

**The Commander**

*“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” -Matthew 28:18-20*

**Group Check-in: Who in your life do you have authority over, and what is your expectation when you command them to do something?**

When we read these three verses, many of us skip down to v. 19 where Jesus commands us to go make disciples. But before Jesus commands us to go, he makes a claim about who He is. He says that, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” This is the fulfillment of a prophecy in Daniel 7:13-14.

*“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. –Daniel 7:13-14*

**1. What observations come to mind as you read this passage on Jesus’ authority and power?**

David Platt points out that we often speak of our conversion as us deciding to make Jesus our personal Lord and Savior. Platt goes on to acknowledge that while it is good to really Jesus’ lordship as a part of our Christian lives, we do not *decide* to make Jesus Lord. He is Lord regardless of what we think of him. Paul affirms this in Philippians 2:9-11

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
<sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
<sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. –Philippians 2:9-11

**2. What evidence do we see in Scripture of Jesus' universal authority or Lordship?**

The implication of Jesus' universal lordship is that he has the absolute authority to command everyone, especially his followers, to do what he desires. This is why all are held accountable for God's commands ('Do not steal', 'Honor your father and mother', 'You shall have no other gods before me', etc. ) even if they do not claim Jesus as Lord. And it is why all Christians are called to obey the Great Commission here in Matthew 28. Jesus is claiming that he has the authority to command what he desires, and what he desires is that his followers would go tell the world about the love of God for sinners.

**Group Check-in: Do you live your life as if God has authority over every aspect, OR as if you have the option to obey God's authority or not? What evidence is there in your life to support your claim?**

But let us not think of Jesus' lordship as commanding us to do what we do not want to do. Rather the truth that Jesus is Lord is good news! First, because the One with all authority is also good. In other words our Lord is not someone who is going to command us to do something that is not good.

*And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,<sup>13</sup> and to observe the LORD's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good? –Deuteronomy 10:12-13*

Therefore, when Jesus commands us to go make disciples, he is commanding something that is good, not just for the listener but also for us! Not only are people saved and taught to love Christ more, but God works through the Great Commission to make us more like Christ, to grow our dependence on Him, to increase our joy, and to increase our reward in Heaven!

Secondly, Jesus' authority gives us confidence as we go share the gospel. Since Jesus has authority over every ruler, every storm, every circumstance, and every created thing we are assured that he will work everything out so that disciples will be made according to his will. There is no king, no ruler, no president, no law, no disaster, no weakness, no unforeseen event, and no enemy that can stand in the way of what God wants to accomplish through us. To quote David Platt, "Christ's mission will succeed because His authority guarantees it."

**Group Check-in: Do you often believe that Christ’s command to go make disciples is good for you? How might you have seen God’s goodness at work in your life as you have obeyed His call to go?**

3. In regards to Jesus’ Lordship over all creation, what circumstances do we often see as “roadblocks” to the gospel advancing that Jesus actually has authority over?

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### **Go Make Disciples**

How would you respond to the statement that Jesus is lord over all creation, including you?

*Tip: If you are wondering how to start this conversation, you can begin by saying, “Can I ask you a question, it is for a class I’m taking?”*

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### **Praying This Week**

- Thank God for his authority and lordship over us and all creation
- Ask God to forgive us for seeing the Great Commission as optional
- Invite the Spirit to change the hearts of those we love to believe that Jesus is lord over their lives.