



The Great Commission—

Why Is It Considered Great?

by Loren Triplett, former executive director, AGWM

Over 2,000 years ago, shortly before the empowerment by the Holy Spirit of the first 120 members of the Christian Church, Jesus announced the mission of the Church. We call His proclamation the Great Commission.

Why is the Great Commission considered great?

1 It is great because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gave it. He said that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and on earth. This means He is the ultimate authority. It means His words are not just the idle comments of a man, but rather the divine and authoritative Word.

He said, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." We must accept this as a very high-priority mandate. It cannot be ignored. It is the will of God. That makes it a Great Commission.

2 It is great because it picks up the Bible truth that God's mercy reaches to men everywhere. God has

inclined himself toward the lost. That is the story of the Bible.



3 It is great because it gives specific personal instructions to every believer. No one is exempt from seeking obedience to the commands of the Lord, and the Great Commission is indeed provided to



offer personal direction to all who believe in Jesus.



4 It is great because it was given to bless every person on the face of the earth. Today there are over 6 billion people living on earth. God knows

every one of them by name and address and wants each of them to have an adequate explanation of what He offers through Jesus Christ. Wherever man is found, God wants them reached with the good news. That is a great assignment—a Great Commission.



5 It is great because Jesus gave His life to make it doable. There would be no gospel to take to the ends of the earth if Jesus had not made the ultimate sacrifice. His death provided the good news. Telling the story of God's love is indeed an awesome responsibility—a Great Commission.



6 It is great because it has stood for over 2,000 years as the literal command of the Lord Jesus to every generation. It is as valid today as it was when first given to the disciples. This holy mandate is as much the will of God for us as it was for that first generation of Christians. It has stood the test of time and still stands as God's assignment for the believers of every generation.



It is great because it is the functional centerpiece of God’s plan to raise up a people for His own. His Word says there will be people gathered around the throne from every tribe and tongue on the face of the earth. The only way the passage in Revelation 5 can happen is if the Church carries out its assignment. Many millions will call Him “worthy” in that final great heavenly gathering. The Great Commission was given to ensure that they would be there from every nation and peoples.



It is great because God entrusts His eternal plan to mere mortals, sons of the first Adam, far less than perfect beings. The Great Commission passage in the New Testament book of Matthew points out that there was still doubt among the 11 on the mountain in Galilee, where Jesus had instructed them to wait for Him. They were not super beings. He stood before them, knowing their weaknesses, and yet gave them the awesome assignment of making disciples of all peoples.

That is the great mystery bound up in the Great Commis-

sion. Why would God depend on man for such an important task? The answer to that question is reserved in the eternal sovereignty of Almighty God. The only option we have is to dedicate ourselves to literal obedience to His command. It is indeed a Great Commission.



It is great because it implies a holy secret that was about to be unveiled for those early disciples. The secret of the Great Commission was the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave the command to go into all the world and preach the gospel but warned them, both in Luke and in Acts, that they should not begin the task until they had received the Promise of the Father.

Empowered by the Spirit

God knows how impossible it is for men to carry out the Great Commission on their own. Scripture is very clear that only “when the Holy Ghost comes upon you, you will be my witnesses.” What a tragedy it would be to seek to carry out this great assignment without the divine

empowerment.

God has sent the blessed Holy Spirit to give us authority and power to come against the plans of the enemy and to demonstrate the supernatural love of God for all peoples with supernatural authority and power.

Our forefathers in the Assemblies of God immediately caught the significance of the Holy Spirit power coming upon them. They immediately intensified their activities to take the good news to the ends of the earth. They understood that the Holy Spirit had come upon them to make them witnesses. To be Pentecostal is to be missionary—that was born into their hearts, and it set the course for these 81 years of Assemblies of God missionary endeavor.

We are indeed a missionary movement, but not by legislation or human effort. Only the Holy Spirit could have placed it so clearly in the hearts of our forefathers to seek to become the greatest evangelistic effort the world has ever seen. May we never cease to reach for that kind of effectiveness in literally obeying the Great Commission.

Questions for Further Study—

1. How do you see children today fulfilling the Great Commission?

2. In what ways in your own life are you fulfilling the Great Commission?