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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

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## Called to Make Disciples Matt 28:16-20; Acts 1:6-8

### Lesson Background and Introduction

Dr. Joe Ellis was a highly respected and innovative authority on church growth. One of Dr. Ellis's most insightful statements comes from another book he wrote entitled *The Personal Evangelist*. It is this: "The most important tasks the church can do are those that only the church can do." What is it that the church, and only the church, can do? What makes the church unique? The answer is that the church alone possesses and can pass along the message of salvation from sin. This message is founded on the facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is the good news, the gospel, as defined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. No other organization or institution in the world declares, or is charged with declaring, such a message. Today, however, the church is pulled in different directions by a host of causes and issues. Many of these causes and issues involve societal ills, a number of which most certainly should be addressed. The Bible is highly concerned with issues of social justice. Even so, the church must not compromise or forsake its primary mission: to take to a lost and dying world the good news of eternal life available through Jesus. As the church makes disciples who in turn make disciples, then the church is accomplishing its primary mission. The locations mentioned in Acts 1:8 can provide a model for any church's evangelistic strategy. A congregation must first seek to reach its own surroundings, but it must not be satisfied with that. The people must be challenged to expand the church's outreach. That involves thinking globally. Support through prayer, financial resources, and personal involvement will be the result. For a church to present itself as an attractive place to put one's membership is relatively easy. For a church to commit to making disciples is an entirely different matter. A church must strive always and consciously to keep the main thing the main thing. The head of the church, Jesus Christ, has given the church its marching orders. Those orders have never been amended. The issue is whether the church needs to amend its priorities. Thus it bears repeating: the most important tasks the church can do are those that only the church can do.

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

**Ministry Preparation** - Before ascending into heaven, Jesus spent His final days preparing His apostles and other followers for their leadership role in the future New Testament church. The living Lord commissioned His ambassadors to announce His victory over death to the entire world. Jesus' reaching clarified His authority, claiming equality with the Father, possessing all sovereignty over heaven and earth.

**Make Disciples** - Jesus' power continued through the working of the Holy Spirit, who came to His disciples at Pentecost. They were to declare the Gospel to everyone—baptizing, initiating, welcoming them into God's family, both Jew and Gentile. As Jesus appointed the twelve disciples, they also needed to keep their eyes open for those willing to be trained and developed to become fishers of men. Jesus' disciples asked Jesus about the restoration of the kingdom to the Jewish nation before He ascended into heaven. They longed to be from under the oppression of the Roman government. Jesus replied that times and places lay in the hands of the heavenly Father. He directed their attention to something greater about to happen than overthrowing a government. The Holy Spirit was coming to fill each one, empowering them to carry on Jesus' ministry, declaring His Gospel message. They now had the enormous task and the exuberant joy of representing Christ at home and eventually abroad.

**Discipleship Today** - This mandate is in effect today. Christians are still under divine orders to spread the Good News about Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Also, Christians are to be taking what they are learning and teaching others. This is God's plan to reach people all the way to the ends of" the earth.

*(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)*

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

#### **THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

No matter where you are, you can tell someone about the love of Christ

#### **POEM FOR THE WEEK:**

People can't believe in Jesus  
If the gospel they don't hear,  
So we must proclaim its message  
To the world—both far and near.  
—Sper

#### **SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*  
(Acts 1:8 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Sep 27, 2012)*

### **Series: Discipleship & Mission**

#### **UNIT: Call To Life in Christ**

#### **NEXT WEEK**

#### **Called to Righteousness**

**(Romans 3:21-31)**

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **Making Disciples in Response to the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20)**

#### *A Commission that was appointed (16)*

- Appointed to teach (2 Tim 2:24)
- Appointed to present everyone perfect in Christ (Col 1:28)
- Appointed because of being qualified (2 Tim 2:2)
- Appointed to use sound doctrine (Titus 1:9)
- Appointed to proclaim God's word clearly (Col 4:3-4)

#### *A Commission that some may doubt (17)*

- Doubt because human limitations (Gen 17:15-19)
- Doubt, but with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26)
- Doubt that should be turned into perseverance (James 1:4-6)
- Doubt that should be helped (Jude 1:22)
- Doubt that should turn into reliance on God (Mark 11:22-24)
- Doubt that does not stop God from being faithful (2 Tim 2:13)

#### *A Commission from and with authority (18)*

- Authority to disciple others (Matt 4:19)
- Authority with power over demons and diseases (Luke 9:1)
- Authority and stewardship of God's Word (Col 1:25)
- Authority that is commissioned by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4)

#### *A Commission that involves baptism (19)*

- A baptism that signified repentance (Acts 19:1-7)
- A baptism that symbolized being buried with Jesus (Col 2:11-12)
- A baptism that symbolized a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:18-22)
- A baptism with water (Acts 1:5)

#### *A Commission that involves teaching (20)*

- Teaching with wisdom (Col 3:16)
- Teaching with ability from God (1 Tim 3:2)
- Teaching sound doctrine (Titus 2:1)
- Teaching that is anointed (1 John 2:27)

### **Making Disciples While There is Time with Godly Power (Acts 1:6-8)**

#### *Time of restoration (6)*

- A restoration from sin (1 John 5:16)
- A restoration from doubting (Jude 22-23)
- A restoration from grief caused by sin (2 Cor 2:5-8)
- A restoration from idleness and weakness (1 Thess 5:14)

#### *Time that is not known (7)*

- Man does not know the future but God does (Eccl 8:7-8)
- Man does not know the day or hour (Matt 24:36)
- Man must understand the present time because the day is nearer than believed (Rom 13:11)
- Man must be watchful because he does not know the time (Matt 25:13)
- Man does not know the time so he must make the most of every opportunity (Eph 5:15-17)

#### *Power provided by the Holy Spirit (8)*

- Power through the Holy Spirit for eternal life (John 4:14)
- Power that leads us into the likeness of Jesus (1 Cor 15:46-49)
- Power that leads to perfection (Heb 12:22-24)
- Power in the inner being (Eph 3:16-19)
- Power to keep the peace with one another (Eph 4:2-4)