

Go!- Reach All people - Matthew 28:19

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We are continuing to roughly follow the book “**Essential Guide to Becoming a Disciple**” by **Greg Ogden**. We’re in Chapter 3 today.

Turn in your bibles to Matthew Chapter 28. Our core truth again comes from the Great Commission; the last command we received from our Lord. We’ll start at verse 18, but our core truth today is in verse 19.

Matthew 28:18–19 (NLT)

18 Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.

*19 Therefore, **GO** and make disciples of all the nations . . .*

Here’s our core truth; Jesus commissions us to – ***GO and make disciples of all people.***

On the authority of Jesus Christ, we are commissioned to **GO**, to make disciples of all people. Wherever they are, and wherever you are.

The “go spirit” compels us to go to the people that need Jesus. But don’t just immediately think of far away, end-of-the-earth missionaries. Because then your “flesh spirit” will excuse you from embracing the “go spirit.”

Audio Adrenaline (one of the best band names ever) had a song back in the day called “a.k.a. Public School” that drove the point home to students that their mission field was “also known as” your public school.

For most of us, our mission field will be right where we are at, and the people we are called to “go to” will be the people who are right in front of us.

The “go spirit” is what moves a disciple of Jesus toward those in need of the love and the grace and the salvation that Jesus freely offers them.

The “go spirit” of a disciple primarily expresses itself in 3 ways:

- 1) a disciple **moves toward** those in need of the good news
- 2) a disciple is a **relational link** to the good news
- 3) a disciple **demonstrates** the good news

The “good news” is the gospel message of *who* Jesus Christ is and *why* he came to earth, and the “go spirit” in a disciple moves toward, and is a relational link for, and demonstrates that good news – to those who need Jesus.

Every disciple is called to **GO** to those who need Jesus. But, in our church culture today, many have adopted what Greg Ogden calls the “*field of dreams*” approach to get the good news to the people who need it. Do you remember the movie? A young Iowa farmer starts hearing a voice coming out of his cornfield . . . “*if you build it, they will come.*”

Ultimately the farmer builds a baseball field, and not only did the baseball greats come, but people came from far and wide to experience what the farmer had built, and to see the celebrities who showed up there.

In some ways, hasn’t that become our approach to getting the Good News to people? “*If we build it, they will come.*” If we build an impressive enough property, and if we pay all the right people to make it all work the right way. And if we manage to create the most attractive environment around. We know (for sure) people will come from far and wide to that church.

But then – here’s what (far too often) happens; People become an ambassador for their church. They become a relational link - to their church. And they demonstrate the goodness “of their church” to people. We say things like, “At our church last night, we had such an awesome this-or-that.” Or, “Our church is doing this-or-that, you should come.”

At the core of this culturally successful approach there can be a severe problem. Because we are really becoming a grass-roots marketing team “for our church.” And we’re trying to draw people to something that will impress, or entertain, or inspire them.

But Jesus didn’t say build something impressive enough to draw people to the church. Instead, Jesus commissioned each individual disciple to **GO**. To go to the people who need the gospel, and to be a relational link between them and Jesus, and to demonstrate the good news of Jesus to them.

I know that the motivation of most people who promote their church is good-hearted. I know they really want people to ultimately come to Jesus and start following him. And I know it’s way easier to invite someone to an awesome and impressive church than it is to invite them to Jesus.

But – do you see a problem with us becoming an ambassador for ‘our church’ – instead of an ambassador for ‘our Lord’? What problems might come from us promoting ‘our church’ instead of promoting ‘our Lord’?

When the pastor falls in some a public and faith-shaking sin. When the sinners who attend that awesome and impressive church do something to hurt or offend that person. Or, when the sizzle just wears off, when the lights don't seem as bright, and the warm-fuzzies don't seem as warm, or fuzzy. Then what does that person do? Often, they just try to find a more awesome and impressive church. But the bigger and better game is hard to keep up, *and so, too often, they begin the slow fade . . . away from Jesus.*

We've got to remember, our God is a personal, relational, one-on-one God. And so it makes sense that God would call us to make disciples in the same way, In a personal, relational, one-on-one way.

If you are becoming a disciple, does it cause any fear or doubt in you – to accept that you, personally, have been commissioned by Jesus to go and make disciples? If so, why?

Turn in your Bibles to Luke 24:36.

This is the very end of Luke's gospel, which actually continues into Acts Chapter 1 (which Luke also wrote). Just before this, two disciples were on the road to Emmaus, after the Resurrection. And suddenly, Jesus was walking with them, and then he ate with them. And in Luke 24:35, these two are telling the other disciples that Jesus walked with them, and ate with them. Then we read,

Luke 24:36–37 (NLT)

36 And just as they were telling about it, Jesus himself was suddenly standing there among them. "Peace be with you," he said.

37 But the whole group was startled and frightened, thinking they were seeing a ghost!

Our focus in this text today is preparing to be a witness. And so, we want to see very clearly how Jesus prepared these Disciples to be witnesses.

So, Jesus suddenly shows up in the room with the Disciples, and the whole group freaks out – even though they had all clearly heard about the resurrection. Then in verse 38, Jesus asks,

Luke 24:38 (NLT)

38 "Why are you frightened?" He asked. "Why are your hearts filled with doubt?"

I wonder if Jesus would ask us these same two questions when he's preparing us to go and make disciples?

Would Jesus ask you these same two questions about fear and doubt, as he is preparing you to go make disciples?

It's ok, Jesus had to ask his first Disciples these questions as well. But then, look closely at the response of Jesus, knowing that his Disciples were frightened and in doubt;

Luke 24:39-40 (NLT)

39 Look at my hands. Look at my feet. You can see that it's really me. Touch me and make sure that I am not a ghost, because ghosts don't have bodies, as you see that I do." 40 As he spoke, he showed them his hands and his feet.

Jesus is saying to his unsure Disciples – If you are unsure - get sure! Look at Jesus closely, study his life, see who he really is, and get to really know him, so that you can be sure! And Jesus will be patient with you as you become convinced of who he is. He was certainly patient with his first disciples.

Look at these next verses.

Luke 24:41-43 (NLT)

41 Still they stood there in disbelief, filled with joy and wonder. Then he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he ate it as they watched.

Do you think the Lord was hungry? Or do you think he was patiently convincing the Disciples of what they needed to be confident of?

Do you see that Jesus wanted his Disciples to have "personal interaction" with him, first, before they would GO to make disciples? How does that apply to US today?

And then, from "personal interaction" with him, Jesus then takes the disciples right to the Word.

Luke 24:44 (NLT)

44 Then he said, "when I was with you before, I told you that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must be fulfilled."

Here Jesus points us to both the New Testament and the Old Testament. First, he says, "*When I was with you, I told you*" (that's New Testament). Then he says, "*that everything written about me in the law and the prophets and the Psalms* (that's Old Testament), all of it *must be fulfilled!*

Luke 24:45 (NLT)

45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.

This is critical. This is the Holy Spirit's job today. The Holy Spirit changes ink and paper into the Living Word of God, that speaks directly to us.

And then Jesus says, in **Luke 24:46-47 (NLT)**

46 And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day.

47 It was also written (here's the point) that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'

And then, the punch line; **Luke 24:48 (NLT)**

48 (Jesus says) You are witnesses of all these things.

That's it, right there - you are witnesses to the life-saving truth of who Jesus Christ is! A witness is someone who simply and accurately tells about what they have seen, and heard, and experienced. So, for us to be a witness, all we have to do is tell someone what we have seen and heard and experienced Jesus do, in our own lives.

So, if you are unsure of what Jesus has done in your life - get sure! Look closely at who Jesus is. Hear his supernatural Word speak to you. And know him personally, so that you can be sure. And, as you are striving to know Jesus more and more, pray the Holy Spirit would open your mind so you would understand the "Living Word of God." Then pray for the power of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Which is exactly how Jesus ends this training session with his disciples.

Luke 24:49 (NLT)

49 "And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven."

Get to know Jesus. Hear him speak to you in God's Word. Then ask God to send the Holy Spirit to fill you with power from heaven! That is how Jesus prepared his first Disciples, and that is how Jesus will prepare us. Remember, as we go to make disciples; We go with the supernatural power from heaven. We go with the authority of the Creator God. And we go to watch God supernaturally transform lives.

And this promise from Jesus continues in Acts Ch 1;

Acts 1:4-5 (NLT)

4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before.

5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

This is Luke reminding us of the event we just read about in Luke 24. In essence, Jesus is finishing here the training he started in Luke 24. And then, let's skip down to verse 8.

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

We are to GO, to take the Good News of Jesus, TO the people. People who are closest to us, and people who are farthest away.

To prepare to go to take the good news to people who need Jesus:

1. Look at Jesus closely. Study his life. See who he really is. And know him. So that you can be sure of him.
2. See and hear and experience him. So that you can be a witness and testify to his grace and power.
3. Pray continually that God would fill you to overflowing with the power of the Holy Spirit.
4. Then . . . **GO**. Move toward those in need of Jesus. Be a relational link between them and Jesus. And demonstrate the love and grace of Jesus to them.

And Jesus will be with you, always.