

# The Five “W”s of the Great Commission

*Matthew 28:18-20*

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*February 26, 2023 p.m.*

Introduction: In previous weeks we have addressed the purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ & therefore seen what ought to be the response of the West Hampden Baptist Church. We are called as believers to exalt the Savior, with a corresponding commitment to worship. We are also called to edify the saints, & therefore we should have a commitment to teaching. And believers are called to evangelize the sinner, so we then should be committed to witness. This process of fulfilling our purpose as a church should cause us to move from just an attender of the church (one of the crowd), to a member of the church (one of the congregation), to a learner in the church (one of the committed), to a server in the church (one of the core). Consider with me this evening the Great Commission, as given by our Savior, & note the “What,” the “Why,” the “Who,” the “Where,” & the “When” of Christ’s commission to His church.

## I. The “**What**” of the Great Commission - Matthew 28:18-20

### A. The power of our commission (:18) >

1. *"Power"* - denotes permission, privilege, right, authority; suggests the power necessary to enforce one's authority.
2. With such given authority (by the Father to the Son), Christ commands His disciples (& therefore us).
3. With such great authority (over heaven & earth), Christ offers salvation and demands obedience.

### B. The purpose of our commission (:19-20a) >

1. Evangelize: (*"teach"*) - make disciples of all nations; step of initiation.
2. Baptize: Our duty, our demonstration, & our declaration; step of identification.
3. Catechize: (*"teaching them to observe all things"*); step of indoctrination.

### C. The promise of our commission (:20b) >

1. Christ is with us *"alway"* (Literally - 'all the days) – He is constantly with us.
2. *"End of the world"* - consummation of the age – He is continually with us.
3. "Days of strength & of weakness, days of success & of failure, of joy & of sorrow, of youth & of old age, days of life, & the day of death - all the days." (Broadus)

## II. The “**Why**” of the Great Commission - Mark 16:15-16

*"...he that believeth not shall be damned."*

### A. Men are lost >

1. John 3:3-7, *"Except a man be born again..."*
2. Luke 13:3 & 5, *"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."*

### B. Time is short >

1. Colossians 4:5-6, *"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."*
2. James 5:8-9, *"Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh...behold, the Judge standeth before the door."*

C. Judgment is sure >

1. Hebrews 9:27, "*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*"
2. Revelation 20:12, "*...the dead were judged out of those things which were written...*"

III. The “**Who**” of the Great Commission - Luke 24:46-48 & John 20:21

*"and ye are witnesses..." - "...so send I you."*

A. Witnesses by the exhortation of the Scripture >

1. Matthew 28:19-20, "*Go ye therefore & teach all nations...*"
2. Mark 16:15, "*Go ye into all the world & preach the gospel...*"

B. Witnesses by the example of the saints >

1. Acts 2:42-47, "*And they continued steadfastly...*"
2. Acts 4:23-31, "*...grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy word.*"

C. Witnesses by the experience of the soul >

1. II Corinthians 5:14-15, "*...that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves...*"
2. Psalm 103:1-5, "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, & forget not all His benefits.*"

IV. The “**Where**” of the Great Commission - Acts 1:8

A. "*Jerusalem*" (Acts 1-7) >

Our Jerusalem?? - Our family, our friends, our neighbors.

B. "*All Judea & Samaria*" (Acts 8-11:18) >

Our surrounding communities, our State, & New England.

C. "*Uttermost part of the earth*" (Acts 11:19-ch. 28) >

Our world; wherever there are lost people.

V. The “**When**” of the Great Commission:

A. Isaiah 55:6-8, "*Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near...*" >  
Now is the time to seek!

B. II Corinthians 6:2, "*...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*" >  
Now is the time to be saved!

C. Revelation 22:17, "*And the Spirit & the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*" >  
Now is the time to speak >

**Conclusion:** We have considered the 5 'W's of our purpose to evangelize the lost. Will you commit yourself to witness? Such a commitment will send you out into the community. May God burden us to go & then help us to share this glorious gospel message. Consider the words of this poem entitled "The Soulwinners's Prayer" as we close: "Lord, give to me Thy love for souls, for lost & wand'ring sheep, That I may see the multitudes and weep as Thou didst weep. Help me to see the tragic plight of souls far off in sin; help me to love, to pray, & go to bring the wand'r'ing in. From off the altar of Thy heart take Thou some flaming coals, then touch my life & give me, Lord, a heart that's hot for souls. O Fire of Love, O Flame Divine, make Thy abode in me; burn in my heart, burn evermore, till I burn out for Thee. (Eugene M. Harrison).