

The ALLS of the Great Commission

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Date: 26 June 2022

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[0 : 00] This morning I want to talk to you about the four alls of the Great Commission. The four alls of the Great Commission. Depending on the different translation you may be reading, there is, words get translated differently sometimes.

And so in this, well I lost my, there we go. So reading from the NIV, there is clearly three alls. In some translations you will find four alls. So let me point out these four alls and then we can move from there. So you will follow the structure of the message.

In chapter 28, verse 18, you will see that Jesus says, All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

It's the first all of the Great Commission. All authority. Number two, we will look at all nations. Verse 19, Jesus says, Go make disciples of all nations.

[1 : 15] So all nations is the second all of the Great Commission. In chapter, I'm sorry, in verse 20, in the NIV, it says, To teach them to obey everything I have commanded.

Some translations translate it this way, Teach them to observe all that I have commanded. So we are going to talk about all the commands.

And then finally, the fourth all of the Great Commission is that Jesus is with us always. He's with us always until the end of the age.

So that's how we're going to walk through the passage this morning. Four alls in the Great Commission. Four alls. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus.

We are to make disciples of all nations. We are to teach them to obey all things. And we know that Jesus is with us always.

[2 : 26] I hope that this message will bring you comfort and encouragement and also will spur us on to participate in the mission God has called us to engage in.

Before I continue, let me pray for us. Father, we come to you, the one true living God, the maker of heaven and earth.

We acknowledge that you are God. There is no one like you. No one beside you worthy of all of our worship, worthy of all of our praise and adoration.

No one but you. Father, we confess that we are often distracted. We become fixated on little things. We become distracted from your purpose for us. And we thank you that when we come to you and confess our shortcomings, confessing our failures and our sin, that you offer forgiveness in Christ.

[3 : 38] We thank you for this forgiveness that is freely given to us. And we thank you that this forgiveness that is made freely available to us is free to everyone else also.

So, Father, this morning as we study this word, would you embolden us and empower us and send us to be your mouthpieces here in Kuching, throughout all of Sarawak, even to the ends of the earth, that all the world may know that Jesus is Lord.

Be with us during these moments. May your spirit guide us and shape us to be the men and women that you have created us to be.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. This passage that we just read is commonly referred to as the Great Commission.

But it's not the only commissioning passage that we find in the New Testament. This is the Great Commission in the Gospel of Matthew, but in the Gospel of Mark we find a similar commission.

[4 : 59] In the Gospel of Mark chapter 16 and verse 15, we read that Jesus told the disciples to go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.

In Luke chapter 24 and verse 46, we read that Jesus said to them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things. In John chapter 20 verse 21, Jesus said to his disciples, Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you. And then Luke also wrote at the beginning of the book of Acts, this commissioning, when Jesus told his disciples, You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

When we take all of these commissioning passages together, we can see that Jesus is concerned that all the world knows who he is.

[6 : 35] And we want to focus on this particular passage in Matthew where Jesus comes to his disciples and he tells them first, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

All authority. Jesus comes announcing his victory. Jesus is a victorious king. A few days prior to this, Jesus did not look like a victorious king.

Jesus looked like a defeated, kind of crazy person. Jesus had come and had taught many things and performed many miracles and many people were very excited about his life and his teaching and his ministries.

But for some reason, they could not accept who he claimed to be. And so, even one of his own betrayed him. And he was eventually arrested and falsely accused and tried and nailed to a cross. On the cross, he looked as though he had been defeated. But we know, as we read the scriptures, that that was all of God's plan so that he would become a substitute for you and me.

[7 : 57] That he would be able to be the one who would take the penalty of your sin and my sin and pay that penalty on the cross so that through him we would be offered eternal life.

Now, once Jesus was on the cross and he was dead and buried, he rose again to life and now he's spending time reminding his disciples of all the things that he had taught them.

And he tells them, all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to me. I'll think about that for a moment.

All authority. It's not some authority. It's not most authority. It is all authority.

All authority. Sometimes that is a concept that is difficult for us to understand. Well, perhaps intellectually we say, yes, we know that Jesus has all authority, but then so does the head of the household.

[9 : 08] Dad has authority in the household. Or perhaps we look at the office place and we say, well, my boss has authority in my place of business.

Or perhaps we think in governments and we think about prime ministers or different people serving in different offices in government and saying, well, they have authority. But what we must recognize as followers of Jesus is that all of those other authorities are delegated authorities that actually all authority belongs to Jesus.

And if all authority belongs to Jesus, then what Jesus says, that's the most important thing. And any other authority in the world that would tell us to do something or believe something that is contrary to what Jesus tells us to do and to be and to believe, we are to obey Jesus.

We see in the book of Acts several times His disciples who were arrested and brought before religious leaders and even government authorities and they would challenge them on the things that they were doing and saying and teaching and they would say, who are we to obey?

God or man? May we be a people who believe that Jesus is the victorious King. May we be a people who believe and obey all His teachings because He has all authority.

[10 : 49] In my household, I am the Father. As I said, I have five children. As a father, oftentimes I give them instructions and expectations.

And when they obey, they are rewarded and when they disobey, there are consequences. Perhaps in your household it is very similar. You have children that you reward for obedience and you discipline for disobedience.

Perhaps you are a child and you know what it is like to obey or to disobey those who have authority in the home. Our Heavenly Father, our risen King, the Lord Jesus.

He desires for us to obey. His desire for us is to obey not because He wants to rule with an iron fist but because He wants us to experience all of the joy and everything that He has prepared for us.

He does not want to wrestle against us but He wants to empower us in our life. We must obey and we must believe and act as though He has all authority.

[12:03] In my household, I can tell you that when my children tell me no, it stirs up something in me. They say, no, Daddy, I won't do that.

Sometimes they say it with their mouths but not usually. Usually what they say is, yes, Daddy, I will do that. And then they go and do what they want to do, not what they've been instructed to do. I'm sure no one in this room has ever experienced anything like that. I know in my household it is only me. The question is for my children, how can they believe that I have authority in the household and not do what I tell them to do?

And the question for us on a much bigger scale is, how can we say, yes, Jesus is our King but not do what He tells us to do and not believe what He tells us to believe?

Jesus has not given us the authority to decide what to believe. He has told us what to believe. He has not given us the authority to decide what to do.

[13:21] He has told us what to do. And our appropriate response is, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus.

And Jesus tells His disciples to go make disciples of all nations. Go make disciples of all nations. He emphasizes this all nations. It's important for us to look at that and recognize that when Jesus says make disciples of all nations, He is making a very radical claim.

before this, God's people were of one ethnicity. But now Jesus is saying make disciples of all the other ethnicities as well.

Prior to this, God's people were one ethnicity. And they would often be referred to as the Jews. And everyone else was referred to as the Gentiles.

[14:37] Gentiles. And the focus of most religious work of the Jews was focused on the Jews. But now Jesus is saying go to all peoples.

He's not using the word nations in the sense that we think of geopolitical nations. He's not saying go to Syria and go to Ethiopia and go to China or go to Malaysia or go to Mexico or go to Canada. He's not saying nations in that sense. He's saying nations using a word ethne, what we get the word ethnic from. Go to all the peoples.

And we see in the book of Revelation in Revelation chapter 7 verse 9 that before the throne of God at the end of time there will be people.

There will be representatives from every tongue, tribe, and nation. We know that this command will be fulfilled because John was able to see in the future that there will be representatives from every tongue, tribe, and nation.

[15:56] So when Jesus says make disciples of all nations, we know that our job, as he has all authority, our job is to go to all peoples.

We don't just go to people who look like us and talk like us and think like us. We cross boundaries, social boundaries, and geographical boundaries, and we cultural boundaries, and linguistic boundaries, in order to make disciples of all nations.

In the modern missions movement, many people make a very big deal about unreached peoples, and they talk about wanting to reach all peoples.

And I think that in many ways that's a healthy corrective to some past mistakes and missions, but it doesn't go far enough. You see, Jesus does not tell us to go reach all nations.

He says to go disciple all nations. One missions author has said a few years ago, he wrote that the greatest tragedy in the world is not that there are unreached peoples.

[17:15] The greatest tragedy in the world is that there are undisciplined peoples. In order to make disciples requires time, investment in relationships.

We think about Jesus, and he set an example, didn't he? He came and he lived his life, and he specifically took three years where he invested his life in twelve men, specifically into twelve men, so that when he left, he was able to give them this charge.

Make disciples of all nations. So, Jesus has all authority. He tells us to go to all nations, and he tells them to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe or to obey all that I have commanded, everything that I have commanded.

Now, I skipped over the command in the Great Commission. The command in the Great Commission is to make disciples.

In the Greek language, the way that Matthew has written and recorded Jesus' words, the command that Jesus gives is to make disciples.

[18 : 43] And he tells us how we are to make disciples. We are to make disciples as we go, wherever we go, whenever we go, however we go.

We make disciples. And we make disciples by baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. So there is something about a new identity that someone takes on as a follower of Jesus.

Being baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, then identifies someone who has been reborn, born again, experienced the new birth, been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, who now bows their knee before King Jesus and says, yes, he has all authority in heaven and on earth.

Jesus commands his disciples to make disciples by teaching them to obey everything that he's commanded. The most recent command that he gives in this entire commission is to make disciples.

Here's a funny question. It's going to seem so obvious to us. But when Jesus says to his disciples to make disciples by teaching them to obey everything that he's commanded, if the most recent command is to make disciples who will teach others to obey, then that means that eventually, as the gospel is passed down from generation to generation, from nation to nation, we all receive this command.

[20 : 34] command. We all receive this command, and as his disciples, we are to carry on this work of discipling others.

How do we make disciples? We go. We baptize. We teach. Now here's something interesting. I hope not to stir up too many problems with this statement.

I haven't cleared this with Pastor Brian, but I'm going to say it anyway. When we look in this passage, we see that making disciples involves going, baptizing, and teaching. Going, baptizing, and teaching.

Every disciple is responsible for going and baptizing and teaching. If we're to obey the commands that Jesus has given us, we go, we baptize, and we teach.

So in our church, we decided that it would not just be elders and pastors in our church who engage in teaching and evangelism and baptizing, but everyone is able to participate.

[21 : 39] So when we have someone in our church who leads a friend to Jesus, guess who gets to baptize that person? The person who led them to Jesus.

So our church has been able to rejoice and see our church members engaging in the Great Commission as they engage in evangelism, as they teach others to obey Jesus, as someone they lead to faith in Jesus is baptized, that person is able to baptize them, and we celebrate it all as a church because we all take on the responsibility of the Great Commission together because we recognize that Jesus has all authority and that we are to take his name and his gospel to all nations and we are to obey all his commands and teach new disciples to obey everything he has commanded.

Oftentimes we think about obeying Jesus' commands and we automatically go to the Great Commandment to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

We should do that. We think of the second greatest command to love our neighbor as ourselves and we should do that. But I want you to recognize that when Jesus says to make disciples by baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything I've commanded, that when we teach somebody to obey the greatest command and the second greatest command, we're actually participating in the Great Commission.

It's not the Great Commission and the Great Commands, it's the Great Commission that tells us to obey the great commands. Who is to obey?

[23 : 29] All disciples. If you're a follower of Jesus, there is some responsibility that you have to engage in the task of proclaiming the good news of Jesus, announcing that he is the victorious king with all authority.

If you're a disciple, you bear some responsibility for going to your neighbors, to your family members, to those in your workplace, or wherever you find yourself, and telling them, and teaching them, and participating in the Great Commission with them.

Perhaps, I don't know how your church does it, but perhaps some of you will have the opportunity to baptize. I don't know. I don't know how your church does it. But these are ways to participate in the all of the Great Commission.

And then notice, finally, Jesus says, Behold, I am with you always to the end of the age, or surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.

Jesus is with us. It is very comforting. It is very comforting. It is very encouraging. It is motivating to know that Jesus is with us.

[24 : 56] Jesus does not send us into the world to engage in this mission in our own power. He does not tell us to go and do this with our own intellect.

and our own ingenuity. And our own talents. And our own skills. And our own gifts. No. He goes with us. And as He is present with us, He empowers us.

When He is present with us through the person of the Holy Spirit, He gives us gifts so that we can engage in the ministries that He calls us to partake in. He is the one who has given us a story to tell. He is the one who provides joy as we are able to tell others the beauty and the truth of the eternal life that we have in Jesus. If you have never been a part of doing this kind of work, if you've never been able to share the gospel with someone who has never heard the gospel, perhaps you don't know the joy of having Jesus with you as you're able to speak these truths of life.

There is something experiential that you cannot explain in words, some joy that overcomes your soul as you are the one who announces Jesus as King to someone who is outside the kingdom.

[26 : 27] There is no greater joy than being the mouthpiece for Jesus to be his ambassador because as you share, as you teach, you become keenly aware of Jesus' presence with you, that he has not left us, that he has not forsaken us.

He is with us always. He's with us always. Jesus has all authority.

It is not for us to question, it is simply for us to submit and obey. He has sent us to all nations.

That means that we do not neglect anyone. We do not think, oh, this person is beyond the reach of the gospel, or this person has a certain background, or this person has a certain belief that they're incapable of following Jesus.

us. That's not true. The Lord's arm is not too short to save. We are to obey all commands and teach disciples to obey all commands, so it is ongoing.

[27 : 46] We know in our own lives that we fall short from time to time. Actually, we fall short a lot of the time, don't we? And yet we know that the joy of the gospel is that Jesus loves us and forgives us and constantly renews us as we seek to obey his commands and as we seek to teach others to obey his commands.

And we get to experience his presence with us always. There is a special promise for Jesus' presence with us.

It is true that individually he is with us. Wherever we go, he never leaves us or forsakes us. But there is something special about the gathering of the saints of God together.

I loved at the beginning of our worship service, the worship leader mentioned how we've been scattered and now we are gathered. And we are a gathering of Christ's ambassadors today.

We come together to encourage one another. We come today bringing the gifts that Christ has given us to build one another up so that as a church we are a witness to all the nations of who our king is.

[29 : 08] There is something exciting, something wonderful that happens as we gather together. There is growth that takes place as we gather together.

together. It's not that these four walls and the ceiling are a special place. What makes the place special is the people who are here. Our brothers and sisters in Christ who call on Jesus as Lord and Savior.

And we're able to do that because we know that he is with us. He's with us. Sometimes you may question, where is God?

We know that when we read the scriptures we can answer confidently, he is with us. He is with me. What a joy.

What a privilege to walk through life doing what we've been commissioned to do by the Lord Jesus knowing that we don't have to do it on our own.

[30 : 18] When I first began working, my work life, I did not know what I was to do. I worked in a television news station.

I did not know how to operate all of the technology. I had someone who would come along and who would teach me. And as that person taught me, I learned how to use the cameras and to use the editing board and how to change tapes way back before we did everything digitally.

And I learned how to put together news stories and how to broadcast. And I learned these things. And as I learned them, then I was given the task to teach new employees how to do these things. And as I look around this room, I see some folks who have been trained faithfully for many years. you know what it means to follow Jesus. You know what it means to obey Him.

You know what it means to discipline your life in order to make much of Jesus in your life. And you have a privilege and an opportunity now to teach a younger generation.

[31 : 31] Invest in a new generation. My prayer for this church is that you will be faithful to obey the commands that Jesus has given you.

That you will acknowledge Him as King and follow all of His authority. That you will go to all nations. That you will obey all His commands and that you will teach others to obey His commands. And that you will always rejoice that Jesus is always with you. Let us pray. Father, thank you for Jesus.

Thank you for the forgiveness of sins that we have in His name. We thank you for the message that we have in His name to proclaim to the nations. We thank you that we trust and know that you are with us and that the cross and the empty tomb is a testimony to the fact that you will not leave us or forsake us.

We praise you. We bless you this morning. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.