

**Transforming Daily**  
**“ . . . Go therefore and make disciples . . . ”**  
*Matthew 28:19*

Matthew 28:18-20, otherwise known as The Great Commission, emphasizes the making of disciples. Interestingly enough, “make disciples” in this passage is the only real imperative. The other participles in these verses, “go(ing),” “baptizing,” “teaching,” “observe,” and “commanded” have an imperative force based on the imperative mood to “make disciples.”

For some time it was debated (and still is in some circles) that the most important part of Matthew 28:18-20 was to “go(ing).” However, the truth of the matter is that the most important part of this text is not the “go(ing),” but the making of disciples. One of the reasons that the “go(ing)” became so important was a marked decline in Christians openly sharing their faith. Many Christians took the position that, if someone wanted to know how to become a Christian, they could ask. Two results occurred (among others) doctrinal liberalism and declining church growth. For those who were serious about evangelizing the lost (and in part due to the Jesus movement) in the late 60s and early 70s, “to go” and “to tell” became the marching orders for any conservative, evangelical, Christian. This movement blossomed forth in the 80s and 90s to become an aggressive ideology for evangelizing the lost.

While it is true that “make disciples” is in the imperative mood in this text, “go(ing)” is the dynamic by which the “teaching,” and “baptizing” was/is to be done, hence, the imperative sense on what Christ “commanded” the disciples “to observe,” i.e., the “baptizing” and the “teaching.” On the other hand, those against organized outreach/soul winning/witnessing argue(d) that the Greek word translated into English as “go” should be translated as “going” which then was to be applied, “as you go,” make disciples. Therefore, the imperative sense “Go!” was reduced to a more favorable and tolerable sense of “as you go” share your faith at your own leisure. So you can see how these two approaches might be in conflict.

This is my position on the matter, the believer should both “Go!” and tell, as well as, tell while we are “going.” In context, this passage has more to do with the power of God that raised Christ from the dead after His crucifixion, burial and resurrection; and by that power Christ has been given all authority to commission believers to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). Are you a witness to Christ? Do you actively pursue others with which to share your faith? When you are at a ball game, a grocery store, a gas station, a bank, etc., do you share your faith as you go? Do you know how to share your faith?

There are so many tools to train believers to share their faith. As a matter of fact, one resource is actually called F. A. I. T. H. Two other resources are called Evangelism Explosion and Continuing Witness Training. (All of these you can find at your local Lifeway Christian Store.) For me, I find that the Romans’ Road is still one of the most effective tools for sharing my faith, that is, to plant seeds of the gospel and water them. So, having said all of this there is still one more thing for us to do, and that is to go therefore and make disciples.