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# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**1 John 1:1-4**  
**Lesson #1**  
**The Great Mission**  
**1/2/2022**

*Matthew 28*

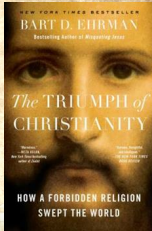

“19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

**It is termed the  
“Great Commission”.**

1

“The reason the Christian religion swept the world was its unique message and the evangelistic efforts of its members.”

**Bart Ehrman**  
The Triumph of Christianity

2

“The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed.”  
**Hudson Taylor** (China Inland Mission)

“You’re either a missionary or a mission field.”  
**Loren Cunningham** (Youth with a Mission)

“There is no higher calling or greater privilege known to man than being involved in helping fulfill the Great Commission.”  
**Bill Bright** (Campus Crusade for Christ)

“You have one business on earth – to save souls.”  
**John Wesley**

“The Christian is not obedient unless he is doing all in his power to send the Gospel to the heathen world.”  
**A.B. Simpson** (Christian and Missionary Alliance)

3-8

**The Great Commission (true or false)**

1. World evangelism is **the purpose of the church** according to the Apostles’ teaching.
2. Every believer is **commanded** to evangelize.
3. Our basic calling is to **win - build - and send** believers to evangelize the lost.
4. Before the modern era, the church ordained only the **mature & gifted** to do “mission work”.
5. The N.T. suggests that the whole world is **yet to be reached** with the Gospel.
6. You can identify a healthy church by the % of attention given to **world missions**.

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*Matthew 28:18*

“And Jesus came up and spoke to **them**,”

- In each of the gospel accounts, these words are directed to the **Apostles**. (Mk. 16:15-16, Lk.24:46-47, Jn.20:21)
- Until the 17th cent. this text was applied to the Apostles who were the **eyewitnesses** to Jesus words, works, and resurrection. (Acts 1:21-26) and performed **signs** (2 Cor.12:12).

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*Matthew 28:19*

“Go(ing) therefore {and} **make disciples** of all the **nations**,”

**The IMPERATIVE**

is not “GO” but rather “MAKE DISCIPLES”.

**The SCOPE**

is not “ISRAEL” but also “GENTILES”.

11

*The incarnation was vital for three reasons.*



**Jesus' birth**

- He affirmed human dignity
- The **WAY** of the Cross

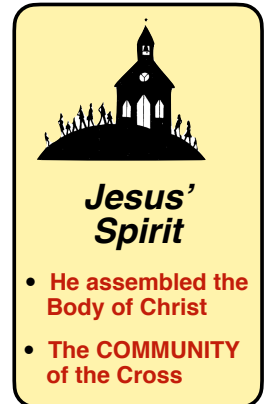
*John's Gospel*



**Jesus' passion**

- He atoned for human depravity
- The **WORD** of the Cross

*John's Epistles*



**Jesus' Spirit**

- He assembled the Body of Christ
- The **COMMUNITY** of the Cross

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*John 10:10*

“I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly.”

**Life in Christ**

An “afterlife” that starts with “this life”

- **John's Gospel** addresses **JESUS' life** given for us. *God's revelation.*
- **John's Epistles** address **OUR life** abiding with and in Christ. *Our response*

13

*1 John 1*

“<sup>1</sup> What was from the beginning, what **we** have **heard**, what we have **seen** with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands **handled**, concerning the Word of Life”

The “**we**” here refers to the apostles who were eyewitnesses to Jesus' life, death, & resurrection.

**This verse points to The Gospel of John**

14

*1 John 1*

2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and **proclaim** to **you** the eternal life, which was with the Father and was **manifested** to us <sup>3</sup> what we have seen and heard we proclaim to **you** also, that **you** also may have **fellowship** with us; and indeed **our** fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

The “**our**” here refers to the apostles and all who receive their message.

How does John understand “**fellowship**” with God and one another?

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**Is the “Great Commission” the “Great Mission” of the church?**

**Why don't we see:**

- the Apostles **reiterating** the “Great Commission” to the church?
- the N.T. Epistles **pushing** world evangelism more than they do?



16

## Spiritual “fellowship”

• In 1 John 1, it is linked to:

- “1 . . . **the Word of Life**;
- “2 . . . **eternal life**;
- “6 . . . **the truth** (the Gospel?);
- “7 . . . **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.**”

• This suggests the fixed and secure work of Christ FOR us and the union we have with one another in the Body of Christ.

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## Spiritual “fellowship”

- Paul consistently uses this word to describe the faith that unites us with God through Christ.

*Philemon*

“4 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, 5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; 6 and I pray that at the **fellowship of your faith** may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ’s sake.”

- Is “fellowship” a dynamic posture maintained through daily obedience to Christ?
- Can a person be a Christian and “out of fellowship” through ungodly living?



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### How does John understand “fellowship” with God and one another?

**child of God**  
(identity)

Christ’s work FOR us

**(Word of the Cross)**

**disciple of Jesus**  
(behavior)

the Spirit’s work IN & THROUGH us

**(Way of the Cross)**

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### Could the real “Great Mission” be building and being the Body of Christ, which is characterized by “fellowship” with God and His people.

The Apostles of Jesus had two callings.

1. - to witness the life & ministry of Jesus.
2. - to bear witness of what they saw.

“4 And these things we write, so that **our joy may be made complete.**”

This would fulfill their calling and joy (“abundant life”).

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### A common theme of these images is Intimate fellowship (koinonia)

**Body / Head**  
(1 Corinthians 12:27)

**Building / Cornerstone**  
(1 Peter 2:4-7)

**Sheep / Shepherd**  
(John 10:11)

**Bride / Groom**  
(Ephesians 5:22-32)

**Branch / Vine**  
(John 15:1-16)

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### The “Great Commission” was fulfilled in the 1st century.

*Colossians 1:23*

“. . . the hope of **the gospel** that you have heard, **which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven**, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”

*Romans 16*

“25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my **gospel**...26... manifested, by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been **made known to all the nations**, leading to obedience of faith;”

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Matt. 28, Mk. 16, Lk. 24, Jn. 20

Jesus' Great Commission

Bring to faith in Christ

Make Disciples

Bring to maturity in Christ

Eph. 4 Rom. 12

Paul's Great Mission

Paul's great commission

Ephesians 4

"11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. . . 15 . . . speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

Ephesians 4

Paul's Great Mission

vs 25-32

6. Walk in the Spirit.

"light & salt"

vs 1

1. Walk in harmony with your calling.

vs 17-24

5. Put off the old, put on the new.

vs 2-11

2. Respect diversity.

vs 15-16

4. Speak truth in love.

vs 12-14

3. Build the Body of Christ.



The Gospel

Christ FOR us

Christ THROUGH us



Christ IN us



The Mission

This is the emphasis when evangelism is central.

Christ FOR us

Christ THROUGH us



Christ IN us



The Mission

This is the emphasis when new spiritual experience is central.

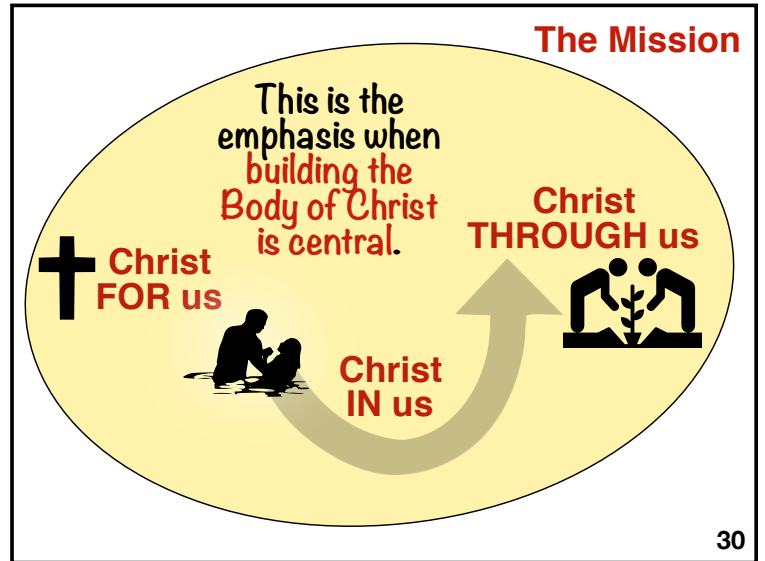
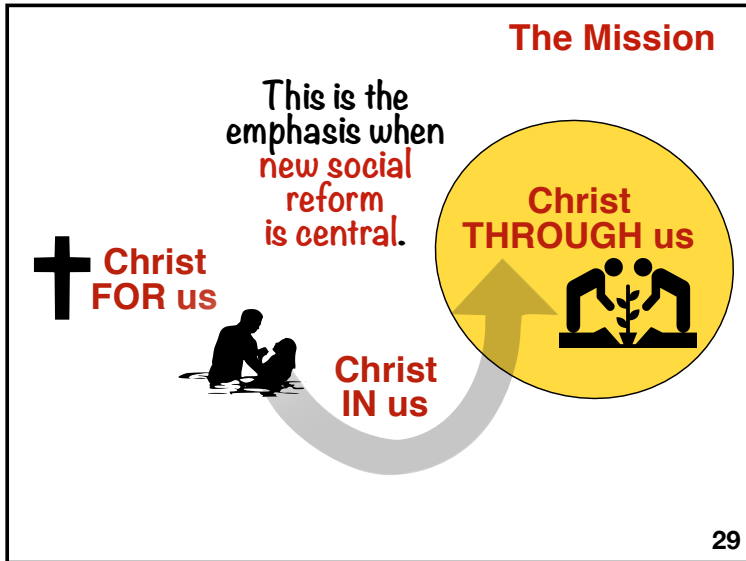
Christ FOR us

Christ THROUGH us



Christ IN us





**EVANGELISM**

is a see, sense, show, and speak ministry.

*1 Peter 3*

“15 but sanctify Christ as lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense **to everyone who asks you** to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; 16 and keep a good conscience so that in the things in which you are slandered, those who revile **your good behavior** in Christ will be put to shame.”

**JESUS' WAY**

Evangelism is a **“lifestyle”** more than a plan.  
All ministry starts with a **“sanctified” heart.**  
First you **SHOW** and then you **SPEAK.**

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**Why is reducing the mission of the church to evangelism a problem?**

- It ignores the **emphasis** of Apostolic teaching & history.
- It distorts the **witness** of church.
- It disrespects the **diversity** of the Body of Christ.
  - It **marginalizes** other (greater?) gifts.
  - It may **pressure** individuals to neglect their true spiritual calling.

32

“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't.”

John Piper

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