



LIFEWAY STUDENTS

GO

LIVING
ON MISSION

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ON MISSION**

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INTRO

When you hear the word “mission,” you might think of a military operation, or a determined shopper rushing through a grocery store, or even the objective of a video game. A mission is an important assignment that must be carried out. A mission gives direction and focus to help people accomplish goals. Whether you know it or not, you have a mission that has been assigned to you.

As Jesus’ disciples, we have been called to go into all the world and make more disciples. This is our mission as Christians. Instructing

us to go on this crucial assignment was so important that it was the last thing Jesus said before He returned to heaven. Because it’s so important, we’ve been called to spend our lives fulfilling this mission.

For the next six sessions, you will take a deep dive into this mission called the Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:19-20. You will explore exactly what Jesus said to His disciples and how it impacts your life as a follower of Christ today. His words were not just for the men and women who lived two thousand years ago. They are for us too!

ABOUT LIFEWAY STUDENTS

Only God and His Word bring about true heart transformation. Because of this, it is our top priority to ensure our resources are rooted in the truth of Scripture. Our desire is to create trustworthy resources that help fuel ministry.

Go: Living on Mission was written by Kyle Wiltshire. Kyle is an editor with Lifeway Students and lives with his wife, Joni, and three children, Noah, Micah, and Lilly, in Hendersonville, Tennessee.

How To Use This Book

This book is a deep dive into Matthew 28:19-20. It includes six sessions, each covering a different phrase of the Great Commission. Each session explores Scripture that will help students grow in their passion for the calling Jesus gave His disciples two thousand years ago and still gives us today—to go make disciples of all nations.

Group Time

Each session starts with questions to help begin the discussion. In sessions 2-6, a recap will help remind students what was discussed in the previous session. The rest of each session will explore key questions and aspects of the Great Commission and how Jesus calls us to go and make disciples.

Personal Days

There are four days of devotions at the end of each session to help students continue to learn and grow.

Day 1: Go Deeper – Takes a deeper look at what was discussed in the session.

Day 2: Get Digital – Encourages students to responsibly use digital means to help make disciples.

Day 3: Let's Pray – Calls students to prayer.

Day 4: Live It Out – Gives practical ways to live out the Great Commission.

Group Guide

Both individuals and groups can use this book to learn about the Great Commission. See page 66 for tips on leading this study with a group, including icebreakers, creative space ideas, and a place to record prayer requests.



SESSION 1



**"GO,
THEREFORE"**



Group Time

If you could go on a road trip to anywhere, where would you go?

Who would you take with you?

What stops would you want to make along the way?

Imagine you lived in North Carolina and wanted to go on a coast-to-coast road trip to California. Along the way, you would cross the Mississippi River. You might see the Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo, Texas. You could decide to make a pit stop at the Grand Canyon or another national park. You'd ultimately end up in California, but you'd experience so much more along the way. A road trip isn't just about the end destination but the journey it takes to get there.

Have you ever thought about where you are going as a Christian? Your ultimate destination is heaven, but what are you supposed to be doing along the way? That's what we'll explore over the next six sessions.

READ MATTHEW 28:19-20.

"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, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

What do you already know about these two verses?

What jumps out to you as important about Jesus' words?

Matthew 28:19-20 is called the Great Commission. Jesus said these words to His disciples after His crucifixion and resurrection. They are the last things He said (recorded in the book of Matthew) to His disciples before He went back to heaven. As followers of Jesus on the road trip of life, this is what we are to do on our way to heaven. This is our mission and purpose. In this session, we'll focus only on the first two words of verse 19. While they are only two words, they are extremely important.

"GO"

No one needs to tell you what the word "go" means. It's probably one of the first words you ever learned. As a child, when your mom or dad left for work in the morning, you might have said, "I want to go!" Or if your sibling was heading off to summer camp and you weren't old enough to go yet,

you probably said, "I want to go!" Or if your neighbors came out to play wearing Mickey Mouse ears and saying, "We're going to Disney World," you definitely said, "I want to go!"

WHILE EVERY FOLLOWER OF JESUS IS NOT CALLED TO BE A MISSIONARY, EVERY FOLLOWER OF JESUS IS CALLED TO LIVE ON MISSION.

We know that "to go" means to move from one place to another or to leave from somewhere. But when Jesus said "go" in Matthew 28:19, was there more to it than that? Without question!

As you look at Matthew 28:19-20, what do you think Jesus meant when He said, "Go"?

What is the opposite of "go"? Why does this matter in relationship to what Jesus said?

The opposite of "go" is "stop" or "stay." So, when Jesus said "go," He meant "don't remain where you are." He's saying, "Don't stop making disciples." This is the reason why we aren't automatically transported to heaven the instant we come to faith in Jesus. We still have a mission to accomplish; we must go.



If we are called as His disciples to go, does that mean every person who places his or her faith in Jesus should move to a new country and serve as a missionary? Why or why not?

The Bible was not written in English. Because of this, sometimes we don't get the whole picture when words are translated from their original language to English. In Greek—the original language the New Testament was written in—the word “go” here means more than just to depart or travel from one place to another. A broader way to understand “go” as it's used here is “as you go.”

How does understanding that “go” in Matthew 28:19 means “as you go” enhance what Jesus said?

Some Christians have a special calling on their lives to leave their homes and families and to move to new places to make disciples. We call these people missionaries. The phrase “as you go” doesn't mean that every Christian is called to serve God this way. However, it does mean that fulfilling the mission Jesus gave us is to be what defines the life of every Christian; it's our purpose and our identity. It's what we do all the time, not just on Sundays or on mission trips. While every follower of Jesus is not called to be a missionary, every follower of Jesus is called to live on mission.

Ultimately, what Jesus is saying is, “As you go about your life, make disciples. My followers aren't just to stay in one place; they are to spread out all over the world and tell people about Me.” This means that the work of telling others about Jesus is not just for career missionaries, pastors, or leaders in the church; it's for everyone who has placed their faith in Jesus. That means you and me. That means right where we are, in whatever we do, and everywhere we go, we are to be on mission.

“THEREFORE”

Now let’s look at the second word in the phrase, “Go, therefore.” Anytime you see the word “therefore” in the Bible, you need to ask yourself, “What’s it there for?” Or another way to think about it is something important came just before this and we need to explore what that is. Take a look at the greater context of Matthew 28:19-20.

READ MATTHEW 28:16-20.

The eleven disciples traveled to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but some doubted. Jesus came near and said to them, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 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, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

What are some things that stand out to you in Matthew 28:16-20?

There are so many interesting things here. For one, some of these disciples had seen Jesus crucified, dead, buried, and raised back to life, and they still struggled with doubt. This just goes to show that the life of following Jesus is a journey and a process. Never stop growing and never stop looking to Him for answers to everything, even your doubts.

Verse 18 is so important to Jesus’ mission for us. He said, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.”

Why is it significant that Jesus has “all authority in heaven and on earth”?

If you’ve ever watched an old Western movie with your grandfather, you may have seen a moment when the sheriff “deputizes” people by giving them a



badge to wear. This means these individuals have been given the authority and power to enforce the law.

As followers of Jesus, we've been deputized. Jesus has given us a badge, not to enforce the law, but to go and tell the world about who He is. The only reason we can "go" and do this is because Jesus has all authority.

What are the limits of Jesus' authority? Why is this important?

Jesus said "all authority . . . in heaven and on earth" has been given to Him. That means there is no place where He does not have all authority. He reigns supreme in heaven and on earth. Jesus doesn't control us like a person playing a video game controls a character on the screen; He gives us the ability to choose. Sometimes we choose right and sometimes we choose wrong. Our ability to choose doesn't change the reality that He reigns supreme over everything on heaven and earth. He can intervene at any moment.

Ultimately, Jesus wants us to willingly go and fulfill the mission He has given all His followers. He has empowered us by His Holy Spirit to go and share the gospel with the world. Whether He calls us to move to a new place to fulfill this task or stay right where we are, the mission doesn't change. In everything we do and everywhere we go, we are called to make disciples.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- ▶ Followers of Jesus are called to go and tell the world about Him.
- ▶ We do this by making His mission the mission of our lives.
- ▶ We can only live out His mission because He has all authority on heaven and earth.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.



"All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth."
— Matthew 28:18b

This verse makes it abundantly clear that Jesus has authority over everything in heaven and on earth. It's easy to say this, but let's dig down a little deeper to see what it really means. What does Jesus really have authority over?

READ MATTHEW 9:1-8.

Thankfully for us, this means that Jesus has the authority to forgive sins. Sin is what separates us from God and breaks our relationship with Him. When we turn from our sin and place our faith in Jesus, our relationship with God is restored. If not for Jesus having authority over our sin, this would not be possible.

READ JOHN 17:1-5.

Jesus also gives life. The life He gives is not just an average, unexciting life. The life Jesus offers us is one of purpose and a mission that brings life to others and glory to God.

Thankfully, Jesus does not use His authority as a weapon. In fact, He is patient and desires for all people to repent of their sins and come to Him in faith (see 2 Peter 3:9). This is why our mission is so urgent. One day He will return and there will be no more opportunities for people to give their lives to Him. When that day comes, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord (see Phil. 2:10-11).

Reflect on Jesus having authority over all things. What difference does that make in your life?

End today's time with God in prayer. Praise Him for how He forgives sins, gives life, and is patient. Ask Him to help you go this week.

We can't escape it; we live in a digital world. When we give our lives to Jesus, He becomes both our Lord and our Savior. That means He is Lord of our life online as well as every other aspect of our lives. So, use your online presence for His glory and to go, helping others know His goodness and love.

If you use social media platforms like Instagram or TikTok, post a video or picture with a message that includes Scripture to encourage others. Consider posting Psalm 145:8-9:

The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in faithful love. The LORD is good to everyone; his compassion rests on all he has made.

If you use platforms like Snapchat, WhatsApp, or Discord, and you have a friend who you know is hurting, encourage him or her with a personal message. Consider sending a verse like Psalm 34:18:

The LORD is near the brokenhearted; he saves those crushed in spirit.

Get creative. If you use any other social media platforms, brainstorm ways you can use them to go and share the gospel.

It's also possible that you don't use any social media platforms. If this is you, fantastic! Use this time to pray for your friends, family, and those around you who don't know Jesus yet. Always be someone who encourages others. Build up; don't tear down.

Pray, "Lord, help me to use my online presence—or whatever I have—to go and bring You glory. Help me to be an encourager to others and to help people know that You are good."

Since you are called to make disciples “as you go,” it’s helpful to think about how you spend your time. Make a schedule of a normal weekday and consider how you can actively tell others about Jesus as you go about your everyday life.

Morning	Afternoon	Night

Who are people in your life who do not know Jesus yet?

At what places or times throughout the day might you have an opportunity to talk to others about Him?

Then [Jesus] said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

— Matthew 9:37-38

Pray and ask the Lord of the harvest to give you eyes to see those who don’t know Him yet and a heart to share the gospel with them.