

Week 52
Matthew 24-28

Theme: Go therefore.

Conversation Starter

What action option did you choose to do after our discussion last week? What went well? What did not go well?

What questions do you have from the reading this week?

Weekly Review/Intro

Special Leader Note

Since this is the final week of the plan, the beginning of this session will be used to reflect about this year of studying the New Testament.

This week marks the end of our yearlong study of the New Testament. During this year, you should have read the entire New Testament.

Did you have any hesitation of starting this reading plan at the beginning of the year?

How many people were able to keep up with the reading plan? How did it feel to finish the reading plan?

***Note*:** At this point, praise those who have completed the plan so far and encourage those who got behind.

How do you think you have changed as a Christian during this study?

What has God been teaching you over the course of the year?

How has God changed you through studying his word?

How would you describe your current relationship with God? Do you feel like you have grown as a Christian throughout this reading plan?

Let's talk about the Actions. What has been the most memorable action you have done as a part of this study? What did you learn, and how did you grow because of it?

What changes have you made in your life based on the readings we have done?

Application

Our final readings finished up the book of Matthew. In these chapters, we saw the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, his trial, death, resurrection, and ascension to Heaven. Most notably, we read the Great Commission. Our lesson is going to be focused on creating an action plan based on the commands of Jesus in that section. Before we do that, let's read the Great Commission and dive into what Jesus told us.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

What is significant about what Jesus says in verse 18?

Why do you think he started by saying this?

How should this statement of Jesus' authority embolden us as Christians?

Before Jesus gives the Great Commission, he states that all authority is his. This statement gives what he is about to tell the disciples more power. If all authority has been given to Jesus, then his commands are supreme to all others. As Christians, this show empower us because we serve the highest authority in heaven and earth.

After stating his authority, what are the three primary commands that Jesus gives us?

Jesus commands us to:

- 1) "Make disciples of all nations"
- 2) Baptize "them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
- 3) Teach "them to observe everything I have commanded you"

What do you think it means to make disciples?

A disciple is defined as "one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). By this definition, we are charged with helping people come to know Jesus and helping them to share the Gospel themselves. Jesus also commands us to baptize Believers and to teach them to follow what Jesus has taught us.

Does Jesus give any requirements on the people that we are to make disciples of?

Does Jesus give any specific direction on which Christians should follow the Great Commission?

The Great Commission is another time where we see that the Gospel is for all. Jesus commands us to go to “All nations.” This does not mean that we are only to minister to the people that look like us, agree with our viewpoints, or are even our same race. Jesus wants us to go to all people. Similarly, the Great Commission is for all Christians. Jesus did not just give this command to pastors or missionaries. We are all called to go and make disciples.

With these facts in mind, we are going to make an action plan for our group for the upcoming year. The purpose of this plan is to create a clear goal and plan for how we are going to share the Gospel with the community around us. We are going to come up with specific goals that we want to accomplish as a group, we are going to come up with a clear outreach plan, and we are going to discuss at least one specific outreach project we want to do for the coming year.

After we have done this, we are going to sign a covenant as a group to follow through with our plan. The hope is that we will use this document as a driving force in our group for the upcoming year. We will do periodic check-ins to see how we are doing with our goals.

Special Leader Note

The document on the next page is a template you can follow to create your action plan. You are welcome to make your own plan, but it is important to work through this as a group.

When you are done, delete the boxes with directions.

This is not the end of this action plan. You are charged with holding your group accountable to following through. Do regular check-ins for the next year. You can even make a new one for the following year.

Action Plan/Covenant

Date

This small group commits to following the Great Commission of Jesus, as outlined in Matthew 28:19-20. Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ, baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teach them to follow the teachings of Jesus.

While this is our broad goal, for this calendar year we prayerfully want to....

Type Goal Here

Set a goal that is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound). Your goal should be specific to your group. We are all commissioned to share the Gospel, but what specifically can your group do to meet that mission.

Example: We will become a Great Commission Small Group by each committing to invite at least 3 not-yet-saved people in our community to church and/or small group and/or sharing the Gospel with them at least once every two months in 2022. (Example goal from Pastor Jim Dreisbach)

To accomplish this goal, we will do the following....

Type Action Statements Here

You are going to create a list of specific actions your group is going to take to reach your goal. These actions should be actions that members can do individually or the whole group can do together.

Examples:

- Each member of our small group will always have a minimum of 3 [or some other number of] not-yet-saved people in our community for whom we are praying to be saved throughout the year.
- We will pray regularly that God will grow our small group by at least 5 new people by the end of the calendar year as we invite not-yet-saved people and share the Gospel with them throughout the year.
- We will regularly hold each other accountable in our small group meetings to our commitment to invite and share the Gospel with those who are not yet saved. (Examples from Pastor Jim Dreisbach)

Our group also commits to the following outreach ministry...

Type your outreach ministry here

An outreach ministry is an event or ministry that your group runs/participates in with the intent of sharing the Gospel. Your group could focus on delivering food to homeless shelters, hold a kids outreach event at the church, or rake leaves for people in the area. The purpose of doing an outreach ministry together is to share the Gospel and develop unity within your small group. This can be a one-time event or an ongoing ministry. The choice is up to you.

As a small group, we commit to working towards these goals for the glory of God the Father and our savior Jesus Christ. We know that we cannot make these happen by our own will, so we will pray and seek God as we faithfully serve him. "To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

Date:

Signed:

Have all small group members sign this document. Be sure to keep this document and post it somewhere as a reminder of your commitment to following the Lord and fulfilling the Great Commission.

Week 52
Reflection

During this week, you are being charged with answering these questions about yourself and your walk with God. Hopefully these will force you to pray and consider what God wants you to do in your life.

- 1) How can you continue to study the Bible now that we have finished the New Testament?
- 2) How has God shaped you over the course of the year?
- 3) In what areas have you changed over the course of the year?
- 4) In what areas are you still changing to follow God?
- 5) Have you been fulfilling the Great Commission?
- 6) What do you need to do differently to better fulfill the Great Commission?

Week 52
Action

19 “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20