **Go.** The process of making disciples is clearly explained by Jesus in this passage. In order to make disciples, one must first go, meaning that believers cannot sit around and expect nonbelievers to come to them. **baptizing.** Once a nonbeliever comes to Christ, he must follow Christ in baptism. Baptism is an outward profession to the world of one’s inward profession of his belief of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The act of baptism does not save anyone. Rather, baptism is an act that follows one’s salvation. **teaching.** Finally, authentic, biblical evangelism continues through a lifelong process of teaching new believers to **observe all I commanded you.** This includes both the popular and unpopular truths of Scripture. Some believers today follow only the parts of Scripture they like, but Jesus expects His true disciples to follow everything He commands, as well as teach others to do the same.

## Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now report on the commands of Jesus that are difficult to follow and why believers should follow everything Jesus commands.

## Discussion Question

Why does Jesus command His followers to make disciples? What makes a person a disciple of Jesus Christ?

## Studying the Passage

The task of making disciples of all nations is a huge responsibility for believers. World population today exceeds seven billion people and many of them do not follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The thought of this gigantic task can be overwhelming at first. Jesus understood this and gave a word of encouragement to His disciples in this passage.

**Verse 20. I am with you always.** Believers cannot possibly reach the entire world for Christ in their own strength and abilities. But, thanks be to God, He did not simply assign this task to believers and expect us to carry it out by ourselves! Jesus’ promise

should give believers hope that He does not expect His followers to walk alone. He will be there when the task seems too difficult to continue. He will be there when believers want to give up. **to the end of the age.** A time will never come when Jesus Christ is not with His disciples. Jesus has always been and always will be with His people. The coming of the Holy Spirit to live inside all believers was the fulfillment of Jesus' promise. Once a person accepts Christ as Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live in this person forever. This thought should bring much encouragement to every disciple of Christ, knowing that our all-authoritative God will never leave you or forsake you.

### **Assignment Three Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now report on why Jesus' presence is a comforting thought to believers.

### **Discussion Question**

How should Jesus' continual presence affect our evangelism? In what ways does the thought of Jesus being with you give you courage?

### **On Your Own**

In the space below write a prayer thanking Jesus for His promise to never leave you. Ask Him for courage to follow and obey Him every day of your life.

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart (the real you) for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something in your life for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below and then be ready to share that with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: “In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue, I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . .”

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## At Home: Nail It Down

Many factors should motivate believers to share the good news of Jesus Christ: love for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14), personal experience with Christ (John 4:28-30), personal responsibility before Christ (Romans 10:14-15) and gratitude for what Christ has done for you (Mark 5:20), to name a few. However, one of the greatest reasons believers should evangelize is simply because Christ commands us to do so (Matthew 28:19). Matthew 28:18-20 is often called the Great Commission of Jesus, but many believers treat this passage as the “Great Suggestion” of Jesus. Jesus didn’t say, “Go and make disciples if you get around to it.” Jesus said, “Go . . . and make disciples.”

Making disciples is more than making converts. The initial profession of faith a person makes is simply the first step in one’s walk with Christ as a disciple. In order to make disciples, believers must commit the time and energy necessary to help a new believer understand what it means to walk with Jesus. Also, in order to make disciples, believers must train new believers to make new disciples, which means believers must evangelize and teach others how to evangelize. In this way, Jesus’ Great Commission is fulfilled by making disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them all of His commands.

Today believers are to evangelize:

- Because of the authority Christ has over all creation.
- Because of the command Christ has given for all believers.
- Because of the promise that Christ will be present with all believers forever.

### Follow-Up Question

*Why should all believers make disciples, and what does the process of disciple making look like?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.