

G R O W

Get focused, Read, Observation, Worship

Our Great Purpose – Matthew 28:19-20

Have you ever done a group assignment, where you are grouped up with other classmates or co-workers to make a report or presentation? Did everyone participate and contribute? How would you feel if someone in the group didn't do anything to contribute? Group work is supposed to be about synergy and teamwork, but sometimes the work is hindered by those don't play their part. In Matthew 28:19-20 we are given a group assignment with a great purpose. Will we play our part?

GET FOCUSED

There's a funny line in the 2010 Karate Kid movie, "your focus needs more focus." Jackie Chan's character is telling Jaden Smith's character that he needs to focus on what's being taught. Jaden Smith's character states that he is focusing, but not enough for his teacher. If we want to get the most from our time with God in His Word, we need to focus. And often our focus needs more focus, as we're so easily distracted. So take a few moments and silence any distractions and focus your heart and mind to receive all that God has to say.

READ

If we're going to grow our faith and grow our relationship with God, we must read His Word. Sometimes we settle for substitutes. Christian books and devotions are good and helpful, but sometimes when they reference the Bible, we don't take time to read God's Word. Power and life are in God's Word, so take advantage of this devotion and insights, but also read His Word.

OBSERVATION (COMB through the text)

In this step, we want to investigate the passage, to understand its message and meaning. In addition to reading our main passage, read the verses around it to understand the **context**. We refer to this passage as the Great Commission, as it is Jesus' final words recorded in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus meets with his disciples after His death and resurrection. Jesus will ascend back into Heaven soon and He wants His disciples to know what to do from there. He wants us to know our great purpose.

Next, we want to **observe** the key words and phrases in Matthew 28:19-20. What stands out to you? You should see these key words and phrases: Go make disciples, all nations, baptizing, Father/Son/Holy Spirit, teaching, and I am with you always.

To help understand the **meaning** of these words and phrases, invest in a good study Bible or utilize online tools like netbible.org. The main imperative here is "make disciples." The term "disciple"

simply means learner, but it was understood as someone committed to following another's way of life. And the other parts of this passage help us see this understanding: baptizing and teaching. Baptism is a ritual of consecration, where someone is immersed in water as a symbol of dying to the past or one way of life and rising out of the water to a new way of life or purpose. The name with which you were baptized defined that consecrated purpose. Jesus' disciples are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – the 3 persons of the Holy Trinity. Being baptized into God's name means that we are consecrated our lives to Him: to live for Him and His glory. Disciples don't simply learn lessons for information sake, but they learn as to know how to live their life for the master. So, we make disciples by helping others learn how to live for Jesus and build their lives on His commands. In Matthew 11:29, Jesus calls us to take His yoke and learn from Him. A yoke was a rabbi's view of the scriptures, their understanding of what they meant and how to live them. The yoke pointed to the farming implement that team two oxen together so that they could work together. Often younger oxen were paired with older oxen so they could learn from the older. We look to Jesus to learn from Him as to how to live a life that honors and glorifies God.

So, we are to go to all people and lead them to commit their lives to Jesus. God loves all people, not just a select group or nation. All people of the earth need Jesus. This term "go" is best understood "as you are going." The idea is that as we live our lives, wherever we go, we encounter people that need Jesus and that we should help lead to Jesus. And Jesus closes with the great news that He is with us in this endeavor. We know that the Holy Spirit indwells us (Eph. 3:17, 5:18) and that God's power is with us to complete this special purpose.

So, what's the **bottom-line**, how would you sum all this up? Jesus sends us to all people to lead them to make a commitment to Jesus.

WORSHIP

In this last part of G.R.O.W., we focus on worship. Remember that worship is more than songs. We are to worship God with our lives, not just in select moments. Worship means to show God's worthiness and value. So, let's consider how we can live this out and worship God.

In Isaiah 6:1-8, he is given a vision of God's throne, where God is worshipped continually. Isaiah realizes his unworthiness before the Lord and confesses His sin. God forgives him and atones his sins. Then God asks, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Our response should be the same as Isaiah's, "Here I am! Send me." What a privilege it is that God wants to use us. This should excite us and cause us to look for every opportunity to share the Gospel with others. This is the worshipful response to this passage. Likely, God has already placed people in your life that He wants to use you to share with. Prayerfully consider who those people are and how you can share with them. Also, adopt the mindset to always be ready (1 Peter 3:15).