

LESSON 42

The Great Commission

MATTHEW 28:16-20



BIBLE TRUTH

THE GOSPEL FULFILLS GOD'S PROMISE TO ABRAHAM

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 28:16–20 from the Scriptures or read story 120, “The Great Commission,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

A Sneak Peek

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Spread the Word

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ brown craft paper to make a large six-foot cross
- ✓ a pad of index-card-size sticky notes—one for each child
- ✓ pencils or pens

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 42—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Not All Teaching Is Equal

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ six feet of chain
- ✓ a lock and key
- ✓ eight index cards
- ✓ Bible

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

Some of the disciples struggled to believe—The eleven disciples were asked to meet Jesus on a particular mountain. When they saw Jesus, some worshiped him, while others doubted. Rather than rebuke those who doubted, Jesus commissioned them all! What an encouragement to us when we struggle with our faith.

Jesus commissioned the doubters—In spite of the fact that some doubted, Jesus commissioned all eleven to go forth and teach all nations to obey everything he commanded, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Here, contained in a very small portion of Scripture, are some astounding truths. First, the apostles were not to limit their teaching to other Jews. They were to spread the teaching of Jesus to the Gentiles as well! Jesus applied this Great Commission to us as well. Jesus also revealed the doctrine of the Trinity here when he says we are to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. By including himself, Jesus again declared his deity.

Jesus is with us as we go—In Genesis we read that God spoke to Abraham, revealing that all of the nations of the earth were going to be blessed through him (Genesis 18:18). Abraham did not live to see the fulfillment of God’s promise to him, but in the Great Commission Jesus set the stage for its fulfillment. Jesus directed the disciples to take the message of the gospel to “all nations.” Lest the disciples think their task impossible, Jesus assured them that he would be with them always (Matthew 28:19–20). Today as we look to continue the work of taking the gospel to all nations, we should remember that we are not alone. The Spirit of Christ goes with us and before us, preparing the hearts of those who will believe. Whenever we run into difficulty, we need to remember that Jesus is with us. Whenever we doubt, we should remember that by his Spirit Jesus is near.

Where Is the Gospel?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:16–20 is not found in the other Gospels, but has a companion passage in Luke. Jesus had earlier commissioned the disciples to spread the message of his death and resurrection (Luke 24:47). Both passages tell us that the gospel is to be preached to all nations. The salvation of Jesus Christ is not limited to the Jews, but is to go to all nations and all peoples. Matthew records that those who receive the message are to be baptized. That baptism, Paul later explains, is an identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus in the life of the individual believer (Romans 6:3–4).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 28:16–20 from the Scriptures or read story 120, "The Great Commission," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

A Sneak Peek

Invite a person or two from another country to share their testimony with your class. After this, read Revelation 7:9–12 and tell the children that this passage speaks of the end of the earth as we know it. Lead the class in a discussion using the following questions:

- **How does the passage from Revelation connect to the Great Commission in today's story?**
(The passage from Revelation describes the fulfillment of the Great Commission.)
- **Can people from any nation, tribe, or tongue become Christians?**
(Yes. God loves all people, and the gospel goes forth to all nations.)
- **If God loves people from every nation, should we do the same?**
(Yes. We should not discriminate or treat others poorly based on where they live or on the color of their skin. All people, regardless of their tribe or nation, are made in the image of God.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

Spread the Word

Pick seven children to line up facing you. Make up a simple handshake and teach it to the first person in line. Once he knows it, he should teach it to the next person. The next person then teaches it to the next person and so on down the line. Try several different handshakes and see if they can be transmitted all the way down the line.

Make the point that we can't always be sure that the handshake would be taught properly, but when it comes to God's Word, God is a part of the process and a guarantee that it will be transmitted down the line. Thus, although the gospel has been told from generation to generation, it has not changed at all. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Color a Picture

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 42—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What are the disciples doing around Jesus?**
(Some are just standing while others are worshipping Jesus.)
- **The Bible tells us that some of the disciples still doubted and had trouble believing it was really Jesus. Can we tell which disciple doubted by looking in the picture?**
(No, we can't tell those who believe by the way they look because believing is something that a person does in his heart.)
- **Why are there only eleven and not twelve disciples?**
(Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, killed himself. He did not ask Jesus for forgiveness from his sin but ran away from Jesus instead.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Not All Teaching Is Equal

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ six feet of chain
- ✓ a lock and key
- ✓ eight index cards
- ✓ Bible

Before class write one of the following statements on each index card (include the number):

1. Remain calm at all times.
2. Hold your hands still.
3. Locate the hole in the bottom of the lock.
4. Don't try to break the chains. They are too strong.
5. Don't scream; it won't help.
6. The key fits in the hole in the bottom of the lock.
7. The lock will open when the inserted key is turned.
8. The key is in the Bible on the table.

The object of this lesson is to help the children realize that the gospel is the most important of Jesus' teachings for us to learn.

Before the children arrive, lock your helper's arms in the chain and seat him at the front of the classroom. When the children arrive, the chained assistant should ask for a volunteer to help him get free from the chains. He should tell the volunteer to ask you for the key to the lock.

Withholding card number 8, shuffle the index cards and have the volunteer pick a card and take it over to the chained helper.

The person in chains should ask for the card to be read. Obviously, only card number 8 can unlock the chains. After two trips, quietly insert the eighth card into the pile and continue the exercise until the key is discovered in the Bible and the lock is removed. Explain to the class that although all of the cards contained helpful information, only one of the cards had the information that would open the lock.

Jesus told the disciples to teach everything he commanded them to all people. So what is the key teaching of Jesus that can unlock people's bondage to sin? The answer, of course, is the gospel. If we teach everything else, but leave out the gospel, we have not helped anyone.

