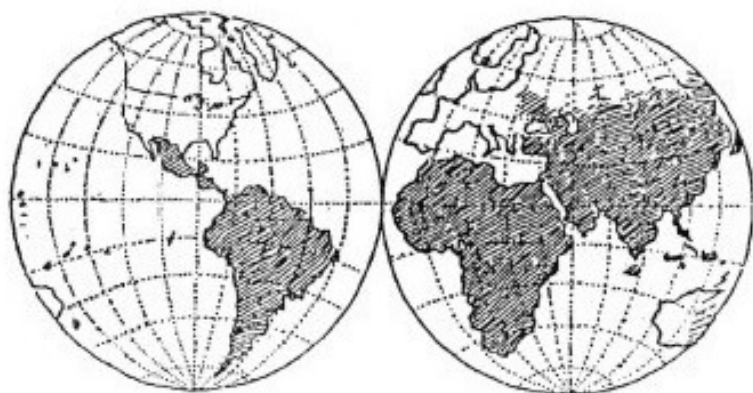
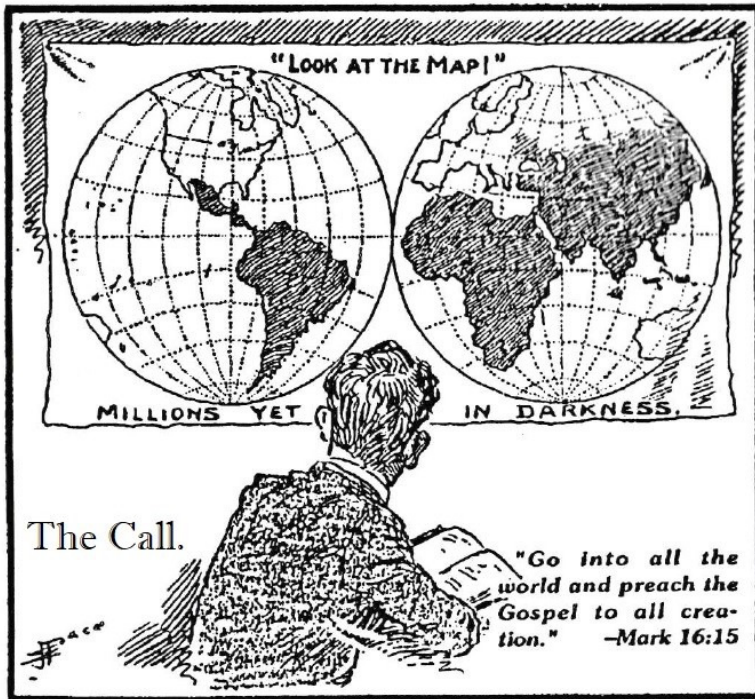


THE HOAX
OF THE
GREAT
COMMISSION



A BIBLE STUDY

Cartoon by E.J. Pace
The Sunday School Times Company (1920)



NEW YORK (AP) - Eyeing the century's end, numerous Christian organizations have set a grand goal of evangelizing the world by 2000 A.D., even though doing so seems impossible. "Only God can do it," they say.

"Pray hard!" A World Evangelization Strategy Committee, using computer data on current Christian works is working on the plans to complete Christ's "Great Commission" to get his message to all the world..."

Christians Work Against Deadline
THE MAIL TRIBUNE
Medford, OR Oct. 16, 1980

FOREWARD

“Send in your tithes and offerings! We must take the Gospel to the nations of the world before it is too late! Jesus has commanded that we do this! We must not fail!”

Have you heard this before? Millions of dollars are solicited annually from well-intentioned Christians, and wasted on church promotions bearing the title of Foreign Missions. Did Christ truly command all generations to “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...!*”

20th Century Christianity finds itself somewhere between Bible and Myth. Apostasy has taken its toll. Christian doctrine today would be barely recognizable if viewed from the eyes of a First Century Christian. Thus, there appears to be a sizable challenge to the modern seeker of truth. Can we bear the pain of losing our idols of tradition and habit?

Objectivity in Bible translation and research is a difficult discipline because religions naturally develop emotional roots. Family and church loyalty militates against our looking upon our pasts objectively. Nonetheless, we must try!

The Hoax of The Great Commission addresses an evolved doctrine of modern Churchianity which has come to be held so dear as to often be considered the very purpose for the church. Millions of Christians are caught up with trying to “save souls” before “the end” comes. However, this was NOT the faith that was delivered to the saints. Christianity has to do with government - not with saving souls from hell!

The research in this book will cause you to re-examine what you may have heard previously from preachers and evangelists concerning what they call *The Great Commission*.

You be the judge.

Pastor Ben Williams

THE HOAX OF: THE GREAT COMMISSION

A Bible Study by Francis Christen

There are few coming from our Judeo-Christian society and the organized churches in general who have not heard sermons preached on “The Great Commission.” Indeed, many churches and Christian ministries are built or formed specifically around this commission. *The Moody Monthly* magazine of June 1976 in an article titled “How To Develop An Evangelistic Lifestyle” states,

“...Evangelism is not optional. It is not for some spiritual elite... Jesus said, ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you’ (Matthew 28: 19, 20). One of his commandments was to ‘go’ and so that applies to ALL Christians. Failure to tell people is being lazy, and being disobedient to Jesus’ command.” (emphasis added)

This appears to summarize the “Evangelical” and/or “Fundamental” position on the Great Commission. One ministry which is built around this idea is the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Another is Bill Bright’s Campus Crusade for Christ international which has distributed millions of small tracts titled, ‘The Four Spiritual Laws’ which explains how to “accept” Jesus. These ministries teach what millions of Judeo-Christians believe: that the Great Commission is a Scriptural mandate to ALL Christians to actively evangelize the world for Jesus Christ.

In large letters across the top of page 10 of a Rex Humbard Ministry Newsletter is printed in bold letters:

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation’ (Mark 16: 15)”

It is followed with the words: *“That COMMAND from Jesus to His disciples calls for a simple act of faith... to go forth boldly and share the GOOD NEWS with as many people as possible. Rex Humbard has been*

doing that since the earliest days of his ministry, and he is still doing it today.” (Rex Humbard Ministry bulletin, p. 10, emphasis added.)

Similar claims can be found in the literature of Jimmy Swaggard, Billy Graham, PTL, Oral Roberts, the 700 Club and many other well-known T.V. Evangelist personalities.

As an example of how this doctrine has spread into every area of our life, let me quote from the Rutherford Institute Newsletter which carried a news article a few years ago concerning students who were barred from having a Bible club at Lake Worth High School in Florida. The school board had formally adopted a “new policy” essentially banning “religious advertising” and specifically prohibiting “proselytizing.” Note how the attorneys for the students argued against the school board’s action. They said,

*“...what the school board calls proselytizing is something a Christian IS **MANDATED** to do in the last chapter of Matthew...”*

One attorney went so far as to say,

*“To prohibit a Christian from evangelizing is to prohibit him from **PRACTICING** his religion, and that is a direct violation of the First Amendment.” (emphasis added)*

An example of the doctrinal position of most denominational churches concerning the Great Commission can be found in “The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church” (Second Edition, 1970) under section 6.175. It states:

*“Since there is **NO OTHER WAY OF SALVATION** than that revealed in the gospel... Christ has commissioned his Church to go into all the world and to make disciples of all nations. All believers are, therefore, **UNDER OBLIGATION** to... contribute by their prayers, gifts, and personal efforts to the extension of the Kingdom of Christ throughout the whole earth.” (emphasis added)*

In the book DISCOVERY, published as a training guide by Scripture Union, we find this on page 98:

*“The disciples have a story to tell (Matthew 28:16-20). No matter if some people won’t ACCEPT it. **OUR JOB** is to tell the god news! Note what **WE MUST** aim for: To make disciples - to bring people to a clear step of conversion to Christ; To baptize - to build them into a living fellowship of committed persons; To teach - to get them to live in their society the kind of all out life that Christ Commanded. Think. Test your aims in life by those three commands of Christ.”(emphasis added)*

A “free” book, which received wide distribution among Christians was the book titled, *POWER FOR LIVING*, published by The Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation to celebrate ‘The Year of the Bible 1983.’ In the book, Arthur S. DeMoss is pictured and said to be founder of a large insurance company. On page 98 we find these statements:

*“God gives us His Spirit for more than the conquest of our personal lives. God has a whole world TO WIN. Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He announced His world-conquering mission to His disciples: (Matthew 28: 18-19) ...Jesus Himself is with His ambassadors by His Spirit...” (emphasis added). The book then goes on to explain how **ALL** Christians are His ambassadors and Apostles.*

To understand the immensity of this “world-conquering mission” as seen through the eyes of Judeo-Christians, consider these statements by Ralph Winter at Billy Graham’s International Congress on World Evangelization:

*“...the job **REMAINING** to **ALL** of us is not only immense, it is still mainly BEYOND all present outreach. There are 500 million people **STILL** to be won in India, 600 million Muslims, 800 million Chinese, 100 million tribal peoples, as well as many others scattered around the world.” (emphasis added)*

That’s not mentioning the billions who have died and never made it! In the book, *ONCE MORE AROUND JERICHO*-The story of the U.S. Center for World Missions, we read,

*“It is a wonderful fact that we can confidently ASSUME that Christians in every land are as willing as we are to **TRY TO FULFILL** the Great Commission.” (emphasis added)*

Continuing on page 236,

“...the Evangelical Movement in America today is bursting out all over with breathtaking new projects. Most of these seem to encompass the whole world in their purpose. Almost everyone knows Billy Graham, Jim Bakker, Robert Schuller, Pat Robertson, Bill Bright, Oral Roberts, Jerry Falwell, Morris Cerillo, etc. Just eight brothers-in-Christ alone are out to raise \$1500 million dollars. (That’s 1.5 billion dollars,) ...Jim Montgomery, Overseas Field Director of Overseas Crusades said, ‘If the U.S. Center for World Mission fails, our mission CANNOT SUCCEED.’” (emphasis added)

Quite a statement, isn’t it? Did Jesus really give these people (or us) a command which is beyond our capability to accomplish? Scripture tells us,

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” Proverbs 23: 7a

What is in our mind (as doctrine, or belief) dictates what we will do or not do in this world. If false doctrine is in our mind then ungodly action will follow. If a person believes that it is alright to steal then he will steal. On the other hand, if a Christian truly believes that everyone is going to a burning hell UNLESS he tells them about Jesus then they will naturally want to expend all their energy trying to get everyone to ACCEPT Jesus. True doctrine is essential to the proper understanding of God’s Word and our proper conduct before Him. If you and I believe wrongly it can only lead to SIN - transgression of God’s Law and His will. Few would not admit that we are in the last days of this age and that we are told by Scripture ‘that these days will be marked by false doctrine. There has been a great falling away from God’s Truth.

But, few think that THEY are among those “fallen away” or that they personally could be anywhere outside of the Truth. Scripture says,

“...because they received not the love of the truth ...for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” 2 Thessalonians: 10b-11

Note: God sends the delusion on men who do not love Truth!

“Beware lest any man spoil YOU through philosophy and vain deceit, after the TRADITIONS OF MEN, after the rudiments of the world and NOT after Christ.” Colossians 2: 8



JUDEO-CHRISTIANITY HAS TRADITIONALLY PREACHED THE
FALSE DOCTRINES OF HEAVEN AND HELL AFTER DEATH

So the questions we want to consider in this study come down to these: Was the Great Commission given to the whole body of Christ? Or, was it given to ALL the disciples and followers of Christ? Or, was it given to you and me and future generations of Christians after the Apostolic time? You may never have examined this doctrine before now? But it is a fundamental doctrine of Judeo-Christian theology and needs our scrutiny. We are told to check or “test all things” and “hold fast” only to what is the truth.

Is every true Christian believer supposed to “evangelize the world” for Jesus or is there perhaps some other meaning here which we may have missed? Were you and I commanded by Jesus to “go into all the world” with a gospel of Personal Salvation? After reading this study my hope is that the reader will have a better grasp and understanding of the following goals:

- 1) What "gospel" is being spoken about in the Commission texts?
- 2) What is the purpose for preaching the Gospel, according to Scripture? Is it FOR personal salvation or is there more to it than that?
- 3) WHO was the Commission specifically given to according to the Bible?
- 4) What was the scope of the work ordered?
- 5) What were the Apostles' methods in fulfilling the Commission, (including the signs that were given in connection with it)?
- 6) What are New Testament elders?
- 7) Who or what is the foundation of the Kingdom of Heaven which was preached as the “gospel” by the Apostles?
- 8) What were the evangelical methods of Jesus himself as compared to those methods employed by modern day evangelists like Billy Graham?
- 9) What is the commission or duties that are given to members of God's Kingdom who are not elders?
- 10) And finally, how are the proselytizing methods used by anti-Christians and pagans different from Scriptural evangelistic methods given in the Bible?

Make no mistake about it, they expend tremendous proselytising efforts, which includes not only the Protestant denominations but also the Jews and Eastern religions as well, which is evidenced all around us by the great numbers of our people who are literally flocking to these anti-Christian pagan groups (this includes the occult - satanism and witchcraft - and the new age movement as well). They have and have had tremendous missionary zeal and fervor, though many may not call it that openly.

Now, I admit this seems like a lot of territory to cover in one Bible study but I believe we can do it. It is very important for us to consider this subject of the Great Commission, because when a person looks at a little

independent Christian group such as ours (American Covenant Fellowship), the natural question which arises is: Why don't you have missionaries? Or why don't you espouse sending members to other lands to 'bring people to Christ? From the perspective of a Judeo-Christian background these would appear to be very good questions. In those churches which have their emphasis on the 'hereafter' and 'heaven or hell' doctrines with the necessity of 'being saved' in order to insure an 'eternity with Christ' such an outlook is not only natural but becomes a number one priority. After all, if when we die we might go to a burning eternal hell, then we certainly would want everyone to know and accept Jesus so they will not be 'lost.' What kind of Christian love would it be NOT to want to reach the world with that 'good message'?

Hopefully, by the time you read this study, you will have already considered the definition of the word 'gospel' and noted the difference between the Judeo-Christian doctrine of salvation and the doctrine of salvation as presented in Scripture. With that in mind let's consider:

The "gospel" of the Commission Texts

Have you ever considered that there may be a difference between the gospel of personal salvation as proclaimed by the Judeo-Christian churches and the Gospel of the Kingdom in Scripture? A clear understanding of that difference is essential to anyone who wants to fully understand the Great Commission. If you have not heard the cassette study on the "*Doctrine of Salvation*" by Pastor Ben Williams, I would encourage you to take the time to study them before continuing this study. Drop him a line and request them at P.O. Box 8430, Medford, OR 97504, you will find them extremely helpful in your quest for Truth.

WHAT GOSPEL DID JESUS PREACH?

The word "gospel" is used over 100 times in the New Testament and ALL except once it comes from the same Greek word or Greek root word. The noun in English is simply, "evangel", which means "good message." Or, the verb form which means "to evangelize" or "to announce a good message."



Three times the word (noun) “evangelist” is used meaning “one who brings a good message.”

So, literally the word gospel merely means “good message” and is incomplete when used by itself. Paul, for example, says that he preached “the Kingdom of God”; and he called it literally, “the good message {gospel) of the grace of God.” In other places in the New Testament we have phrases such as: the gospel of Christ; Christ’s gospel; the gospel of peace; the gospel of the circumcision; the gospel of your salvation; the gospel of God; the everlasting gospel, etc.

So, in the New Testament the phrase “the gospel” can mean any part or parts of the message of God or it can refer to the whole message of God. Just using the term “the gospel” does not mean any specific doctrine or message, per se. You have to add something to the term “gospel” in order to say what you mean and communicate what you are talking about. The whole Bible is an evangel (or gospel). But each book of the Bible, like Isaiah, or Acts or Revelation is also individually a “good message” or gospel. So, when someone says they preach “the gospel” they actually could be saying they preach something that is completely different from what you understand or what in fact the Bible really says. All they are saying is that “we are preaching good news.” We should immediately ask, “What good news?”

Evangelicals will tell you that they are preaching the “gospel of personal salvation.” What exactly does that mean? What salvation are they talking about? We certainly need to know if their “gospel of salvation” IS the “gospel of salvation” which is spoken about in Scripture. If you join the Catholic church and confess your sins to a priest according to them, you’ll be saved - that’s their gospel. If you go to the local Baptist church and answer their “altar call,” go forth and “accept” and “confess” Jesus then you’ll be saved (according to them) - that’s their gospel. If you join the Mormon church and accept the rule of the elders and prophets over you and are baptized then you’ll be saved - that’s their gospel. It becomes evident that in all of these cases, these people have a “different gospel” and a “different doctrine of salvation.”

This is such an important issue that Paul warns us in Scripture about “another Jesus” “another gospel” and “another spirit.” Different from what is found in the Scriptures! Judeo-Christians make two major errors in their “gospel about salvation.” First, they believe that one can come to Christ; that a person can choose to follow the Lord. But the Scriptures clearly teach that He chooses us, we do not choose Him! Furthermore, only those who are already His can respond or “hear His voice.” Jesus said, “*MY SHEEP hear my voice!*” They (fundamentalists, etc.) then go on to compound their error by refusing to obey Gods commands - His Law. They call people to their altars to make a decision (a vow) to follow and obey Christ, then give contradicting direction by saying “You’re under grace, not Law!” But Jesus said that His disciples were those who “OBEY my commandments!” Solomon warned us in Ecclesiastes 5: 2-5,

‘Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God...When thou vowest a vow unto God defer not to pay it; for He has no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou has vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay.’

Is it a light thing people do when they vow to follow and obey Jesus our King and then do not, because they cannot? Billy Graham and men like him, teach blasphemy when they say that men are “saved” by their own decision. Scripture makes it clear that men are “saved” by GRACE

as a GIFT of God. They are saved by God's will and His alone! No work of man, NOT EVEN HIS OWN THOUGHTS (or decisions) can "save" him. It is this very doctrine which is the crux of the problems our people face. In his book, *World Aflame* Billy Graham says: 'The Christian hope is based on two worlds - this world and the next.' Or, in other words, this physical world and some fantasy spiritual realm after we die. But that is not true.

The Christian hope is based on this world and whether we will have the rule (kingdom rule) of God or the rule of man. Remember that the word "kingdom" means "jurisdiction" and there are two distinct kingdoms, or jurisdictions spoken of in Scripture - the jurisdiction (Kingdom) of God and the jurisdiction (Kingdom) or rule of men. The "two worlds" spoken of in the Bible are the humanistic Babylonian world system and the heavenly kingdom-rule of God - BOTH about the here and now, not after death. To believe that everything waits for some future time after we are dead is to do nothing for the Kingdom of God and it destines our families and future generations of Christians to Babylonian anti-Christ slavery. It is well time we examined the doctrines we have accepted and separate from the "traditions of men" into the true Salvation that Jesus is offering by his offering by his true government. His salvation is Freedom. And in fact, the word "salvation" means "freedom - and who among us does not recognize that freedom or salvation is what we need: individually, in our families, in our communities and in our nation-more than anything else!

So, from my study, I believe that "the gospel" that was to be taken to all the nations was the "Gospel of the Kingdom of God (or Heaven)" not just a gospel of personal salvation. Personal salvation was included but it was only a part of the "good news" concerning the overall Kingdom or "reign" of God on earth - with Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the "good news" of God's government upon the earth for God's people who are living. This came not from man's internal or inherent capabilities but rather externally from an all-powerful God. This kingdom was centered in Christ, not in man. We can hear this good news and accept that reign of Heaven's jurisdiction or we can ignore it and continue with man's (Babylonian) rule. An example of this is found in Matthew 24: 14 when Jesus is speaking about the signs before His return.

“And this GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and THEN shall the end come.”

(Now, without jumping ahead too much or getting off point; the Gospel of the Kingdom **WAS preached and we are in the END, NOW!** 1 John 2: 18)

Does Billy Graham and the many other ‘evangelists’ like him preach the ‘good news’ of the kingdom (reign) of God, OR do they preach a man-centered, ego-inflating gospel where you become the saviour by your own ‘work’ of accepting Jesus? We should be thinking in terms of where we fit in God’s plan rather than thinking that God’s plan has to somehow fit in us (or in our plans). For further study of this important point let me recommend the taped teaching cassette titled, *THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM* - again by Pastor Ben Williams. A proper understanding of what the TRUE Gospel is, is fundamental to understanding of what the Bible is all about. They are all pieces of an overall picture, very different from man’s ideas. As God tells us in Isaiah 55:8,

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”



JOHN WROTE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD DESTROYING THE
BABYLONIAN KINGDOMS OF MAN
IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The PURPOSE for Preaching the Gospel

When the Lord gave this particular commission as it is worded in Mark 16, for example, He said to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Now, most people have taken that to mean that it is our responsibility to go and tell a lost and dying world about the love of Jesus and urge them to “accept” Him in order to “be saved for heaven and avoid a burning hell-fire. Of course, that is a gross misunderstanding of this passage and the purpose for preaching the gospel. There are four basic reasons for preaching the gospel. FIRST of all in 2 Timothy 1: 10 we are told:

“But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality TO LIGHT through the gospel.”

Now observe, that the gospel is not to establish life and immortality, but it is rather to bring it to light.

Note: that the word “immortality” should more correctly be translated as “sincerity.” It has to do with the quality of life now for the living rather than the destiny of the body after death. The Greek word is Strong’s #861, “aphtharsia” meaning “genuineness.” It has been translated correctly as “sincerity” in Titus 2: 7 and Ephesians 6: 24 among other places. It is saying that we are putting on a sincere holy motivation or holy spirit!

But the point here is, that you cannot bring to light something which is not already in an individual. So the gospel is to bring to light, or into open view for all to see, the quality of life that the Lord has ALREADY given a person; the preaching of the gospel brings it out into manifestation. And if an individual does not have such life then of course he will not receive the testimony of the gospel. We then read in John 5:24 that,

“...He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, HATH everlasting life (more correctly: “age lasting” life) and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life.”

This unequivocally establishes the fact that the gift of life PRECEDES the ability to hear and believe the gospel message. So you see the life comes first, then the gospel, and as that gospel is heard, believed and obeyed, that life (which is already there) is brought to light or manifestation. The evidences of its presence IS the activity of hearing, believing and obeying. And if that life is not there, of course, the testimony of the gospel will not be received. This is most consistent with what Jesus told us in John 10: 27:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give them eternal life; (again Strong’s #166 “aionis” meaning: “age lasting”) and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Evidently, there are sheep that belong to the Lord and there are sheep that do not belong to Him. There are sheep (good and bad) and there are also goats. You might say, Where did the evil people come from? Proverbs 16: 4, *“The Lord hath made ALL THINGS for himself yea, EVEN THE WICKED for the day of evil.”* But continuing, in 1 Corinthians 2: 14, Paul tells us:

“...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”



“For the PREACHING of the cross is TO THEM THAT PERISH foolishness: but UNTO US which ARE SAVED it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

So, the gospel to a perishing man is foolishness. A man must be saved already for the gospel to be anything but foolishness. Notice that it says to us that “**ARE saved** it is the power of God” but otherwise it is not even understood.

So, again, the gospel is not to give life and immortality – you already have that - the Gospel merely brings it to light.

The *Scofield Reference Bible* is a primary source for much of the Judeo-Christian (funny-mental-ism) doctrines. In a footnote on John 3: 3 it says: “the condition of the new birth is faith in Christ crucified...” Yet Scripture abundantly affirms that faith in Christ IS NOT the condition for obtaining new birth, but the evidence that one is ALREADY born anew! Notice this passage which proves this point in John 1: 12-13,

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons (no longer children) of God, even to them that believe (present tense) on His name. Which WERE born (past), not of blood, nor of the WILL OF MAN, but of God.”

Again observe in this passage, how the birth preceded the believing. Then in John 6: 47,

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me HATH (not ‘will have’ but HATH) everlasting (age-lasting) life.” (Past tense!)

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ IS BORN (not ‘will be born’ IS BORN) of God...” (1 John 5: 1)

So, as in so many other cases, Mr. Scofield and those who believe like him have the cart before the horse in the matter of the new birth and faith in Jesus Christ. When were we who are Christ’s, born of God, born again? Jesus said that “No man comes to the Father BUT by me,” and Ephesians 1: 3-5 we find the answer:

“3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as HE HATH CHOSEN us in Him BEFORE the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:

5 Having PREDESTINATED us unto the adoption of children of Jesus Christ to himself: according to the good pleasure of HIS WILL (NOT ours).”

Is it not obvious that we were chosen and placed in Christ “BEFORE the foundations of the world, NOT when we chose Him when some Baptist preacher convinced us to come forward in an altar call? Ephesians 2: 8 says clearly:

*“For by grace ARE YE SAVED (past tense) through faith: and that NOT OF YOURSELVES (by your accepting Him): **it is the GIFT of God.**”*

Now a second purpose for the gospel is found in Ephesians 4: 11-14,

“And He gave some, Apostles: and some, prophets: and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

Now notice **WHY** he gave all of these:

“For the perfecting of the saints”

Now, let's digress for a moment and consider this word evangelist. In Strong's we are told that it comes from the Greek word *evangel*, which we have already seen means “gospel,” or “good news.” Evangelist is the noun form and it means “a preacher of the gospel” - You can substantiate that with any English dictionary. An evangelist is “a preacher of the (evangel) gospel.” He is not “saving souls,” but rather is telling them the good news” that they **ARE** saved! So, when a New Testament pastor is standing in the pulpit preaching a gospel to the people, he is doing the work of an evangelist. Hopefully his ‘gospel’ will be the gospel of the Kingdom of God - the true Gospel of Christ! It is more than just the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ which in itself is also “good news.” But, make special notice that the evangelist is given for the exact same identical purpose as the pastor and teacher and the prophet and Apostle:

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: That we henceforth be **no more children**, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine...”

We notice from this verse that a purpose for the gospel is to indoctrinate (that is to bring YOU and I into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God; and also to establish YOU and I so that we Christians, are no longer tossed to and fro by false doctrine. No longer “children.” In other words, to Sonship. Remember, we read in John 1: 12-13 that He gave us power to become “Sons” of God. There is not one word in these passages about putting you on the road to heaven or causing you to pass from death into life. It’s talking about establishing people that are already passed from death to life that they not continue being children “tossed to and fro.” You see, we are already children. Nor, is there any indication that an evangelist is supposed to go to other races - or people - to preach the gospel. These words are to Israelites who are the “lost sheep of Israel” who are to be reconciled back to God through Christ, so they can do what they have been called to do. Jesus said, “...*I am not sent **but** unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” (Matthew 15: 24). It is time that we lined up our thinking with the words of scripture.

Then a third purpose for the preaching of the gospel is stated in Romans 16: 25-26. Paul is here speaking about the gospel when he says:

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations FOR the OBEDENCE OF FAITH.”

So, the gospel is designed to produce obedience; and teach us how to **obey** God.

OUR DUTY AS KINGDOM WORKERS

If we are not to go out and “save souls,” just what are we supposed to do as members of Gods government? Well, it is summed up in that verse just quoted, “For the obedience of faith.” Is that all, just obedience, you say! Yes, that’s all. But is that really all that easy? If you think it is, maybe you don’t have the right idea of what it all entails. In the Book of Joshua, 1:7-8 we read,

“Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to ALL the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to ALL that is written therein for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

Here Joshua is to be guided by a written word; “This BOOK of the Law.” Abraham had obeyed the spoken Word of God; Moses had written the book directly as God told him; now Joshua is instructed to follow this written Word. Joshua was charged to obey the Word because it was God’s Word. That same charge, to obey, is yours and mine. When we come to Jesus we begin following His rules and his laws. That is proof that we have indeed repented - turned in God’s direction.

When men and women obey the Word - God’s Law - God blesses. When they disobey or forget his Law they bring trouble on themselves and those around them. Solomon heeded the evil that was in his heart and rejected the Scripture, and thus the decline in Israel began. Josiah was used by God to locate the Scriptures in the house of the Lord. He stood up and read it and the people were revived. Ezra did the same. Every time the people of God brought out the Word - the Law of God - and read and determined to obey it, they were revived and blessings followed.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth.” God told Joshua: Here is the law; you are to obey it. Here are the rules and regulations I expect you to live by; here is the guidance I have given you that you may be blessed. But, you must meditate upon it so that you can obey it in its fullest. What did Jesus say when He came - THE SAME THING! **“If you love me, KEEP my commandments.”**

How can the Judeo-Christian churches hear these words when they teach we are NOT under God’s Law, but under grace?

A person is always under law - either man's (Babylon's), or God's. In the New Testament, after establishing his Apostleship in Romans, Paul says (Romans 1: 5-6):

“5 By whom we have received grace and Apostleship. FOR OBEDIENCE to the faith AMONG ALL NATIONS, for His name.

6 Among whom ARE YE ALSO THE CALLED of Jesus Christ:”

The entire letter to the Romans must have been for the same purpose because Paul ends it with almost the same phrase in verse 26:

*“...made known to all nations for the **obedience** of faith.”*

The Law of our God of Israel is eternal and over all. It is as sure as the law of gravity. It is truth expressed in the form of principles which exist with or without our knowledge of them. Jesus said,

*“...if they **WILL NOT** hear Moses, **NEITHER** will they hear me, for Moses wrote of me.”*

Moses' Law came from God. It did not necessarily contain every principle of God's universal, eternal law, but it was all from God. Through Moses, Israel's God gave them the laws that they needed to form a civil government under Him. The Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9: 1; Galatians 6: 2) is also God's Law. Jesus said He could do nothing of His own, only that which the Father gave Him to do (John 5: 30). The law that Jesus taught was God's Law. It re-emphasized and included all the Law and prophets. Jesus said that he didn't come to do away with the law, but to DO (fulfil) it (Matthew 5: 17).

Now the final point which relates to the utility or purpose for the preaching of the gospel is found in 1 John 1: 3-4, John says,

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”

That we may have joy. So summing it all up by the texts we have just looked at we see that the PURPOSE for preaching the gospel is:

- ✓ 1. to bring life to light or manifestation;
- ✓ 2. to indoctrinate and establish us as Sons of God;
- ✓ 3. to produce obedience, and finally;
- ✓ 4. to lead to fellowship with God in other believers and at the same time produce a fullness of joy.

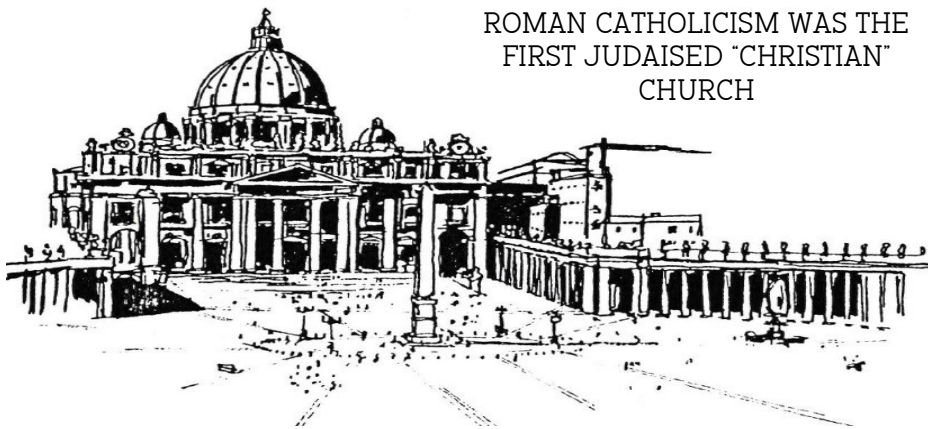
Now, that is **why** we are to preach the gospel to others. Those are the Scriptural purposes for the gospel. It is not some next world salvation plan but rather a ‘this world’ practicality in our relationship to God and others. So the idea that the Great Commission means that we must go out here and save lost souls from hell for some spiritual heavenly realm is simply fallacious.

Without eternal life already in you this message is nothing but foolishness. Jesus said that His sheep would hear His voice. His voice, not yours or mine. In our circles there is the additional mistaken idea that fellowshiping with off-beat churches is a “special calling” some of us have received to ‘wake up’ a sleeping church. But the church they are trying to wake up is **NOT** the ‘church’ of Jesus Christ in the first place. Jesus came to establish a *KINGDOM* not start a church! A kingdom has to do with *jurisdiction* and *government*. We are ‘elected’ or ‘called out’ to rule in God’s government upon the earth - in our personal lives, families and communities.

But Christians have been so busy in their denominations and churches, they have left true government to Babylon, instead of taking the active part they have been called to take. Nor, are we called to fellowship with those who are not believers in the true Jesus of Scripture. The true Jesus is the sovereign King of a presently established kingdom - not some future kingdom after some future seven-year tribulation period after “Christians” are raptured away to heaven. The so-called “Rapture” is false doctrine. It is fantasy. It is not only a different Jesus, it is a different gospel altogether and a different spirit as well. We should obey the simple command of 2 Corinthians 6: 14,

“Be ye NOT unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?”

ROMAN CATHOLICISM WAS THE
FIRST JUDAISED “CHRISTIAN”
CHURCH



The Gospel of the Kingdom is what separates **us** from the Judeo-Christians. Theirs is a gospel of “personal” salvation NOT the gospel of God’s Kingdom rule in Christ Jesus. **Jesus** is what separates us from them because theirs is a Jewish Jesus, who promotes Babylonian brotherhood and peace with anti-Christ, and fellowship with the wicked. And, it is a different **spirit** which separates us, because their spirit is to love evil and hate judgment, perverting His grace as an excuse to live without His law. Don’t be deceived!

One should easily recognize, by this point in our study, that what Judeo-Christian churches and people are intending to do by their so-called obedience to the Great Commission, isn’t what God says the preaching of the gospel is for. You can see that even though they may think they are obeying this commission, they are in fact, disobeying God and His Word by their misunderstanding of what the gospel is really for in the first place.

They are trying to do something that obedience to that commission was never intended to do to start with. But this thing goes much deeper.

THE GREAT COMMISSION TEXTS

Let us now examine the Commission texts themselves. This will get us right into the meat of the Great Commission. There are four sets of texts that cover this Commission:

- ✓ Matthew 28: 16-20;
- ✓ Mark 16: 14-20;
- ✓ Luke 24: 46-51 which needs to be studied along with,
- ✓ Acts 1: 1-8 which was written by the same author, Luke.

We will take each one and see if this Great Commission does indeed apply to us today - either to those who are ministers or to the ordinary Christian who is not an ordained minister or elder. Let's test it out and see, because if we are to obey the Great Commission, then maybe we should have missionaries or we should use God's money to support missionaries of our own in foreign countries like the majority of the organized Christian world. The first one we will consider is Matthew 28:16-20, it reads:

"16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a (mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have I commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world Amen."

So, in verse 16 we need to ask ourselves the question: Who were those eleven disciples? Are they not Christ's Apostles? There are only eleven because Judas, who betrayed the Lord, is dead, having hung himself after betraying the Lord. So, you have only eleven at this time. Notice that Jesus "had appointed them" - these eleven. Verse 17 again refers to the eleven as "they." Notice in verse 18, Jesus "spake unto them." You haven't added one person to the eleven at this point. In verse 19, Jesus tells the eleven "Go ye" - referring to the same eleven disciples.

There has not been one person added to the number. So there can be no doubt that Jesus was speaking specifically to the eleven people in these verses. Now, let's go on and consider Mark 16: 14-20, the second commission text.

"14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven..."

So again we have the same eleven Apostles.

"...as they sat at meat, and upbraided them..."

Who is the "them?" - the Apostles.

"...with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen."

Who are we talking about, "believed not them?" - Remember Mary in the garden after the resurrection of Jesus?

"15 And he said unto them..."

Who? Again the eleven!

"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them..."

Who? The eleven disciples (or Apostles).

"...he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God."

Now notice carefully that the Lord told **THEM** to go into all the world and preach the gospel - not you or I, or anyone else! And in the next verse, He's telling us that they **DID IT**!

"20 And they ..." The Apostles!

"...went forth, and preached..." (PAST tense)

"...everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."

SIGNS FOLLOWING

Also take special note that these signs were to confirm the gospel as **THEY** went forth to fulfil the Great Commission; not that signs would never happen again, but these particular signs were given for a specific purpose which is contained in the instructions specifically given to these Apostles. There are those who use these scriptures to claim such signs today but such cannot be. Wherever God is with His people signs can surely happen. We serve a God of miracles! But let's be careful.

The signs which are specifically connected to the Great Commission which was given to the Apostles are spoken about as future here in Mark, present tense in the Acts of the Apostles, and PAST tense in the Book of Hebrews. These signs (such as the one in Acts 3, where Peter healed the lame man) are examples *of "...the Lord working **WITH THEM**, and confirming the word..."* Let's not pull "signs" out of context and say that God is confirming **OUR** words with signs today, when He is not!

Let's go on and look at Luke. Remember that it is important that we consider Luke 24 with Acts 1, because both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles were written by the same person. In fact, you can see in Acts 1, where Luke actually takes up where he left off in the 24th chapter of Luke, addressing it to the same "Theophilus." Acts 1: 1-8 recounts the scene you just read in Luke 24 and you can recognize a similarity of language. Luke 24, starting in verse 46 we read:

"46 And said unto them..."



SIGNS CONFIRMED THE GOSPEL PREACHED BY THE APOSTLES AS
THEY CARRIED OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION

Now again the question is: Who is the “them?” If you go back up to verse 33 it will tell you:

“...and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.”

So, there were more than just the eleven present at this particular gathering. So taken on face value it might appear that the Commission could have been given to everyone. But, when you consider this with Acts 1: 46-49, it becomes clear, that again, it was ONLY given to the eleven in the crowd and not to everyone else.

“46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoves Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations beginning in Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

We have noted that there were more than just the eleven Apostles in the room when the Lord issued this mandate according to these verses. But, now **turn** to Acts 1. Luke is talking about the very same incident and you will see exactly to whom the Lord was speaking when he said that “ye are witnesses of these things...” Acts 1: 1-8 (last Commission text):

“1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus...”

This is the same way he addressed his gospel in Luke 1: 3.

*“...Of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
2 Unto the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Spirit **had given commandments unto the Apostles whom he had chosen.**”*

Who? The Apostles.

*“3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the **KINGDOM** (Jurisdiction) of God.*

*4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded **them**...”*

Again, the Apostles.

"...that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying. Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?

*7 And he said unto **them**...”*

Who? The same ones identified in verse 2 - the Apostles.

“...It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

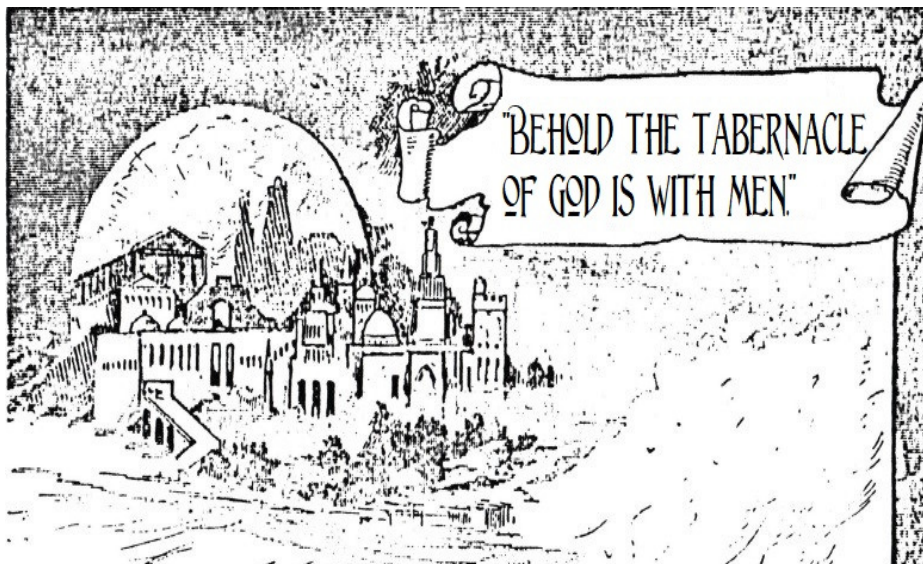
8 But ye...” The Apostles.

*“...shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon **you:** and **ye...**”* The Apostles.

*“...shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and **in** Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*

One can see by this careful comparative analysis of all these texts that this Great Commission was delivered specifically to the Apostles whom Jesus had personally chosen for that purpose. They were to be the foundation with Christ for the Government or Kingdom of God on the earth! To believe that the Great Commission was given to everybody, one must read their assumption and presumptions into the texts.

At this point, let's carefully consider the very important point of who these men were that the Commission was given to. Again and again the Holy Spirit has made it clear in Scripture that Jesus did not give this Commission to the rank and file of his followers, or to future generations of Christians. He specifically gave it to His eleven Apostles. Let's look at a verse which directly connects being an Apostle with going into all the world and preaching the gospel. Romans 1:5. Paul is speaking and he says:



GOD'S KINGDOM - HEAVEN - IS ON THE EARTH

“By whom we have received grace and Apostleship...”

Now, notice he is going to tell you what this Apostleship was for. You and I have not received this Apostleship; Paul did. What is it for?

“...for OBEDIENCE to the faith among all nations, for his Name.”

Does that not confirm ***again*** that the mandate to go and preach the Gospel to all nations was given to Christ’s Apostles? We are to OBEY the faith. What faith? The Faith we learned of by hearing the gospel preached. Faith in our Great Lawgiver and His Christ. Because we are His we are to come to an understanding (through the preaching of the gospel) of our responsibilities in obeying the commandments of God’s Kingdom rule.

So, converting the kindred nations was specifically a function of Apostleship. Now, just what went into being an Apostle? And can it be applied to people living today? I know there are people who claim to be Apostles in the church today or they claim to be holding an “office” of an Apostle just like the Apostles chosen by Jesus when he was on earth. But, there are three things which made the Apostles of Jesus Christ different from you and I.

AN APOSTLE

Number one, they were specially chosen witnesses of Jesus Christ. Not just a witness that goes out and talks about something but a witness who actually saw the Lord Jesus Christ *In the flesh* with their own two eyes; heard him with their own ears; touched him with their own two hands; actually saw him after they knew he had been put to death and had died a horrible death on the cross! That’s a FIRST-HAND witness. You and I cannot make such a claim. A person who *was there* and saw it – not hear-say. They were specifically chosen witnesses by Jesus Christ himself. Now notice when Jesus chose them in Mark 3: 13-14.

“And he goeth up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.”

The Lord chose twelve men to be in his company in an intimate way during his public ministry so they could be witnesses of it. If you read on in verses 15 through 19 you will find the names of these particular men. Then compare that with Luke 6: 13 where it says:

“And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles.”

In John 15: 27 the Lord is in the upper room. It is after the Lord's Supper and the washing of the disciple's feet. Now, ask yourself the question: With whom did the Lord observe the Passover - the Lord's Supper, or the washing of feet? Was it with all of his followers? No! It was only with his Apostles. That upper room discourse was given to his specially selected Apostles, and that is an important point to remember when you study this discourse. Because not everything that is in that discourse belongs to you and I, there is a lot which applies **ONLY** to those to whom it was spoken! Notice what he says to them - again the eleven, Judas had already left:

*“And ye also shall bear witness (WHY?) **BECAUSE** ye have been with me from the beginning.”*

At the beginning of his ministry he chose twelve men and now as his 'ministry comes to an end, he says, “You have been with me from the beginning” and “you are going to be my witnesses.” Make no mistake about it. They could be witnesses to Jesus in a way that nobody else could. Because they were actually there and saw, and heard and touched and handled; they had been with him from the beginning for that very reason. Notice in Acts 1, already quoted above:

“Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea...”

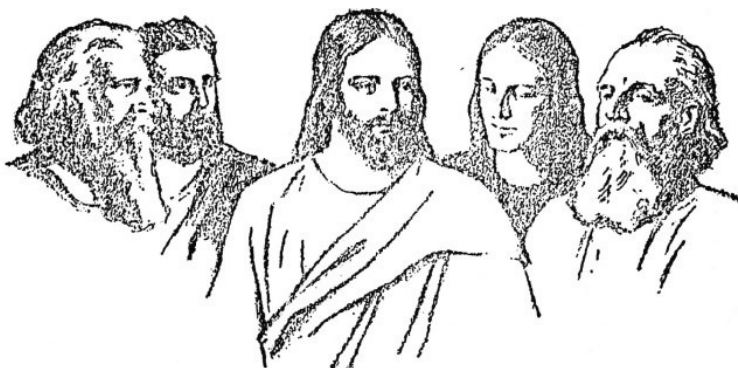
Then, at that time, right after his ascension and resurrection. We certainly could not say that **WE** are his witnesses in “Jerusalem and in all Judea,” but they could and were. Acts 10: 40-41 says:

*“Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; **NOT TO ALL THE PEOPLE**, but unto witnesses **CHOSEN** before of God, even to*

us (the Apostles - specially chosen witnesses), who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”

Then again in Acts 13: 31 we read that Jesus was:

“...seen many days of THEM WHICH CAME UP WITH HIM from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.”



JESUS CHOSE SPECIFIC MEN TO BE HIS FIRST-HAND WITNESSES TO ISRAEL

Now, who were the people who had been with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem? Answer: the 12 Apostles. Remember eleven Apostles were Galileans, Judas was a Judean (or “Jew” in KJB). Remember also, when they preached on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2: 7, those who heard said, “...are not ALL these which speak Galileans?” Remember what the angel said to them after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into the heavens, they were standing there looking up, and the “...two MEN stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee.” (Acts 1: 10-11). Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee and he chose twelve men to be with him from that time all the way to Jerusalem where his earthly ministry was terminated at the cross. These then, are his witnesses to the people after his death and resurrection. So, the first thing we can say about “His” Apostles is that they were specially chosen witnesses who could testify first-hand as to what they had seen and heard and felt while in the physical company of the Lord Jesus Christ, in an intimate and personal way. You and I, nor anyone else since the Apostles can make such a claim.

“Witness”

When you go through the Acts of the Apostles the word “witness” or forms of the word “witness” is used 21 times. 13 of those times – THIRTEEN - (over half of the 21 times) the word witness refers specifically to the Apostles and their preaching of Jesus, the Christ.

- ✓ There is one time when it refers to the false witnesses against Stephen;

- ✓ Another time it refers to the tabernacle of witnesses in the wilderness;

- ✓ Another time when it refers to the witness of those who stoned Stephen;

- ✓ One time it refers to the witness of the Old Testament prophets;

- ✓ Two times it refers to the witness that God gave, like when he gave the spirit to the household of Cornelius, and as when he sends rain to fill our hearts with food and gladness and provided a witness unto Himself;

- ✓ One time it refers to the high priest being able to bear witness to the fact that Paul had letters of authority to go to Damascus;

- ✓ And one other time it refers to the holy spirit bearing witness in every city saying that bonds and afflictions abode the Apostle Paul.

Now, that will show you how the word “witness” is used in Acts; **NOT ONCE** does it ever refer to people going out in the streets and knocking on doors and passing out tracts; telling people about Jesus! I’m sorry but it just isn’t there. The major number of times it is speaking about the men that were personally chosen to be first-hand witnesses of Christ and that was His twelve Apostles. Now, the word “Apostle” merely means, “someone sent” but here we are speaking about Jesus’ Apostles - not just any “Apostle.” Again, one needs to be specific when using the word Apostle, just like when we use the word “gospel”. It is incomplete unless you know who did the sending. There are many “Apostles” today, but they are not Jesus Christ’s Apostles! Notice, in 1 John 1: 1-2, John is talking and says,

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life.”

Now, can you say that that happened to you? Certainly not! You've never seen Jesus Christ in the flesh; you've never heard Him with your own ears; you've never handled Him with your hands! "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness." Now, who did see Christ and hear Christ and handle Christ and therefore was confident to bear true witness by virtue of that fact? The Apostles whom He had chosen. John is writing here and he's telling about why it is that **THEY** are witnesses. Luke refers to **THEM** in Luke 1: 1-2 as **eyewitnesses**:

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us. Even as they delivered them unto us, which FROM THE BEGINNING WERE EYEWITNESSES, and MINISTERS of the Word."

The first thing one can establish about the Apostles, which makes them unique is the fact that they were witnesses specially chosen and selected by the Lord Jesus Christ while he was on the earth physically. They were with Him, they saw Him, they heard Him, they handled Him and they were with Him **from the beginning from Galilee all the way to Jerusalem**.

Secondly, and this is particularly important to notice, especially for later study, is the fact that the Apostles were ministers - elders. In other words, they were preachers of the Gospel (Evangelists) as qualified ordained pastors of the New Testament (assembly-rulers) government. In 2 Timothy 1: 11, where Paul is speaking about himself, he says,

"Whereunto I am appointed a PREACHER, and an APOSTLE, and a TEACHER..."

Paul was an Apostle, but he was also a preacher and a teacher; just like Ben Williams is a preacher and teacher today. In 1 Peter 5: 1 the Apostle Peter says,

"The elders which are among you I exhort, WHO AM ALSO AN ELDER..."

Then the Apostle John writes in his second Epistle in verse 1,

“THE ELDER unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth...”

Now, the point is this: The Apostles were elders (i.e., pastors and teachers, evangelists like we have today) but as APOSTLES they were a whole lot more. One thing we have already pointed out is that they were specially chosen witnesses who could witness in a way Ben Williams cannot witness. But then, they were special elders and they had special qualifications and special duties that belonged to them and that DO NOT belong to ordinary elders living today. Now, it may appear that we are getting away from our study of the Great Commission, but we are not, because it is VITAL that we establish the special nature of the APOSTOLIC Ministry.

Remember, that the point we are trying to see is that the commission was given to the Apostles, and NOT everybody is an Apostle. Not everybody has the responsibility or the ministry of an Apostle. That is why this particular segment of our study is so important. So please bear with me. We must take scripture and compare verse with verse and squeeze out everything that we can see from each verse in order to come to a true and accurate picture and understanding of just what is being said.

HOW JESUS' APOSTLES ARE SPECIAL

Let's look at four things which show that the Apostles of Jesus Christ were SPECIAL Elders with SPECIAL qualifications and SPECIAL duties which don't belong to ordinary ministers who have come along since the Apostolic age:

✓ **First** the Apostles had special qualifications. They had special qualifications which no man living today can meet. Therefore, it does not matter that there are those going around today saying they are Apostles. I'm going to tell you just like the Lord told that Church in Ephesus in Revelation 2: 2, when He said “...*thou hast tried them which SAY they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*” Let's try these guys today that say they are Apostles, by the qualifications found in the Word of God. Turn to Acts 1, beginning in verse 21. What you have here is

Judas has died and now they are going to replace him with another man to fill the office and here are the qualifications:

“Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John...”

So, first he had to have been with the Lord from the beginning.

“...unto the same day that he was taken up from us.”

They had to go from the beginning all the way to the Resurrection of the Lord.

*“...must one be **ordained** to be a witness WITH US...”*

With whom? With the Apostles!

“...of His resurrection.”

And then they prayed for the Lord to show which one he had chosen, and the Lord showed them and they chose Matthias:

“26...and he was numbered (says the holy spirit) with the eleven Apostles.”

He, Matthias then became an Apostle. Now many people saw Christ besides the Apostles. So there's even more to being an Apostle than just seeing Jesus Christ in the flesh and just seeing Him risen from the dead, because there were many, other than the Apostles that saw that. And, what is that other special ingredient which qualifies a man to be considered for selection? You had to be specially chosen of God. That's the special added Ingredient.

Remember, he called to himself whom he would and he ordained them. And what did they do here in Acts? They asked Him to show them who He had chosen! How did they do it? They used lots, which is scripturally correct. Proverbs 16: 33,

“The lot is cast in the Lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.”

“The lot causeth contentions to cease...” (Proverbs 18: 18)

So, the legitimate method for determining the mind of the Lord according to Old Testament economy was the use of the lot which these men were familiar with and justified in doing. So, number one, these men had special qualifications. Notice that he must have been with Christ from the beginning from the baptism of John until the day Jesus was ascended after his resurrection. Now the question may arise: Paul was an Apostle, wasn't he? And he wasn't with Jesus like the others, was he? No. He wasn't with Jesus any of that time, BUT one thing that did happen to him that happened to all the other Apostles - he saw the Lord Jesus Christ risen from the dead. Listen to him as he says in 1 Corinthians 9: 1,

“Am I not an Apostle? Am I not free? Have I NOT SEEN JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD?”

You see, one necessary, indispensable qualification to being an Apostle, was that you must have seen the risen Christ, and Paul saw Him. Because Christ appeared to him on the Damascus road and the Lord had said,



“For THIS PURPOSE I have appeared to thee to make thee A WITNESS of the things which thou has seen and heard.”

And Paul includes himself in the group of Apostles. Notice what he says in verse five:

“Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other Apostles...”

You see, he includes himself with the others. Then notice what he says about himself in 1 Corinthians 15: 7, talking about the risen Christ,

“After that, he was seen of James; then of all the Apostles, AND LAST OF ALL HE WAS SEEN OF ME ALSO, AS OF ONE BORN OUT OF DUE TIME.”

You see, Paul had just gotten in under the rope, as it were, to be an Apostle. He was the last one to get a glimpse, BUT he got a glimpse, and thus he qualified to be one of Jesus’ Apostles. So while Paul had not been with Christ all during His public ministry, he still qualified to be an Apostle because Jesus chose to appear to him. Noting this, Paul makes the comment, *“as one born out of due time”*. The Lord made a special revelation to Paul, just to qualify him. So he says, *“...I am the least of the Apostles...”* in verse 9, BUT I AM ONE OF THEM. Verse 10,

“...that am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all...”

So, the Apostles are special elders because they have special qualifications and they must have seen the risen Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody since the Apostle Paul has seen the risen Christ!

✓ The **second** thing that is special about the Apostles is found in Ephesians 2: 19-20:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.”

Notice: “fellow-CITIZENS!” Citizens of what? The household of God! Now, what is *“the household of God”*? It is the *“called out ones”* of Israel, commonly referred to as Christ’s body, or His Ecclesia. Again, this refers to God’s KINGDOM government (His jurisdiction) described in 1 Timothy 3: 15,

“...the house of God, which is the church (Ecclesia - the elect) of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”

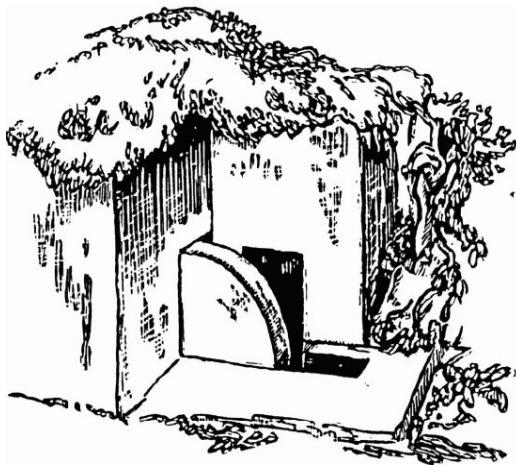
So these Ephesians are the assembly of called out ones in Ephesus. They were “elected by God to do His Kingdom/ Jurisdiction work in Ephesus.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE KINGDOM

“And are built upon the FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” (Ephesians 2: 20)

The Apostles were the foundation for the Kingdom of God on earth as established by Jesus Christ himself. They assisted with the Lord in laying the framework, the ministry, the ordinances, and the government for the New Testament community of Saints to practice and to teach and believe through the centuries which were to follow. They are the foundation of God’s government on earth. Now, elders today or since the Apostles cannot claim to be the foundation of God’s government with Christ!

They weren’t around when the Kingdom was proclaimed and established by Jesus and His Apostles. They are all way too late to be part of the foundation; it was laid with the ministry of Christ and His Apostles. And, we are building on the foundation that they laid and no other foundation can be laid than that which they laid, with Jesus, the Christ, as Lord, High Priest and King. So, this is a second thing which makes THEM very special from other men.



THE APOSTLES WITNESSED THE
RESURRECTED JESUS FIRST HAND.
THEY SAW HIM AND TOUCHED HIM
PERSONALLY

✓ The **third** thing is that they (Christ's Apostles) occupy a particular position of judgment. Notice in Matthew 19: 27-28 where the Lord is speaking to His Apostles:

"Then answered Peter and said unto him. Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you. That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Now, there is a lot of doctrine in these verses and it is most unfortunate that our Judeo-Christian churches make these all future. With just a casual eye, one can know that we are presently in the regeneration and therefore these verses are presently active and NOT future. But, suffice it to say that these twelve Apostles are placed in a position of judgment over the commonwealth/government of Israel. This is also referred to in Revelation 21: 12-14, for those who wish to study further. But what does it mean to JUDGE in Israel? Let's read Deuteronomy 17: 8-13,

"8 If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose;

9 And thou shalt come unto the priests and Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:

10 And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place with the Lord shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

11 According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left.

12 And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not harken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. 13 And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously."

Now from these verses, what is the one outstanding thing you notice about the sentence of a God-ordained judge of Israel? The one outstanding feature is that when he passes judgment, IT IS FINAL! And it requires absolute obedience - unquestionably. Alright, the Lord tells his Apostles, I'm going to make you judges; I'm going to put you on thrones and make you judges in Israel. What do you think that means? I believe it means that their judgments are going to be final, authoritative, and binding, and to resist those judgments is to act presumptuously and in rebellion against God and His instituted authority. That's not talking about just any Christian elder of today or some pastor, we are talking about the Apostles. If anyone sets up anything in contradiction to what they set up, they are acting presumptuously. We have no authority that in any way extends beyond theirs. Now notice how this relates to the Apostles of Our Lord. Notice how final their judgment is. The Apostle Paul writes,

"...brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught whether by word, or our epistle." (2 Thessalonians 2: 15)

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." (2 Thessalonians 3: 14)

Paul hinges the discipline of the elect upon his authority to give judgment as an Apostle of Jesus Christ. And the Apostle John does likewise.

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (1 John 4: 6)

So authoritative and final is the judgment of an Apostle of Jesus Christ that if anybody does not hear and abide to what that Apostle says, then that determines for us the fact that that person is working in the spirit of error. Whereas, if what he says and does aligns with the Apostles, then he's acting in the spirit of truth, so that they (the Apostles) become for us, a final authoritative standard of judgment. Now that is right NOW, not some time off in the future. So this is another sense in which the Apostle were special elders.

Let's sum up thus far: the Apostles are special elders because 1) they were specially chosen witnesses; 2) they have special qualifications; 3) they are the foundations of the Kingdom/ Jurisdiction of God; and 4) they have a position of Judgment. But there is still one more thing which sets them apart from others.

✓ **Fourth.** They did something which you and I had better not try to do! They **WROTE** Scripture. John 15: 20. Jesus says to the Apostles during the Upper Room Discourse (and remember this Discourse was given to them - the Apostles):

“Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings (the sayings of Jesus, the Christ) they will keep YOURS (the sayings of the Apostles) also.”

Jesus was telling them, “...just as surely as they fulfil my word they will fulfil yours.” You see the Apostles were going to have a **WORD** tool - a word that would have a predictive element in it; that would be guaranteed a fulfilment. They would speak by Divine inspiration. Look at verse 27, he says to the Apostles, “...ye also shall bear witness...” and indeed they do! Every time you pick up and read their writings they are bearing witness to you of what they saw and heard. In John 17 Jesus is praying for the Apostles in the first verses. He doesn't get to praying for anybody else specifically, until he gets down to verse 20, but notice in verse 18 he says in praying for his Apostles:

“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth Neither pray I for these alone...”

See, He's not going to pray **JUST** for His Apostles, He's going to pray for somebody else, Notice:

*“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me **THROUGH THEIR WORD.**”*

Now, ask yourself this question:

By what means did you come to believe on Jesus Christ? How did you even know about Jesus Christ? Was it not through **THEIR WORD!** You've read it. You've heard it preached. You believed on Christ through their word. You see, they were the ones specifically commissioned to write Scripture. Now, when Jesus was transfigured on the mount there were three men with him. We are told that Peter, James and John were there. What were they? Apostles. One of these Apostles, Peter, said this in 2 Peter 1: 19, "**WE...**" - We who? We Apostles "*...have a more sure word of prophecy.*"

Now, someone will remind me that Luke and Mark were not considered Apostles. And I know that they wrote Scripture, **BUT** I'll tell you something: They were under the immediate influence of the Apostles! And Luke plainly shows you right there in Luke 1: 14 that what he wrote **EXACTLY** paralleled what "*THEY delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the WORD;*" what they were teaching and preaching. So that everything he wrote was exactly tantamount to what an Apostle would write. So, either they penned it themselves or they gave it to be written. You see even Paul's epistles were dictated. But they came from him. They were the ones to give the Scriptures.

As an Apostle, John describes himself as one who has seen and handled and looked upon the Lord Jesus Christ "*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you,*" and then he says in 1 John 1: 4, "*These things write we...*" - We who? We, who were witnesses, we, who saw it, "*...write we unto you that your joy may be full.*" So the Apostles were also those particularly commissioned to write Scripture.



THE APOSTLES WERE COMMISSIONED TO WRITE
SCRIPTURE SO WE COULD KNOW OF CHRIST

[illegible]

MAP PREPARED BY THE REV. FREDK. ASTON,
H. H. PAINE & "OXONIAN" (REV. W. M. H. MILNER, M.A.)
IN 1900. REV.

ISAIAH 24:5 "ISLES OF THE WEST."
II SAM. 7:10 "THE APPOINTED PLACE."
DAN. 2:34 "THE STONECUT OUT WITHOUT
HOSEA 2:14 "THE WILDERNESS"

(HOSEA IX: 17)
**ISRAEL'S
WANDERING**

From the foregoing you should be able to see that the Commission was given primarily to the eleven Apostles. Then, later on, Paul and Matthias were added and they are merged into the Apostolic ministry which was for the OBEDIENCE OF FAITH for all nations. So, the commission was given specifically to Christ's Apostles. We have also seen how they were special elders, special witnesses, and had special qualifications and duties.

Now, there is another point which needs to be established in our minds which is extremely important to the *obedient Christian*. And that is that scripture repeatedly forbids anyone to assume to himself the obligations of an office which is not properly his. The point is important for this reason: If we can show, and I believe we can, and have, that the Great Commission was primarily the work of the Christ's Apostles, then we are going to incur Divine judgment if we try to assume to ourselves a job that was given to them. God doesn't take that very lightly. When you assume obligations for something which He never appointed to you in the first place, you are asking for trouble. Let's consider some examples. Remember the Ark of the Covenant? It was being brought back to Jerusalem by King David. What did he do? He had the Ark of the Covenant loaded up on an oxen cart and pulled back into Jerusalem by oxen. And as they were going along, one of the oxen stumbled and the Ark of the Covenant started to fall off and a man named Uzzah "...put forth his hand to hold the ark..." so it wouldn't fall to the ground. And when he did that, "...the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah and he smote him..." - He killed him!

Now, I ask you a question: Why did God visit judgment upon that man for doing that? What was wrong? Why would God do that? What was the missing ingredient? Well, the missing ingredient was that he was not called to do what he tried to do. He wasn't a Levite! David had no business moving that Ark on a cart pulled by oxen, because God had specified in Deuteronomy 10: 8 explicitly how the Ark was to be moved, when he said,

"At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi to BEAR the ark of the covenant of the Lord to stand before the Lord to minister unto him."

When the Lord specifies for a certain person, or group of persons to do a certain thing, then He means for them to do it and nobody else. And anybody else that takes that upon himself is being presumptuous and will incur His judgment. And even David came to realize that, because after that incident, first in 1 Chronicles 13: 12 we are told, “*And David was afraid of God that day...*” and later in 15: 2, he said, “*None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites.*” He got the message. Of course poor Uzzah was dead!

Then there’s good king Amaziah, king of Judah, in 2 Kings 15. He was a good king but he decided that he wanted to do what a priest was supposed to do, so he takes the incense and goes into the house of the Lord to offer incense and what happens? The Lord strikes him with leprosy and he has to go dwell in a several house (segregated place) as a leper until the day of his death. What was wrong? Why did God deal this way with good king Amaziah? Because the King knew that the only persons God ever specified to do that was the priests! Not the king, but the priests. Amaziah was usurping to himself the obligations of a job that God had never assigned to him as king.

Then, of course, there’s King Saul. King Saul is facing a battle and he wants to inquire of God and he needs to make a sacrifice at the time of the inquiry. So, he says, “I forced myself and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.” And the prophet Samuel says to him on behalf of God, “God is going to take away the kingdom from you,” because of that. Now, why did God do that? Because that was not Saul’s job. That was the priest’s responsibility. And Saul was relegating to himself a job that was not properly his.

This point carries right over into the New Testament where we are warned in Jude 11 against “*the gainsaying of Core.*” Now, Core was a Levite according to Numbers 16. He was a Levite that wanted to be a priest. You see, not all Levites were priests; all priests were Levites, but not all Levites were priests. The priests came from a certain family in the tribe of Levi. It was the heritage of Aaron - the family of Aaron. But Core wanted the job of the priesthood, he said to Moses concerning himself and Aaron “you’re taking too much on yourself.”

And remember what happened? God opened the earth and did a new thing, the earth swallowed him and the men with him alive right on the spot! Why? Because they wanted to assume to themselves the obligations and privileges of a job that God did not call them to do. God did not specify the job to them. And you and I are warned in the New Testament against just such “gainsayings!” - Taking upon ourselves something that God never told us or intended for us to do. This is not a light matter.

Imagine the gall of a man in this 20th century who would claim to be one of Christ’s specially chosen Apostles! Can you imagine what that man is going to have to face when God deals with him in the severity of His judgment for doing that? The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11: 1-2,

*“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ, keep the ordinances, **AS I DELIVERED THEM TO YOU.**”*

Also, in 2 Thessalonians 3: 6 Paul tells us, that if anyone walk, “...disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us...” that you are to keep no company with that individual. In fact, he says:

*“Now we **COMMAND** you... that ye withdraw yourselves from...”* that brother.

*“Those things, which ye have both learned and received and heard, and seen in me, **DO**: and the God of peace shall be with you.”* (Philippians 4:9)

So, we are confined to practice strictly, as it is delivered to us, and we are not to relegate to ourselves things that were not given to us. We are to stay right within the pattern as God gave it through his Apostles in Scripture. And, we are sternly warned in Colossians 2: 8 against the “traditions and commandments of men” and again in Titus 1: 14, Paul warns Titus for us against the same commandments and ideas of men. A disciple is under discipline. Christ’s disciples are under His discipline; that is where the word disciple comes from.

When it comes to the area of trying to fulfil the Great Commission, most of us could point to families which have suffered complete breakup because some misguided person placed “witnessing” or being a “missionary” above their duty to their family. Instead of obeying God and taking care of their family, they have worked a misguided “ministry” of going out to “win souls for Christ,” something they were not supposed to do in the first place. Thus, they were (and are) in disobedience **NOT** obedience to the Faith once delivered by Scripture. They bring the very judgment which is visited upon them by God-the destruction of their home! Listen to these words in Ezekiel 13,

“17 Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their OWN heart: and prophesy thou against them.”

Here Ezekiel is about to prophesy against someone, in this case “women-daughters” or it could be men who preach like women.

“18 And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls. Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you?

19 And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your LYING to my people that hear your lies?”

What is he saying? I believe he is saying: Woe to the feminine preachers who make the people comfortable preaching “peace.” While our nation is facing perhaps the greatest and most determined enemy that we have ever faced these false preachers come along and preach peace and safety. Peace, peace when there is no peace! They say: Oh, everything is wonderful. Isn’t it great to be a Christian? Something good is going to happen to you! And, then they go on to talk about the rapture and all that; to make you comfortable and believe that no matter what comes you don’t have to worry, you can be at peace because you’ll be taken off to heaven if you die before the Lord comes back. They make you comfortable by sewing pillows on your elbows.

He also uses the expression “...make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls...” which can and has been translated as “covers.” He goes on, “Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you?” Which seems a bit sarcastic. Next to the “peace” doctrine the next greatest theme of most Judeo-Christian churches is: Let’s go soul winning; let’s go out and save some souls for Jesus; let’s go hunt for some unsaved souls and convert them so they can go to heaven! And God asks them “Will YOU hunt the souls of my people, will YOU save the souls alive that come unto you.” I think in effect God is saying: You can’t save a single soul alive; their lives are in MY (God’s) hands! And yet, many of these (Baptist churches especially), by implication and by their teaching, teach that the ones THEY reach and get to make a confession, are going to be alive, but the ones they don’t reach or don’t get to make a confession, those are going to die. And God says to them “will YOU do that?” The implication is YOU have absolutely NO power to do anything like that!



JESUS DID NOT COME TO ESTABLISH A CHURCH BUT TO
ANNOUNCE THE KINGDOM OR JURISDICTION OF GOD ON EARTH

Remember what God's Word says about being saved?

"3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

*4 According as **HE HATH CHOSEN** us in Him **BEFORE** the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

*5 Having **PREDESTINATED** us unto the adoption of children of Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of **HIS WILL** (NOT OURS!)."* Ephesians 1: 3-5

Obviously, our salvation, our being kept alive in God, is a Gift of God through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2: 8)! Some of these churches even keep a running account of all the "souls" THEY have saved; you can see it up on their bulletin boards. 'WE saved so many souls last week; so many last month; so many last year,' BUT they didn't save one! Souls were saved by Jesus Christ and His Blood; by His Will and nobody else's!!

Continuing in Ezekiel 13,

"18 ...will YE save the souls alive that come unto you?

19 And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread..."

Or, in other words: Will you preach for mere money? To do what?

"...to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your LYING to my people that hear your lies?"

They turn God's Word right around! By implication and teaching and the plain doctrine of the Bible, Jesus Christ will resurrect his chosen people from the dead and they will live; but the churches tell us: Oh, they're all going to die and go to hell except for those that WE can get to and save! Do you see what God is saying here? He's rebuking the churches and preacher pimps for lying divination which involves the slaying of the souls that should live and the keeping alive of the ones God says should die! In fact, whenever these churches get some Jew, and convert him, they

have a celebration. And, they say they ‘saved him alive,’ and often times they put him in the pulpit and have him preaching and teaching our people in a matter of days.

Let’s read on in Ezekiel 13: 22 where these false, lying preachers are rebuked by God because they “...*strengthened the hands of the wicked, that they should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.*” Is this not exactly what is happening today by telling people that all they have to do is “come to Jesus and be saved and then telling them “you’re under grace and not law.” You don’t have to obey God’s law but you will live anyway! All of this springs from the false doctrine of salvation and the false belief about the Great Commission, which is rooted in paganism and not Scripture. So, we have shown that the commission commonly called the Great Commission (a phrase not found in Scripture) was given primarily to the Apostles. Now let us consider number **four**: the scope of the work that the Lord outlined to be done in this Commission to his Apostles.

THE SCOPE OF THE WORK IN THE COMMISSION

Basically, there are three main things that the Lord said to do in this commission:

- ✓ 1. Preach the gospel (indoctrinate and build up the saints);
- ✓ 2. Baptize; and
- ✓ 3. Teach them to observe all the things which He has commanded.

In other words, teach obedience.

What was the scope? The SCOPE was to go into “*all nations and preach to every creature.*” Let’s consider that term: “*all nations.*” What was the Lord doing when he said “*teach all nations?*” Number one, he was granting a permission. He was giving His Apostles permission to do something they did not have permission to do before then. And that was to take the message of the good news of the Kingdom/jurisdiction of God outside the boundaries of the Judean area to the Israelites in the other nations, commonly mislabelled the “Gentiles.” In the Scriptures, in most cases, the word “Gentiles” should have been translated as “nations.” The word “Gentile” has come to mean “non-Jew” which is NOT the meaning found in Scripture. Gentiles in the Bible means Israelites found in the

nations - those scattered among the nations; the “lost sheep” in the nations other than Jerusalem or Judea. Let’s look at only one of many scriptures which conveys this permission, not before granted to the Apostles. Luke 12: 30, listen to the Lord speaking,

“For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.”

He’s teaching us not to be distraught over physical needs. But notice, in talking about the same identical thing in Matthew 6: 32:

“For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.”

Notice, that in Luke they are called “nations” but here in Matthew they are called “Gentiles” - they are one and the same! In Deuteronomy 32: 43 there is a prophecy given and the word used is “nations.” When Paul quotes that prophecy in Romans 15: 10 the English word “Gentiles” is used. The nations are the Gentiles; the Gentiles are the nations. And both are reference to Israelites, i.e., Christ’s sheep - the “lost” or “scattered” sheep of the House of Israel. It is important to keep in mind the context of the Bible as a whole. It is about Israel, its beginnings, its growth, its purposes and its future in Christ. Israel is God’s plan of Salvation (or plan of Freedom) for the whole world - every race, BUT it begins with Israel.

So when the Lord was telling His Apostles that they should teach all nations he was saying you can NOW go to the nations (mistranslated as “gentiles” in most Bibles - those Israelites, or “lost” sheep in the nations of the known world, beyond the boundaries of this Jerusalem area and Galilee. You see, prior to the giving of this Great Commission, the revelation and proclamation of God’s truth was restricted to one nation - the kingdom of Judah (in the Judean geographical area). Prophecy foretold that the messiah would come through Judah; and that old Jerusalem would reject Him and be destroyed in the “Great Tribulation,” which came in 70 A.D. Paul in Romans 3,

“1 What advantage then hath the Judean? Or what profit is there of circumcision?”

Circumcision was that outward rite still observed by the Judean Israelite people at the time of Christ.

“2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.”

Now the oracles of God, as you probably know, were His written Words; His Revelation through the law and the Prophets. The true Judeans (or Judahites) were Israelites who were in the desert when God gave Moses His Law and Commandments. In Romans 9: 4, Paul speaks of the Israelites according to the flesh and he said,

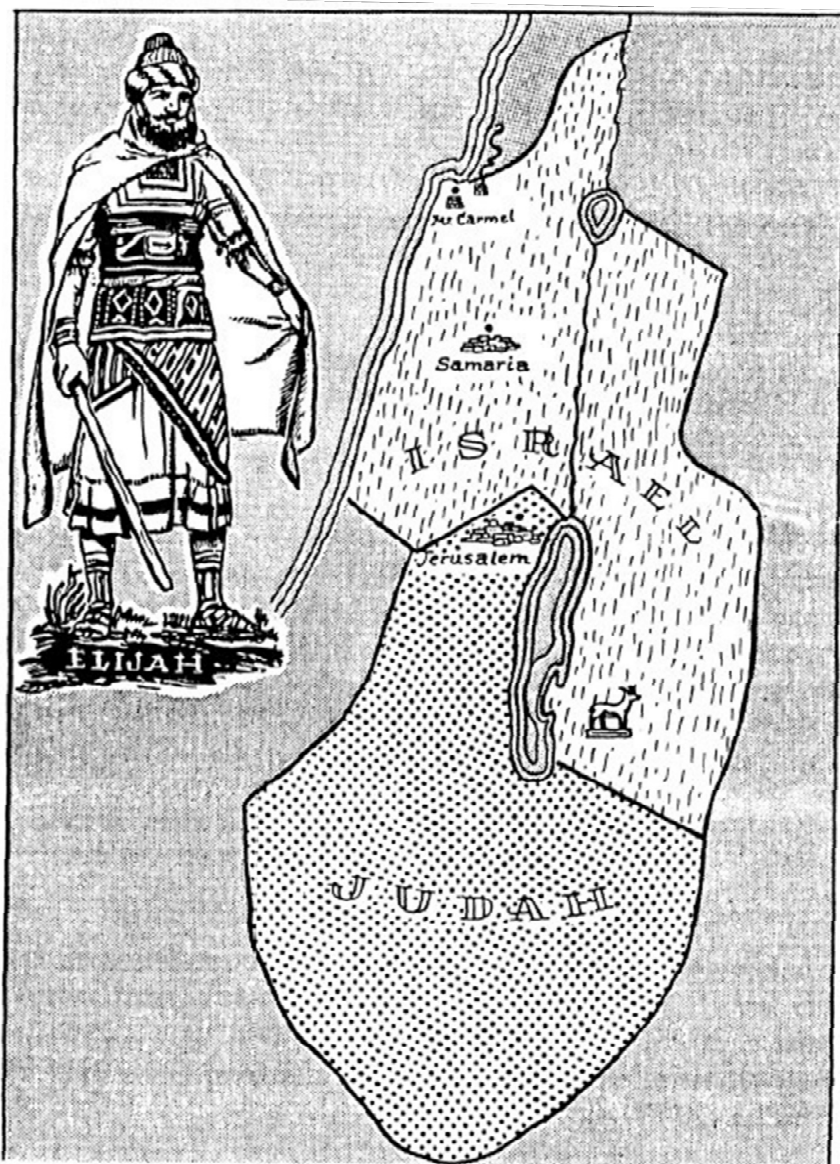
“...to them pertaineth the...giving of the law...”

In Psalm 147: 19-20 it states,

“He sheweth his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with ANY nation; and as for his judgments, they (other nations) have not known them...”

Prior to the Great Commission the only people the Lord showed his word to was the House of Israel. And, the Northern kingdom of Israel had been divorced and scattered and were “lost” in the nations - years before the time of Jesus, the Christ. Only the kingdom of Judah remained, the southern part of the House of Israel, which had just come out of the Babylonian captivity. A great change came with this “Great” Commission, which was the fulfilment of many prophecies for the regathering of scattered Israel from the nations of the world.

The Great Commission granted a permission which hitherto had not been given. It was lifting a restriction. When the “lost sheep” of Israel who were scattered in other nations heard the voice of the Lord by the witness of the Apostles they became Christian and in so doing Christianised a pagan world. These men, the Apostles, turned the world upside down. Christendom, or Christian rule, resulted for the western world. Keep in mind the first commission which the Lord gave his Apostles. As you know the Great Commission was not the first time that the Lord sent them forth to preach. He had sent them before. In Matthew 10 we read:



THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL HAD BEEN DIVIDED INTO THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL AND THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH. ONLY JUDAH EXISTED DURING THE TIME OF CHRIST. THE NORTHERN KINGDOM HAD BEEN DISBURSED INTO THE NATIONS

“5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go NOT into the way of the nations, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

In other words, he was saying: Don't go beyond the Judah kingdom at this time; I have preached here in Galilee, now you go to the other lost sheep which are in the other parts of the Judean area. Thus, they were restricted from going beyond the Palestine area at this time. But with the great commission, after the resurrection, that restriction was lifted and they were now told to go into ALL THE NATIONS. So the Great Commission was first granting permission, and secondly, it gave an express order:

“...go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Now here is the scope of the commission - the mandate given is to go into all nations, or as expressed in Mark *“...go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”* Then, in Acts 1: 8: *“Be my witnesses beginning at Jerusalem and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*

To whom was the Lord speaking? The Apostles. To them he gave the command and scope of the Commission. Now, the Apostles are not around today are they? So, the question that remains to be answered is this: Inasmuch as the Lord told the Apostles to go into all the nations, all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, to the uttermost part of the earth... DID THEY DO IT or DIDN'T THEY?!!

DID THE APOSTLES OBEY CHRIST'S COMMISSION?

You may want to mark these verses in your Bible. I'd like to show you that every one of the expressions (used in the Great Commission texts) is used elsewhere and shows that what the Lord commanded in that Commission WAS DONE!

First: *“all nations.”* Turn to Romans 16: 26. The Apostle Paul says,

*“But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to **ALL NATIONS** for the **OBEDIENCE** of faith.”*

He didn't say “it will be made known,” he said it “**IS**” made known to ALL NATIONS! The Lord said to make it known to all nations, and here Paul says it's done!

What about “***all of the world?***” Let's cover that one. In case somebody thinks that “all nations” doesn't cover it. Turn to Colossians 1: 6. Here Paul is talking about the gospel, “**WHICH IS COME.**” Present perfect tense. That means it's already happened. This is action that is completed in the past; the effects of which are being felt in the present. One of the effects: the converted Colossians. What was the past action? The fact that the gospel “**IS COME unto you, AS IT IS IN ALL THE WORLD...**” Jesus said, “*GO into all the world,*” and Paul again says, It's accomplished, It's DONE!!

Well now, what about “***every creature?***” Read verse 23: “*If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which **WAS** preached to **EVERY CREATURE** which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*”

So, the Lord said “GO and preach to every creature” and Paul tells us: Task accomplished! It's DONE! A man who was qualified to do it, commissioned to do it, says It's DONE. And someone comes along 2,000 years later and says, No! We still have to do it. Who is the liar? Paul or all the little modern day Judeo-Christian false prophets and preachers?

Now, let's take the last one “***the uttermost part of the earth.***”

Turn to Romans 10. Again the Apostle Paul is talking about the gospel. He says in verse 16,

“16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith. Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

*18 But I say, Have they not heard? YES verily, their sound WENT INTO ALL THE EARTH, and their words **UNTO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.***”

Not something which is to happen sometime in the future when the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association can reach the ends of the earth, BUT PAST TENSE, “...*their sound WENT into all the earth and their words unto the **ENDS of the world.***” Now, ask yourself: When you reach the ends of the world, have you reached the uttermost part of the earth? Isn’t that about as far as you can go? If you could go further, it wouldn’t be the end. So again, the Lord said to take the gospel to the uttermost parts of the world, and Paul tells you, It’s DONE! It’s accomplished! Now, we don’t read that Paul went to China, or India, or Australia, but the point is this: whatever Jesus Christ intended when he gave the mandate to go to every creature, it was fulfilled by the very individuals to whom it was given. They went to the scattered “lost” sheep of the House of Israel. The ones the Lord told them to go to. And those sheep heard the Shepherd’s voice and became Christians. You and I, like those Colossians, are the RESULT of what the Apostles did when **they FULFILLED the Great Commission!**

Notice one thing different about Paul. He labored more abundantly than the other twelve. He was specifically chosen to be an Apostle to the nations (or Gentiles). And he was specifically called to do just that. In Acts 9: 15, when the Lord chose him, he said:

“...Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name BEFORE THE NATIONS, and kings, and the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. “

That is not a contradiction! He was called to go to the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL in the NATIONS and the kings who were ruling over them (who in many cases were also Israelites). Listen to him when he speaks of himself in Acts 13: 46-47,

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting love, lo, we turn to the (“ethnos”) Nations. For so hath the Lord commanded us (Paul

and Barnabas as Apostles), saying, I have set thee to be a light to the Nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”

The Apostle Paul’s ministry was designed by the Lord Jesus Christ to extend the Jurisdiction (or Kingdom) of God on the earth to all nations. Paul said in Romans 11: 13, that he was the Apostle to the nations. He particularly and pre-eminently was the Apostle to bear the word to all nations. He said in 2 Timothy 4: 17, concerning his ministry:

*“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me (Paul) the preaching might be fully known, **and that all the nations might hear...**”*

The Lord called Paul and delivered Paul for the expressed purpose that by Paul’s preaching all the lost sheep of Israel in the nations might hear and come to the Lord. Can you see that? Scripture must be the authority for what we believe. Every dot and tittle is important to sound doctrine. The Lord said “GO into all the nations,” and Paul, who was most responsible for carrying that out says, “...the Lord delivered me so I could do that.”

Now, another question: Did Paul do it? Well, read what he says in verse 7, of 2 Timothy 4:

*“I have fought a good fight, **I have finished my course**, I have kept the faith.”*

He was called to bear witness to all the nations, and he says he did it. He did it! So Mark 16 represented this thing quite accurately when after mentioning the great commission given to the Apostles it says:

“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following, Amen!”

They did it!

Now, the one thing we should notice as being conspicuously absent is any mandate being given to any *modern-day* elder or Kingdom worker to

go into all the world and preach the gospel. Search all you like, it just is not there! And if you can, where the Lord ever told you or me to do that. You might find also where we are told to pray for the “unsaved,” or Gods enemies in this world. Where are we told to pray for the wicked (those who hate God)? Remember, doctrine determines what our actions will be in this world. “*As a man THINKETH in his heart, so is he.*” Therefore, if our doctrine is wrong then our actions will also be wrong. Disobedience, NOT obedience to the gospel follows wrong thinking.

THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Now, we have pointed out that certain aspects of the Great Commission apply to ordinary New Testament Elders today. We determine which of these particular aspects apply by a careful study of the epistles. We have pointed out that the scope of the commission and the work of the commission are two entirely different things. The SCOPE of the commission was to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; which we have seen was specifically fulfilled by the Apostles, as scripture points out and this study has cogently proven and demonstrated. However, the WORK of the commission, which is preaching the gospel and baptising and teaching OBEDIENCE to the gospel, continues as a responsibility of New Testament Elders (pastors, teachers, evangelists) as the Lord opens the opportunity to them.

This can be verified as the very things delivered to them in New Testament epistles such as 2 Timothy 1: 8 and 2 Timothy 4: 5 which teach the New Testament Elder is to preach the gospel. Romans 6: 1-5 shows the ordinance of baptism as continuing in the New Testament assembly. Then see also 2 Timothy 2: 2 and 1 Corinthians 11: 1 which shows indoctrination and the responsibility thereof, to be continued in the community of Christ’s “called out ones.” But the responsibility of going into all “*the world*” and to “*all nations*” **does not** belong to the ordinary Elder or Kingdom worker today since we can find NO such mandate given to them specifically for that. Today’s Elder or Pastor is rather charged to feed the flock of God which is among them (1 Peter 5: 1-2). And the Kingdom Christian is to OBEY the Law of God contained in the gospel message of the Bible.

In reviewing our study it appears that two points yet need comment on. They are points number 8 and 10 from the list of considerations we started with. We do not need to go into great detail about the differences between the evangelical methods of Jesus as compared to the proselytizing methods of Billy Graham and his like today. After “saving” you he sends you back to whatever church you came from, be it Catholic, Protestant or non-denominational. Suffice It to say, that Jesus taught in parables so “*that some would not understand*”. He made it clear that some were not given to understand. When his disciples came to him in Matthew 13 they asked him:

“10 ...Why speakest thou unto them in parables?”

*11 He answered and said unto them. Because it is GIVEN UNTO YOU to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven but to them **IT IS NOT GIVEN.**”*

Billy Graham would have us believe that it is given to all and if you send him enough money he will reach everybody. That is quite a difference, wouldn’t you say? Jesus said:

*“15 For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart **AND SHOULD BE CONVERTED**, and I should heal them.*

*16 **BUT** blessed are **YOUR** eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.*

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them: and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

God does not want His enemies to know the secrets of His Kingdom, they are reserved only for His Sheep. When we fully understand that people claiming to be “saved” are not necessarily being converted to the *true* Jesus of Scripture then we can better understand this last point: That **Judeo-Christian, anti-Christians and pagans proselytize, they do NOT evangelize.** Their methods have pervaded our culture to the point that we sometimes miss it. In T.V., books, magazines, movies, everywhere, we see the false doctrines of the one-world church; doctrines about

devils and of demons and ghosts, heaven, hell, and a **future** tribulation and millennium kingdom with a future king who is returning to set things right by destroying some mythical antichrist and burning up Gods world. One cannot look at the paper today without seeing a movie like, *"Angel in my Pocket"* or the T.V. program like *"Highway to Heaven"* by that good Jew Michael Landon. The ad for Jews for Jesus in this booklet is another example of the proselytizing of Jews to the "Jewish-Christian" religion along with reemphasizing the lie that the "Jews are God's Chosen People" and we are all "gentile" stepchildren of their kingdom. The Judeo-Christian church denominations along with their offshoot "cults" all teach basically the same doctrines, which are paganism and NOT Biblical.



PROSELYTIZING METHODS OF JEWS

SOUND DOCTRINE

Our responsibility before the Lord is to study and obey God's Law, and rest in sound doctrine. This cannot be overemphasized. Our families, our communities, and our Nation faces an enemy which can only be conquered through the proper understanding and application of God's Truth. Babylonian tyranny is utterly destroyed by the "brightness of His coming" and His coming is by the fire of His Holy Word. In Scripture, the English word "coming" has been mistranslated from a Greek word which actually means "appear" or "appearance."

It is the Greek word (#2064) “*erchomai*” which is used only in the present and imperfect tenses. **It is NOT future!** (Examples: Matthew 26: 64; Mark 14: 62 and 13: 26 and Revelation 22: 7.) The other Greek word mistranslated to the English word “coming” is the Greek word “*parousia*” (#3952) which actually means “presence.” An example of this word is found in Matthew 24: 3, which should read: “...and what shall be the sign of **thy presence**...?” not “coming.” Change these words in your Bible to reflect the true word “presence” or “appearance” and you will realize a different meaning to your Bible which does NOT relegate everything to the future, but places you in the here and NOW!



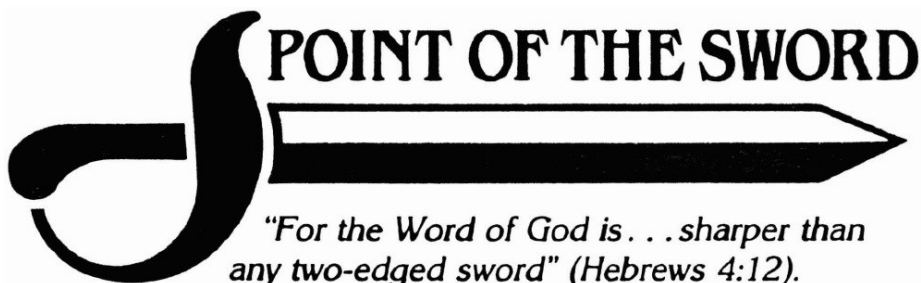
GODS LAW

*“For I give you GOOD DOCTRINE, **FORSAKE YE NOT MY LAW.**”*
(Proverbs 4: 2)

We are not saved by the Law, but we are converted by the Law according to Psalms. One cannot preach Jesus without preaching God’s Law. Sin is transgression of the Law. Conversion - true conversion - comes as we begin to **OBEY** the Commandments of the Living God of Israel. We therefore obey the Law because we are the saved People of God; it is the proof that we have indeed turned to Jesus.

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of GOOD DOCTRINE, whereunto thou hast attained.” (1 Timothy 4: 6)

“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by SOUND DOCTRINE both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” (Titus 1: 9)



DOES ‘FULFIL’ MEAN ABOLISH?

The Judeo-Christian churches oft-repeat the statement that Christ “nailed the law to the moss” or “abolished the law.” They repeatedly tell their followers, “You’re under grace not law.” These blind leaders either knowingly or ignorantly deceive God’s People. The language of Christ as recorded in Scripture is as follows:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” -Matthew 5: 17

The argument is that Christ fulfilled the law, or as they are pleased to state it, “filled it full and abolished it.” That is precisely the kind of twisting of Scripture that men are compelled to resort to, to get rid of God’s law and establish their own; but every serious Bible student knows that the word “fulfil” means nothing of the sort. It means “DO!”

As it was Christ Himself who said, ***“I am NOT come to destroy, but to fulfil,”*** we must understand what He meant by “fulfil” and we can best understand this by His use of the word “fulfil” elsewhere. Now Jesus used that same word when John reluctantly baptized Him, saying, ***“I am not worthy,”*** etc., Jesus answered thus:

“Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” Matthew 3: 15

Question: Did Jesus, when He said, “thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness,” mean that he came to abolish all righteousness, or “fill it full” and do away with it?

Nonsense! He meant that He came to carry out, or perform, or do all righteousness, and His use of the word “fulfil” in that text, determines His meaning when He said, “I am not come to destroy but to fulfil?” He came to fulfil, to carry out, to perform and do the law and the things written therein. Christ kept the law and He said so in these words:

“I have kept my Father’s Commandments.” John 15: 10.

To abolish the law, is to abolish sin, ***“for where no law is, there is no transgression.”*** Romans 4: 15; and again, ***“for sin is the transgression of the law.”*** 1 John 3: 4. Therefore, if the law is abolished, sin is also abolished, and there is no need of a Saviour from sin.

Thus the men who claim that the law of God is abolished, abolish and repudiate the Saviour as well and make His atoning work of no avail. What was the mission of Jesus Christ? Let the Bible tell us:

“And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His People from their sin.” Matthew 1: 21.

Believe Jesus and Scripture and don’t follow those who would twist Scripture to try and get rid of God’s Law. When God’s Law is established in the land, righteousness will be exalted in our Nation.

