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## *Biblical Missionaries*

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## The Great Commission (Command)

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**T**hen Jesus came to them. He said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. So you must go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And you can be sure that I am always with you, to the very end’ ” (Matthew 28:18–20, NlrV).

How much clearer could it be? Here is Jesus—the risen Jesus, the Jesus whom they worshiped (verse 17). He has been giving His people throughout church history their calling and mission. Their most important duty is to make disciples in every nation of the world. Period.

It is not hard to understand the connection between these words, spoken to the eleven disciples in Galilee, and the words spoken to John on the island of Patmos many years later: “I saw another angel. He was flying high in the air. He came to tell everyone on earth the good news that will always be true. He told it to every nation, tribe, language and people. In a loud voice he said, ‘Have respect for God. Give him glory [praise and honor]. The hour has come for God to judge. Worship him who made the heavens and the earth. Worship him who made the sea and the springs of water’ ”(Revelation 14:6, 7, NlrV; read also verses 8–12).

A person could say that the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14 are also the Great Commission (command) in Matthew 28:18–20. This command is to be applied to our understanding of the last days of earth’s history.

No question: God has told His church, His people, to reach out and spread the gospel to the entire world. It is what Jesus has been calling us to do. Our mission is to spread (1) the truth about Jesus and what He has done for us (John 3:16), (2) what He is doing now for us (Romans 8:34), and (3) what He will do for us in the future (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

The word *mission* itself means “a sending or being sent to do a service.” For example, people go away in order to do something. So, the Great Commission means that what people do is to spread the gospel to the world.

This quarter we will study mission as God’s way for communicating the gospel to people who do not know it. Mission is a basic, but important, part of God’s heavenly work in saving souls. So, we will study how God’s eternal purpose has been fulfilled in the lives of people in the Bible. They are the people God has sent as missionaries to the lost.

In the end, the Christian mission is God’s mission, not ours. It started in the heart of God. It is based on the love of God. And it is done by the will of God.

To better understand God’s mission work, this quarter’s lessons are based on the following model of salvation history:

1. God created men and women and gave them free will.
2. The first man and woman misused their free will by disobeying God, and they had to leave Eden.
3. God could not use force to bring them back to Eden.
4. God sent His Son on a mission to die in their place and to bring them back into harmony or a good relationship with Him.
5. God’s mission is to make the offer of salvation known to all people. This goal opens the way for them to have salvation.

At its most basic level, mission is letting the whole world know about Jesus. It also is about what He has done for each of us and about what He promises to do for us, now and for eternity. In short, we who know about those promises have been called to tell others about them too.

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***The three angels’ messages of Revelation 14 are God’s Great Command in Matthew 28:18–20 to spread the gospel to the world.***