

KEEPING OUR BALANCE

Outreach

INTRODUCTION

AIM:

To remind ourselves of how and why Jesus asked his church to be outward-looking.

OPENER

What comes to mind when you hear the word 'evangelism'?

Has your experience of evangelism (on the giving or receiving end) been positive or negative?

PRAY

As you start to once again be reminded that all people and places are under Jesus' authority, and that all people need the good news of hope that we have as believers. Ask for a sense of strength, and also excitement, as we seek to **'shine like stars'** in our families, work places, and neighbourhoods

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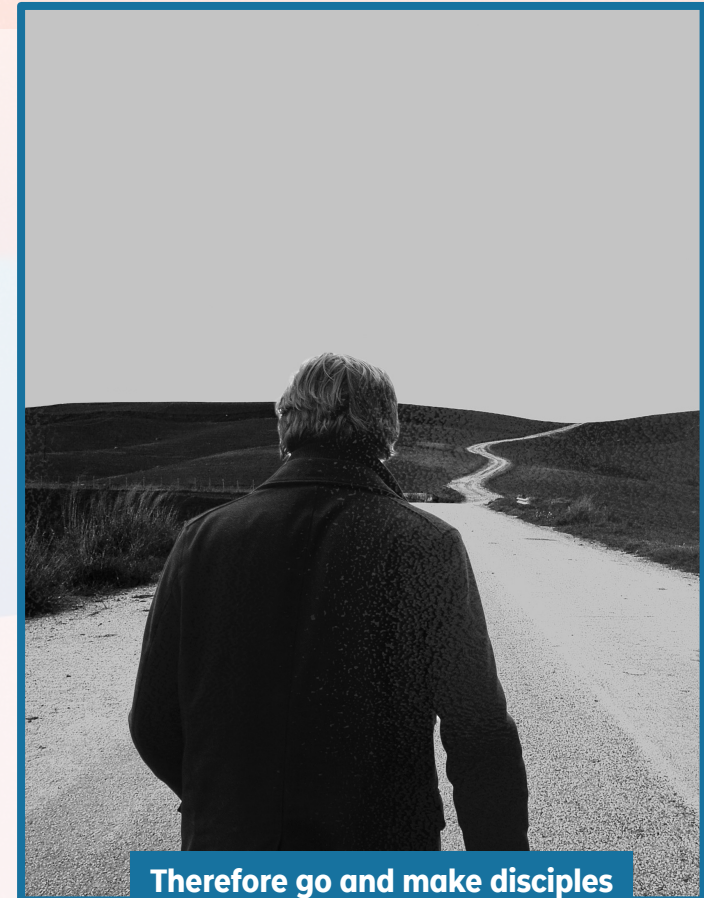
BIBLE STUDY



Read: Matthew 28 : 19-20

This is one of the most famous passages of Scripture and is known as the **Great Commission**. As Jesus' followers today, these words continue to hold a powerful command for us, some two thousand years later.

- How does Jesus begin the Great Commission in **verse 18**?
 - How has Jesus shown this to be true as he says these words to his disciples?
 - Why is it significant for us to remember these opening words as we consider what he is asking us to do?
- Why do you think Jesus uses the word 'go'?
 - What stops us from going?
- Where is the place we 'go' to find people who are on our 'frontline' – people who don't know Jesus? Think about all the places in your life that this might apply to.



**Therefore go and make disciples
of all nations**

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BIBLE STUDY



Matthew 28 : 19-20

- What are the two parts that follow the command to 'go and make disciples' in **verses 19-20**? Why are they each an important part of discipleship?
- In **verse 20b**, what does Jesus promise? In what way is he always with us?
- Looking once again at the bookends of the **Great Commission** (the way Jesus opens and closes) where do you feel encouraged, and where do you feel challenged as you consider it?

'What he commands us to do, he empowers us to do. The command is to "make disciples." The rest of the verses tell us how we do that: sharing the gospel, baptizing those who respond and teaching them to obey.

The resurrection is intimately tied with the authority vested in Jesus and the power we now have to share the gospel and make disciples'

Ephesians 1:19-20

Taken from <https://fpchouston.org/am-site/media/small-group-study-guide-november-22-2015.pdf>

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GOING DEEPER

Read: Ephesians 1 : 17-23

We can easily feel very daunted by the **Great Commission**, feeling that it is for those with a special calling to evangelise others, or those who are sent overseas in mission.

- How can these verses from Ephesians encourage us today? As we consider our various roles in our life outside church, how can we use these verses to change our perspective if we are feeling overwhelmed?
- What holds you back from speaking about your faith to those in your daily life?
- What could you ask your group to pray about in this area?



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PRAY

Pray using the verses from Ephesians 1

- Use these verses as a prayer of praise to thank God for what he has done in Jesus and the hope and power that this gives us today.
- Ask him that **'the eyes of your heart'** may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you', as you reflect on what today's verses mean for you in the situation you find yourself in.
- Thank him that we do not walk in our own strength as we look for opportunities to talk to others about our faith.

