

Go, Make, Baptize!

Matthew 28: 20

October 18, 2026

In November of 1996 an Ethiopian Airliner was hijacked and later crashed into the ocean. The moment of impact was caught on video and broadcast around the world. Only later did we learn of something even more dramatic that happened inside the plane as it headed for disaster. Andy Meakins and his wife were seated together on that plane. He was a gentle giant of faith who had served Jesus in Africa for many years. The hijackers demanded to be flown to Australia even though there wasn't nearly enough fuel for that. As they crossed the Indian Ocean, one engine flamed out, and the pilot told passengers that the other one would soon run out of fuel too. Andy's wife heard the snap of a seatbelt being unbuckled and turned to see her husband standing up.

"Many of us might die in this crash," he called out, "so there's something you need to know." He then began explaining the Gospel simply and urgently, moving to each part of the plane so that everyone would hear. He invited people to place their trust in Jesus Christ in repentance and faith. A flight attendant bowed her head, and asked Jesus to forgive her sins and to save her. She watched as many others did the same and, along with another survivor, later told this story. Of the 175 people on board, 125 died, including Andy, who was still sharing Jesus as the plane hit the water.

Every day, 165,000 people slip from this world into eternity, most of them unprepared, "dead in their trespasses and sins." We need to seize every opportunity to share the love of Jesus and the truth of His Gospel, which the only message that can save a lost soul. Just like that doomed airplane, time is running out. Andy Meakins used his life to witness every day, and he even did so with his last breath. His passion to save souls comes directly from our Lord. Please open your Bibles to Matthew 28.

We're going to take another break from our march through the Bible to let the Israelites get used to the dessert, for today we join all other CBC congregations all around the world in celebrating CBC Sunday! And this year's theme is Go, Make, Baptize. Say it. It comes directly from the Great Commission Jesus left His Disciples before He ascended back to heaven. If you are able, please stand as we read it from Matt 28:16-20 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "**All** authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey **everything** I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We've spoken from this passage many times over the last 31 years and will again no doubt for it is the last words Jesus left us before He went back to heaven. These are our marching orders. When a cadet graduates from West Point, he or she is given a commission, an assignment, a task, orders from the President delivered through the War Dept to carry out. And this final statement of Jesus is **His** Great Commission to every believer. If you're saved, this is your commission. Let's examine it a bit this morning.

The first thing we notice here is that they worshipped Jesus. Say Worship. Our service to others starts in our worship, not the other way around. Every person was created to worship God and to adore Him forever. To love Him. Those who are crippled and cannot serve in any way can still worship God. Those in nursing homes and hospitals can worship Him. No matter where we are, what we are doing, we can glorify God's name in word and song, from the depths of our being in spirit and in truth. If we become the greatest servants ever and do every task we possibly can for God, teach Sunday School, help with BLAST, go on mission trips, pack 6000 shoeboxes, burn ourselves out in service, but neglect to worship God, we will have missed our mission. God created you to worship Him! So when we sing, sing! When we pray, Pray! When we humble ourselves, humble! When the Word is shared, Listen, learn, praise, glorify! Worship comes first!

Sadly, while others were worshipping, some doubted. Say doubt. This always seems to be the case. If only we could get 100% to worship together. There's always someone distracted by their phone, by their to-do list, by the cares of this world. They will be there when we get back. For one hour, let's worship! And take time to worship **each** day! Without doubting. Apparently there were those who didn't believe it was really Jesus, or that He really was God. If you have doubts like these people, check them out. Do your research. The truth about Jesus is durable and will stand up to all the scrutiny you give it. But after you find that He is risen, that He is God, that He is Lord, listen to what He told Thomas, "Stop doubting and believe!" Then fall and worship Him!! Today, on this CBC Sunday, we join Brethren around the world who are worshipping before the throne of God. Brothers and Sisters in Mozambique, Uganda, Spain, Panama, etc. Lifting up the best of our music and thoughts and souls to our God. Along with **all** true believers everywhere. First we worship!

Secondly, Jesus' commission flows out of His authority. Say authority. How much authority did Jesus say had been given to Him? All of it! In heaven and on earth! Jesus is our authority! He is our Lord! He trumps Trump! He has more power than Putin or Xi and all the other world leaders combined. The Father has delegated all this authority to Jesus. He has the ability and the authorization to control everything everywhere. Which is why we must obey Him!

And with all of His authority, Jesus commands us to go and make disciples. Say go. Not sit still and wait for them to come to us, but go to them! Where do we go? Go

home and make disciples, go next door, go to work, go to school, go to Walmart, go to nursing homes, go to Strasburg, go to WV, go to Haiti. In vs 19, Jesus said go to **all** nations. His disciples took Him seriously and obeyed. Church tradition tells us that Thomas went to India on foot, and perhaps much further. John went into Turkey, Peter went to Rome, Andrew to Greece, Matthew to Ethiopia, Simon to Persia, etc. Where will you go? Sister Linda Hawkins has been going across her street to her neighbors.

One of the best varieties of spirit-fruit we can produce is the fruit of salvation. Of leading someone else to Jesus. There's nothing more eternal than that! Or just telling them. It's up to them to accept or reject but it's up to us to tell. If we don't, they may never hear it from anyone else and then they will experience eternal hell because of our sloth, our apathy, because we didn't want to risk it, to leave our comfort zone, unbuckle our seat belt and stand up. Economists sometimes talk about the cost of doing nothing. In this case, the cost of doing nothing is eternal and it will be paid by everyone we fail to tell about Jesus.

I remember Bro John Neff telling about a Christian who was asked if they had invited anyone to church recently. "No," she said. "We haven't had an invite a friend Sunday." Oh my goodness! **Every** Sunday is invite a friend Sunday! Thank you to those who are faithfully doing that! Little Reeve Johnson is inviting his neighbors, his friends, his family, his daycare providers, etc. He's not waiting for a special Sunday. Neither should we! Let's obey Jesus and copy Reeve!

We sing plenty of songs about going, Rescue the Perishing, People Need the Lord, Tell the World that Jesus Loves You, etc. But do we go? Don't stop singing, but let's start going! Or keep going! Our CBC brothers and sisters have been going in the Democratic Republic of Congo. They've been affected by war and yet they're planting churches!! Our CBC siblings in Venezuela went into the capital after the earthquakes to help with relief **AND** to share Jesus! New Churches were planted as a result. Our Regional Elder there, Bro Humberto, is constantly thinking about how to advance the gospel! How to share to Jesus, how to plant more churches! That's a contagious infection I hope we all get!

You heard me tell the story how some folks at the AMWC this summer struck up a conversation about Jesus in Walmart that has led to the planting of the Cristo la Roca CBC church in Johnstown, PA. Those people were already saved, but they can now be discipled. More on discipling in a bit, but all the world includes everyone everywhere. No place is off the list. Every believer ought to consider at least once a day where God is calling him or her to go and then go there to share Jesus. Where do you want me to go today, Lord? Witnessing is a bit like hunting. Deer don't run into my living room and say here I am, shoot me. I have to go where they are! Look for them. Likewise the unsaved, don't usually say Here I am, save me. They may not come to us which is why

Jesus commanded that we go to them. Look for hot spots. Their trails, hangouts, food plots, etc.

Then, both while we go and as we get there, we are to make disciples. Say disciples. What is a disciple? The Greek word means learner, pupil. Someone who is mentored in the ways of Jesus. An apprentice learning from a master. Before trade schools became popular, plumbers, electricians, welders and others learned their trades by spending time with and copying a master. They were an apprentice. My dad learned taxidermy by being an apprentice to a taxidermist in Denver. After 3 years of being Jesus' apprentice, the 12 disciples were now ready to take on their own disciples and teach them. Some of us have been serving God all our lives and we've never discipled anyone. You don't have to be a teacher, just a faithful follower. Some of the best disciple makers I know aren't teachers or preachers. They're just committed Christians who are helping others be faithful. And some of us longtime believers need to be discipled ourselves. It's not automatic. We learn to be more like Jesus from those who are more like Jesus.

This isn't optional. Say command. It is Jesus' command. His commission to every believer. We're either doing it or we aren't doing it. It can start with a question like, "Do you know Jesus? What is most important to you? What'd you do this weekend?" Etc. These open the door to share a bit. To invite them into the greatest relationship with the greatest friend they could ever have. "But I'm not good at witnessing." I used to not be very good at turkey hunting. But I learned. I still have a lot to learn about turkey hunting as well as about witnessing and disciple making, but I'm learning. And one of the ways I learned to hunt was by mistakes. I've messed up just about every way you can. And I've done the same with witnessing. But hopefully we can learn from our mistakes. So we worship, we go, we make disciples.

And then, once someone believes, we are to baptize them. Say baptize. We dunkers are big on baptism. Dunk em under the water three times in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which underscores our belief in the holy Trinity written into the CBC Statement of Faith. Baptism is the outward sign of an inward decision to follow Jesus, to become an apprentice of the Master. Not just to believe, but to follow. To obey. To copy. You can't see faith, but you can see someone's faith when they are baptized. You can see Love Feast. You can **hear** worship. These are outward signs of inward commitments to be Jesus' disciple. And baptism is huge. It's not something mom or dad can choose for us, it is something we each have to decide on our own. And we're looking forward to celebrating baptism again later this fall. If you are interested, let me know.

Then, after baptizing them, in vs 20, we are to teach these new disciples to do what? Obey everything Jesus commanded. Say everything. Too often we pray and work and witness till someone gets saved and then we let them go. No! That's catch and release evangelism. It's faulty fishing that allows the fish to go unchanged. We are to

catch them, **grow** them, and then release them to glorify and to serve. Jesus didn't say just make believers. He said make what? Disciples! They have to become believers first, but it's so much more than that! Even demons believe! One of the biggest false beliefs in the church today is that getting saved is all there is to it. NO! Jesus saved us so we can become like Him! So we can produce His good fruit. So that we can become less disgusting and sinful and more holy. Are you up for that? Discipling a person after they get saved is called sanctification and that's another of the most delicious varieties of spirit fruit we can ever produce. Helping someone become more like Jesus while we become more like Him ourselves.

Getting saved is just the beginning! Only the start! This thing of learning all that Jesus commanded takes the rest of our lives! It involves all that we have. This passage highlights the three main functions of the church: worshiping God, saving the lost, growing the saved. This last part of the Great Commission is why Sunday School and Bible Study are so important. It's what BLAST and VBS are all about. It's what believing parents are to do for their children and what friends are to do with each other, iron constantly sharpening other iron. If we aren't involved in some type of intentional discipleship, we need to become involved. Sunday worship is important, as we've already mentioned. And the sermons are part of teaching us to obey all that Jesus commanded. But the highest goal for me in preaching is not so that you will learn more, but that learning more about God, you will worship Him more! Greater, deeper. And loving Him, you will obey Him! So if you're not already, plug into a SS class or a Bible Study, some type of discipleship ministry.

I heard someone say once that every believer needs a Paul to lead and train us, a Silas to walk beside us, and a Timothy whom we are to train and mentor. Learning to obey all that Jesus commanded us is not just being able to pass a test on Jesus' parables or sermons. It's discovering how to apply it in my life every day. How and to whom should I be merciful? How can I be a peacemaker with my family? With my coworkers? With my enemies? I know that Jesus commanded it. But until I obey it, I'm not following Jesus.

Finally, Jesus leaves us with the best reminder we could ever have. Vs 20 "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." This is the same promise God made to Moses at the burning bush, remember? I will be with you! The same Great I Am that I Am! The one with all the authority! The One with all the power! He will be with you always! Just in case you think you've outlived Jesus' promise, no! It's good till the very end of the age! The Age of Grace. We're not there yet! Till He returns. Even when we don't feel Him with us, He's with us. Even when we doubt, He's with us. Even when we're weak, especially when we're weak, He's with us! Friends may desert us, family may turn their backs on us, even fellow Christians sometimes leave us hanging. Jesus never will! He's with you always!! In Walmart, in Venezuela, even in a plane over the Indian Ocean.

You heard what the old-timer said when asked why he would never get on an airplane? Jesus clearly said, “Lo, I am with you always.” Lo simply means surely. Thankfully God is with us even on airplane. The truth of the matter is we are all on a flight that will crash, unless Jesus comes first. All of our seatmates, our friends and neighbors **will** perish and spend eternity in Hell if we don’t care enough to do what Andy Meakins did on that airplane over the Indian Ocean, unbuckle our safe and secure comfortable seatbelt, stand up and start telling others about the best news ever-about Jesus Christ! On His authority, I commission each of you today to Go, Make, Baptize disciples for Jesus Christ! If you will accept that commission please stand if you are able.