



Connect to the Mission

Leader's Guide

Week 3

Topic: Go, Make Disciples and Baptize

PREWORK: Read the full leader's guide and watch the videos on the website. Note the time of the videos so you can plan well.

Speaker: Pastor Alan White

Start Script****

We have been talking about becoming a disciple and the Great Commission which says:

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19.) These are final words from Jesus and are a vision for our lives today. Jesus used twelve ordinary men (fishermen and tax collectors) to do His work. What does that look like for all of us normal, everyday Christians to be disciples of Jesus? What does it mean for us to go, to make, and to baptize?

Go means “as you go”

It is interesting that Jesus did not tell us to draw unbelievers or seekers to the church with state-of-the-art facilities, quality programming, and well executed events. The early church had none of those things; they were a few hundred believers who met in their homes. No Bible, no theology, no coffee! We use these tools today to invite and meet the needs of our community, but Christ's mandate “to Go” still stands. He wants us to take the good news to those around us, outside the church walls. It is a wonderful thing to invite others to church, events, and small groups. Keep doing that! This is not an either/or. In the New Testament, we see Jesus meeting the woman at the well, the sick and injured where they were on the street, and the men in fishing boats on the docks. Church is only a few hours of the 168 we have every week. Where are we spending those other hours and how can we share the love of Jesus?

When we hear the Great Commission, we tend to think of missionaries or those in full time ministry (past and present) like Billy Graham, Mother Teresa, and Pope Francis. We imagine people who leave the comforts of the modern life to serve those in the bleakest of circumstances, but Jesus commissions ALL Christians to make disciples everywhere. That is me. That is you. So, how are we to interpret the ‘go’ part of this mandate? The verb “go” in this

verse translates to “as you go,” meaning as you go through life, whatever you are doing, take the gospel to those who need it, and that is everybody!

God may call you to a jungle in Southeast Asia or lead you to ask about the well-being of your postal clerk. Both need Jesus! Jesus’ ministry did not start when He hopped a plane, but at a friend’s wedding three miles from His home. Jesus did not travel outside of a 100-mile radius His entire life, but instead shared Himself with people in need along the way as He traveled from village to village. For some, God will call us to travel the world and share our lives in distant lands, but for many of us, it may be a coworker or a friend who desperately need to hear that God is on their side, and that we are too.

Disciples are made through a relationship with Jesus and each other

The invitation to share what the grace of Christ has done in our lives is earned through love and authentic relationship. Jesus teaches his disciples the importance of loving like He does. He said, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34-35). Disciples are to be known for their radical, Christ-like love. When we love in this manner, God is glorified, and people are drawn to Christ.

We have all seen the man at the concert or football game, holding a sign condemning about half of the ticket holders to eternal damnation. He may scare a few people straight, but the method is faulty as he has no relationship or love for anyone walking by him. We can make disciples more effectively with people if we take the time to know and love them. Most people come to know the grace of God through one-on-one relationships, just like the one-on-one moment at a well in Samaria that changed a woman and her entire community. The Samaritan woman left her water jug at the well after meeting Jesus because he had given her “living water” (John 4:10). Jesus quenched her soul, and she went to share that living water with everyone she knew. She went to her friends and family, her connections. She did not have a pulpit or TV audience. She only had her story, her witness, to share with the people in her circle. What is your story? Who is in your circle?

Authentic relationships, which are life-on-life connections grounded in Christ-like love, are the best environment for discipleship. Without a personal relationship there is no discipleship, just the passing of information. There are so many people we encounter daily. A moment of compassion and active listening can open their hearts to hear about what God is doing in your life and allow you to extend the invitation for them to join you. As we GO through our daily life, God is inviting us to share with His beloved what He has done in our lives and what He has done through Jesus. He loves your mail carrier, your grocery cashier, your family, the people in your community, and all over the world. God wants them to know He loves them and has sent His

son for them, and He placed YOU in their lives to share that good news, to grow them into their faith, and baptize them into the community of believers.

Baptizing is one of the first steps in making disciples

The act of baptism is practiced across every Christian sect in the world, originating with John the Baptist baptizing Jesus in the Jordan river. It is a sacrament marked by the ritual use of water that admits the recipient into the Christian community of faith. It is also done by spiritually immersing or involving oneself deeply into the life of Jesus Christ. Baptism is the literal and symbolic ritual of entering a relationship with Christ and His church. Jesus tells us He wants us to be "...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Even in the moment of baptism, we are being brought not only into the midst of God's community as the Church, but into all aspects of the Trinity. Even God lives in the mysterious community of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and so should we with fellow believers!

Why is the act of baptism so significant? The sacrament of baptism is such a pivotal step of discipleship because it involves consent and participation from every person involved. It is a beautiful moment with the disciple seeking acceptance into the community, the other believers consenting and asking others witnessing to support this initiate into the church, while the Holy Spirit moves in every heart of those involved. It requires community, witnesses, and the move of God in one's life. It is a powerful event when we bear witness and commit to helping the person grow in their discipleship. As we watch someone join a small group, volunteer in the nursery, or serve coffee in the church gathering area, we are witnesses to someone diving into humble service and following Jesus; they are being baptized into the community of faith.

As a Jesus follower, especially as a new disciple, it often feels like we are learning to swim. At first, awkward and unsure, we are encouraged by other seasoned swimmers and a good coach. We eventually learn to trust ourselves and the water we find ourselves in, finally finding our thirst for truth and purpose quelled. The water that surrounds us is God's grace and salvation. We immerse in His community and His word, and we strive to share the living water with others around us who are still on the shore, thirsty for the living water of Jesus Christ.

Though baptism is a one-time physical event, the immersion of ourselves in God's faith community is continual. Before we know it, we are no longer in the shallows but encouraging others into the deeper waters of discipleship. When we follow Christ and deepen our own relationship with Jesus, we cannot help but invite others to and into the living water that Christ still offers us.

End Script****

Tough questions prep:

I'm not good at sharing the gospel/talking to strangers/witnessing.

First, just share what you know personally - Who Jesus is to you and why you follow. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words. Remember if you act in love there is no fear.

I think God means those he's gifted to take the gospel are supposed to go, not everyone. Right?

If you have ever taken a spiritual gifts assessment, they rate them highest to lowest. We all have every gift it is just that some are higher and lower. You have the gift and can ask God to grow. For example, James 1:5 says we can ask for wisdom. So, ask God to grow you in your gifts and step out of your comfort zone.

Or

Jesus said we will do greater things than He (John 14:12). Do you believe Jesus? Why not? Paul wrote we are made perfect in our weakness. It is through humility and faith that we lean on God and not our own skills anyway.

Christians have failed to love and damaged the reputation of Christ and the church. How can this damage be overcome? Why would someone hurt by Christians want to hear anything I have to say?

Good question. Validate their feelings and love on them to heal. When the time is right remind them that God is always good and men are naturally evil. It is only by God's grace that there is goodness in man. Remind them that Churches are a hospital for the sick and not a hotel for saints. Ask if they can forgive and seek God.

Didn't Jesus just tell the 11 to do this? Is he really asking this of us?

In week 2, we discussed a Christian and disciple are the same thing. Jesus was talking to His disciples then and us now. Every Scripture in the Bible applies to all of us. We cannot pick and choose which ones to obey.

What about the 500+ that followed him? Acts 1:8

Key Scriptures used: Matthew 28:18-20, I Peter 3:15, Acts 1:8, John 13:34-35, Matthew 5:16, I Peter 2:12, I John 4:16-18, Mark 1:9-11

Class Timeline:

	Estimated time
1. Introductions	15 min
2. Teaching Video	Pastor Alan White, 8 minutes
3. Discussion Questions	20 min
4. Testimonial Video	Cameron Pierce, 6 minutes
5. Takeaways	10 min
6. Prayer	1 min
7. Invitation for next week	1 min

1.Introduce the content and video for this class (in your own words):

Week one, we learned that Jesus has been given the authority to commission us as his witnesses. In part two, we discussed that a Christian not only believes but follows Jesus' teachings. This week, we examine Jesus' mandate to **GO** and make other disciples. But where do we go, and how, exactly, do we make disciples and baptize them? What does this mean for us who are not pastors and missionaries?

Share if you have ever invited someone into a community. It doesn't have to be church. Have you ever asked someone to help volunteer with you? Join a sports team? Work with you? How did it turn out for you and your relationship with them?

2.Play the teaching video.

3.Discussion questions:

1. Does learning that "go" is understood "as you go" change your understanding of the great commission? How?
2. How can we view baptism as more than just an immersion with water? What ways can you be baptizing others into the Christian community?
3. What prevents you from practicing sacrificial, radical love? How can you remove those obstacles?
4. In what relationships can you become more intentional about sharing Jesus?

4.Play the short personal testimony video.

5. Closing / takeaways in your own words:

1. We are to “go” make disciples of Jesus through our daily life in ordinary places, like home and work. In this way, go means “as you go.”
2. Disciples are made through a relationship with Jesus.
3. Baptizing is the first steps in making disciples. It is done by immersing or involving oneself deeply into life of Jesus Christ.

6. Close in prayer Use the PRAY model as we teach them to pray:

P = praise – praise God for who He is and what he has done -- Use attributes to describe Him

R = Repent – helps us confess any sins and change the way we think or feel

A = Ask – petition your request for this group to our Father in Heaven including their understanding of Jesus’ mission

Y = Yield – Submit to God’s will and let go of our will

PRAISE	Matthew 6:9	“Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.’”
REPENT	Matthew 6:12	“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”
ASK	Matthew 6:11&13	“Give us this day our daily bread.” “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]”
YIELD	Matthew 6:10	“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.”

7. Invite them back next week to learn about

The next week’s topic is “teach them to obey” as Jesus did in the Great Commission