



Go and Make Disciples
of All Nations



Matthew 28:16-20

- Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 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.***



The allegation

- The ESV text on the previous slide is quite representative of our English translations.
- But there is an allegation circulating that this rendering seriously misrepresents the Greek text.
- ESV: “**Go therefore and make disciples...**”
- Alleged correction: “**Therefore, As you go, make disciples...**”



The Myth



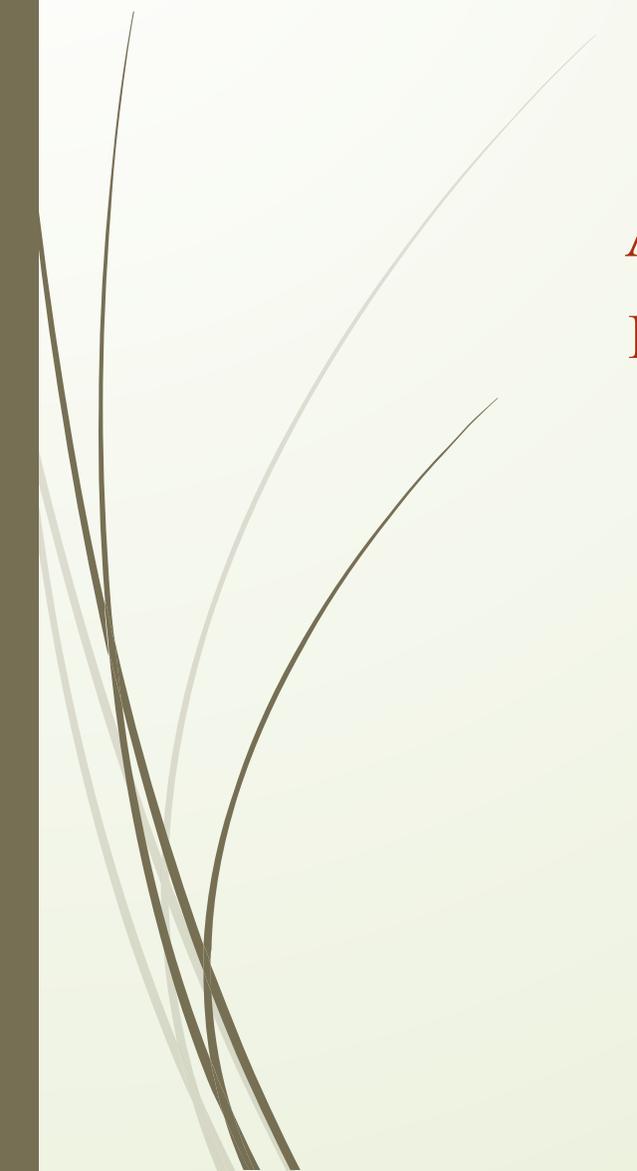
- “There’s a myth foisted on the Christian public about the meaning of the Great Commission (Matt 28.19-20). It goes something like this: In the Greek, the word translated ‘Go’ is really a participle and it literally means, ‘as you are going.’ But the words ‘make disciples’ are an imperative in Greek. That’s the only imperative in these two verses. Therefore, the Great Commission is not a command to go; rather, it is a command to make disciples *as you are going*, or make disciples along the way.”

• ~Daniel Wallace

- The myth alleges that the translators of the English Bible made a dumb mistake and distorted the meaning of the passage.
 - Wallace has an excellent refutation of the myth here:
danielwallace.com/2014/02/17/the-great-commission-or-the-great-suggestion



My Two Goals

- A. Instill skepticism of “correcting the translations”
 - B. Emphasize what the “correction” obscures about the Great Commission
- 

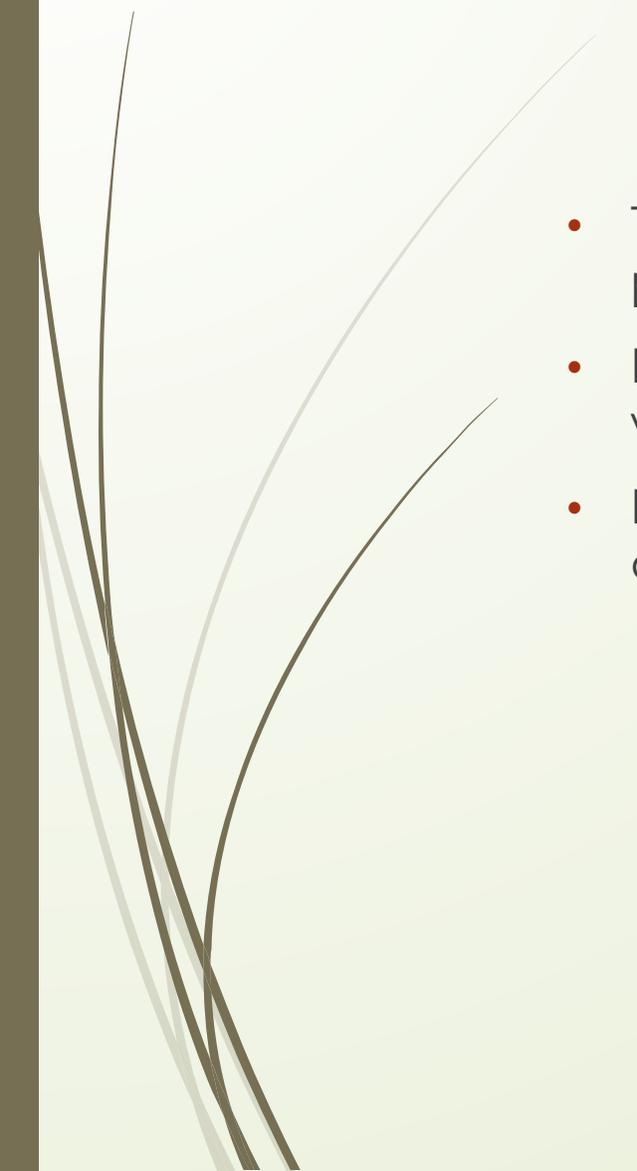


First Response...

- Your first response to an alleged correction of the English text should be to check a variety of credible translations.
- NASB Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...
- NKJV Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...
- NIV Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...
- HCSB Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...
- ASV Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations...
- NRSV Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...
- NET Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...
- ISV Therefore, as you go, disciple people in all nations...



What about the ISV?

- This is a translation produced by a committee. So it isn't one person's pet project.
 - But, anything unique to one translation demands strong caution. This holds whether the translation is the ISV, the ESV, the NKJV, the KJV or whatever.
 - But, I have never seen the "correctors" cite the ISV. Instead they give an argument that shows they haven't done their homework.
- 

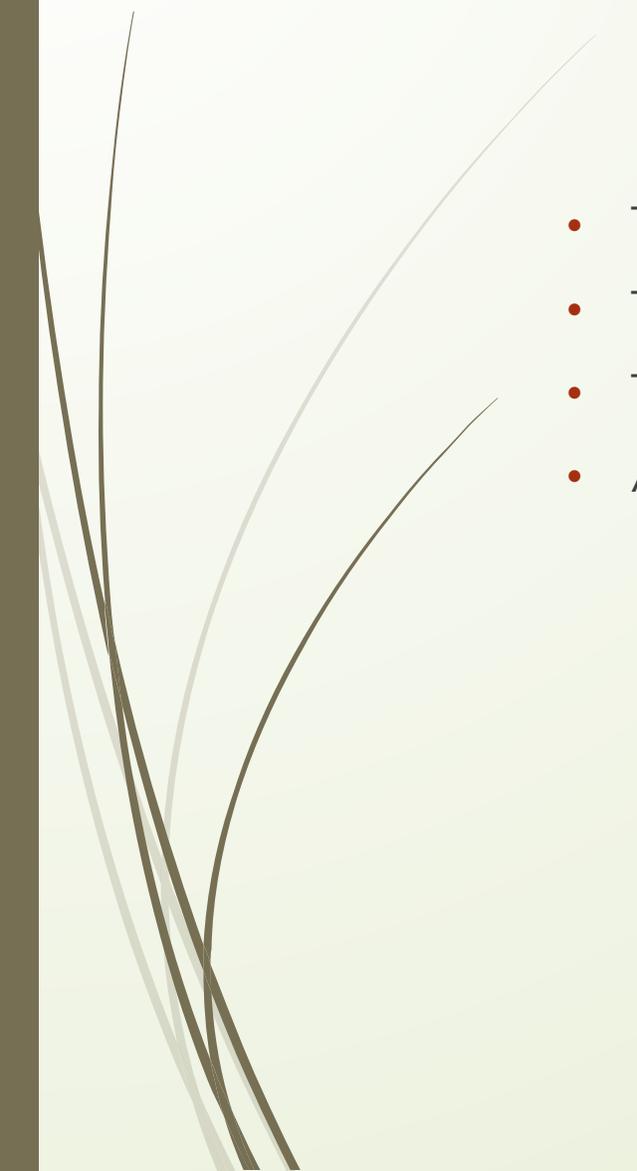


The Alleged Correction in Detail.

- Since the word “go” is a Greek **participle** it should not be construed as a command to go anywhere.
- Rather the sense is that **“in our going”** or **“as we go”** we are to make disciples.
- So, they say, the emphasis in this passage is not on strategically **going to** places, but on making disciples along the way **as we go about** our normal activities.
- The great commission is for everyone, not just those strategically sent.
- There is one laudable intention behind this interpretation, namely, to motivate all of us to bear witness to Jesus and engage in Christian training in the course of our other activities.

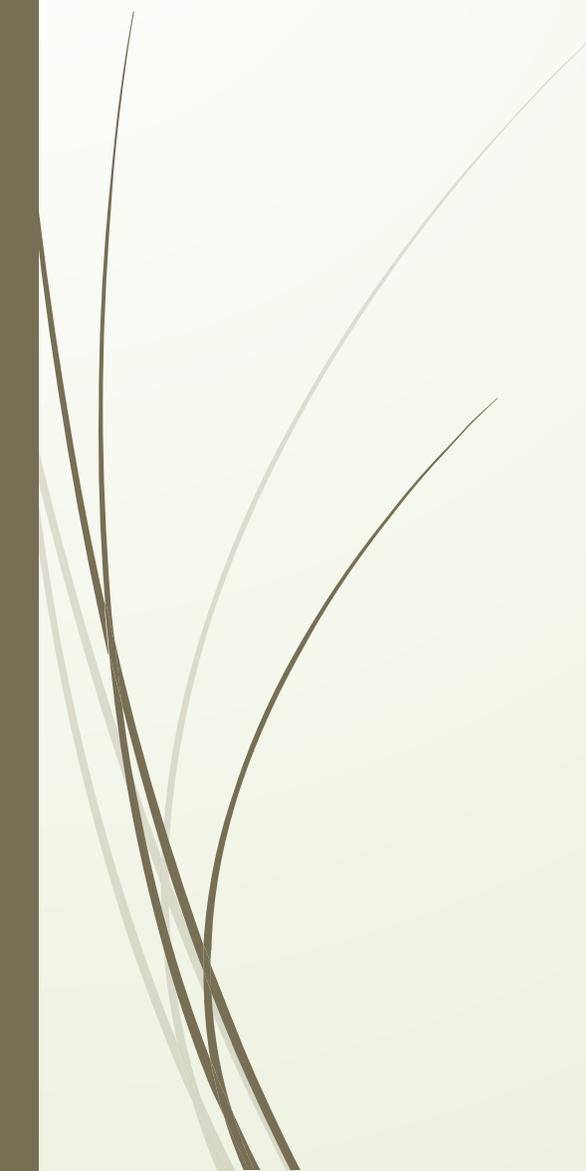


But...

- The grammatical argument is far fetched.
 - The standard translation is eminently defensible.
 - The correction results in a sentence that does not make sense.
 - And strategic going is in focus.
- 



My Two Goals (once again)

- A. Strengthen your respect for the English Bible
 - B. Emphasize what the “correction” obscures about the Great Commission
- 



What's the difference?

- A. Dad leaves the farm for awhile. He tells the boys: “**Go and** collect soil samples from each field.”
- B. Dad leaves the farm for awhile. He tells the boys: “**As you go** (about your other pursuits), collect soil samples from each field.”

The difference is whether we strategically pursue the goal (each field, all nations) or whether we treat the goal as something to be done as it fits with other pursuits.



What could the correction mean?

Jesus said

- “all nations”, [every ethnic group, all the Gentile peoples]
- “all the world,” and “all creation” (Mk. 16:15),
- “to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

This does not happen “as you go (about your other business)”!



What about the Grammar?

- “**Go**” is a participle. The main verb in the sentence and the only one in the imperative mood is “**make disciples.**”
- This much is fact, but it doesn’t mean what they say it means.
- Consider the next slide to see what it does mean.

- 
- 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.

* Aorist participle ** Present participle



“Go” as a Necessary Prerequisite

(aorist participles with imperative verbs)

- Matthew 2:8-9 And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “**Go and search** diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way.
- Matthew 17:27 ... **go** to the sea **and cast** a hook **and take** the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself.”
- Matthew 28:7 Then **go** quickly **and tell** his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee...

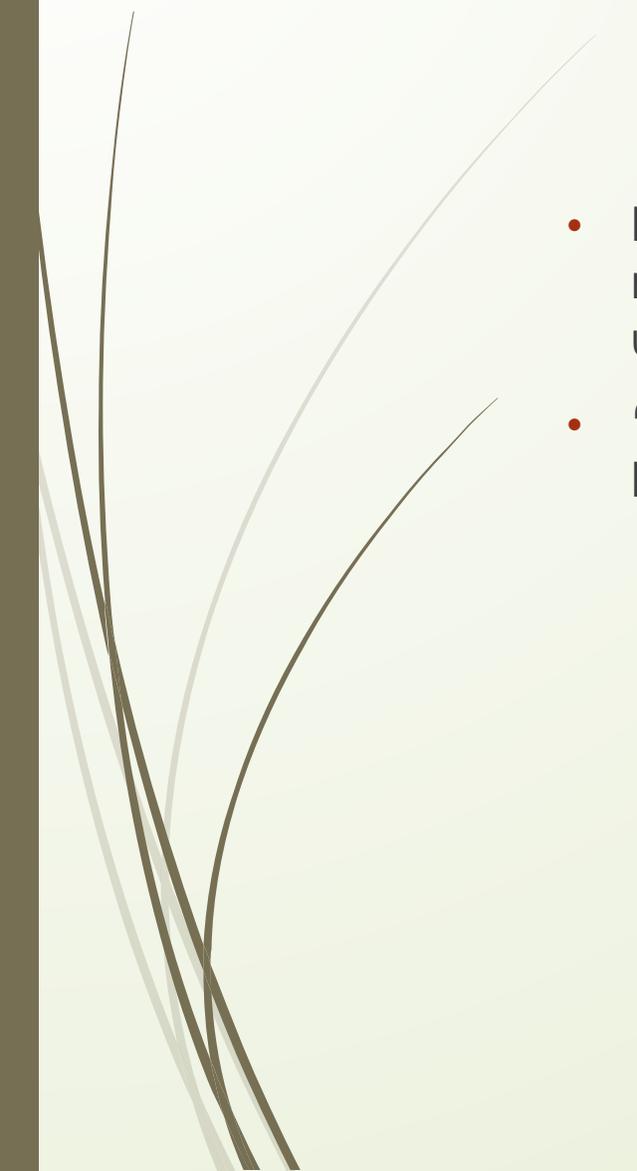


In Summary.

- The main command is to **“make disciples of all nations”**
 - The main command is fleshed out by **“baptizing,”** and **“teaching them to observe”**
 - **“Go”** is a necessary prerequisite to the main command.
- 



From BMA Website

- **DestiNATIONS International (DNI)** is the mission agency of BMA. It exists to make "Christ's last command our first priority--church planting among unreached people groups."
 - "DNI places a priority on unreached people groups in North America and beyond with a concern for under-reached groups of people as well."
- 



From Global Tribes Outreach (GTO)

OUR GOALS

- A. Proclaim the Salvation and Lordship of Jesus Christ to unreached people groups**
- B. Plant self-propagating indigenous churches among these groups**
- C. Provide a Biblical discipleship program for new believers**
- D. Establish training institutes for native pastors and missionaries
- E. Support existing churches and missionaries in their work
- F. Revive, Challenge, and Train western Christians through short term and long term mission projects



From All Nations Bible Translation (ABT)

That God may be glorified among the nations,

ABT exists to assist the church

by providing a platform

to mobilize, train, and equip missionary teams

to evangelize unreached people groups,

translate the Scriptures,

and plant indigenous churches

that follow the teachings of Jesus

and the principles of His Kingdom.



The Mission of God

That All the Nations Be Blessed

(from ABT)

Much mission work finds its impetus in Jesus' instructions to His disciples to "go and teach all nations" (Matthew), to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark), to preach "repentance and remission of sins" among all nations (Luke), and to be His witnesses "unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts).

Was this a new idea, an addition to God's plan of ages past?



The Mission of God

That All the Nations Be Blessed

(slide 2)

No, this Great Commission is based soundly in the entire revelation of God even back in Genesis. God called Abraham and set his family apart not so they alone would be blessed, but that all other families could be blessed through Abraham's family. "And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).

As families grew, they became people groups, or nations. The entire theme of the Bible revolves around God's heart for all the nations.



The Mission of God

That All the Nations Be Blessed

(slide 3)

- Abraham again received the promise after his great test of obedience: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:18).
- The psalmist prays for God’s mercy and blessing on his people, “that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations” (Psalm 67:2).
- The prophet of God declared, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17).
- Jesus declared that before the end comes, “this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations” (Matthew 24:14).



The Mission of God

That All the Nations Be Blessed

(slide 4)

- Paul believed he had been called to be an apostle “for obedience to the faith among all nations for [Jesus’] name” (Romans 1:5).
- John saw a vision where “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,” ascribing salvation to God and the Lamb (Revelation 7:9, 10).
- God’s Abrahamic blessing extends to **all nations** through Jesus Christ. “That the blessing of Abraham might come on **the Gentiles** through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Galatians 3:14).



The Mission of God

That All the Nations Be Blessed

In our generation many nations, or people groups, remain outside the blessing of Abraham.

Will we let God's mission—that **all the nations** be blessed—become our mission?

- <https://www.allnationsbibletranslation.org/vision/the-mission-of-god>