

KINGDOM AND CAUSE

THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

What is THE Cause (or the Great Commission), and how does it apply to me?

BIG IDEA

Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave His disciples one final message. He said, *“Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28:19). This cause that Jesus sent His disciples on carries on today. As Christians, we are called to go and spread the gospel and disciple the world.

SCRIPTURE USED

Mark 8:27-33 *Jesus and his disciples left Galilee and went up to the villages near Caesarea Philippi. As they were walking along, he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say you are one of the other prophets.” Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Peter replied, “You are the Messiah.” But Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. Then Jesus began to tell them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things and be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead. As he talked about this openly with his disciples, Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. Jesus turned around and looked at his disciples, then reprimanded Peter. “Get away from me, Satan!” he said. “You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”*

Matthew 28:19-20 *Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Romans 10:14 *But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?*

For this lesson you will need:

- Enough pieces of paper and pens for students in groups of three
- A surface for the students to write on (e.g., clipboard)
- Prize for winning the game (e.g., candy, church swag, gift card)

OPENER

Play Degrees of Separation Break your students out into groups of three or more (*the more groups, the better*). Each group is given a piece of paper and pen. Write the words “evangelism”, “THE Cause” (or “Great Commission”) and “Jesus” where everyone can see them. Then give each group 3 minutes to write as many words that are closely related to the three words. Have each group read off their list. Award the group that came up with the most related words. Now take the same three words and give the students three minutes to get as far away from the word as they can. For example: Church (your starting word) - Cross, Wood, Forest (*Forest would be the 1st Degree of Separation*), Leaves, Animals, Zoo (*Zoo would be the 2nd Degree of Separation*) and so on. Have each group read their list aloud. The group with the most degrees of separation within each category wins a prize.

EXPLAIN

Often times when the words “evangelism,” “THE Cause” and “Jesus” come up, it is like playing the game *Degrees of Separation*. People think of all sorts of things. (Randomly name some of the degrees of separation that the groups came up with.) **Many of the ideas that people come up with have nothing to do with what Jesus said or did. Do you know the last thing that Jesus said before ascending to heaven?**

Read Matthew 28:19

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus was sending out His followers both past and present to spread the gospel and disciple converts all throughout the earth. In recent times, people have criticized this noble work and have condemned Christianity for trying to make disciples. “Keep your Christianity to yourself,” some may say. How should Christians respond? And why did Jesus command His followers to share the gospel and spread THE Cause?