

SERIES OVERVIEW



The “GOAT” series is grounded in the book of Matthew and helps teenagers see how Jesus is the GOAT (Greatest of All Time) and challenges them to live out three of his greatest teachings. Drawing from popular current debates over who or what is the GOAT, students will encounter the authority of Jesus and some of his GREAT teachings. Throughout the series, there are opportunities to cast vision for your youth ministry as well as give students practical ways to put the Greatest Commandments, servant leadership, and the Great Commission into practice.

Week 1: The GREATEST Commandment(s)

Jesus shows he’s the GOAT as he sums up all of scripture in the two Greatest Commandments we can live out in as a church and as individuals.

Week 2: The Path to GREATNESS

Greatness requires elite skills, strength, confidence, and dominance - and there must be clear evidence that someone is superior to everyone else in that given category. With that idea in your mind, let’s look at Jesus and see how the actual GOAT defines greatness.

Week 3: The GREAT Commission

Jesus commissions us to reach this world, and he walks in walk in co-mission with us.

Coleader Teaching Format

CAPTURE

Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?

Goal: To captivate students’ interest and encourage them to actively engage and learn.

“The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing...” Proverbs 15:2

SCRIPTURE

What does God’s Word say?

Goal: To foster a deeper understanding of Scripture among students.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.” 2 Timothy 3:16

INSIGHTS

What might this Scripture mean?

Goal: To present key insights in a way that resonates with teenagers.

“The teaching of your word gives light; so even the simple can understand.” Psalm 119:130

ACTION

How could we live this out?

Goal: To assist teenagers in implementing God’s Word into their daily actions.

“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.” James 2:17

DISCUSS

What can we learn from one another?

Goal: To foster meaningful discussions and encourage active participation among students.

“As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.” Proverbs 18:15

Each teaching comes with two teaching options: (1) an outline, and (2) full manuscript that is flavored with illustrations, humor, photos, videos, object-lessons, and/or stories. All scriptures are NLT unless otherwise noted. Feel free to customize to your own translation preference with blank slides and Word doc.

Teaching Guide

Week 3 GOAT: The Great Co-Mission



Big Idea

Jesus commissions us to reach this world, and He walks in co-mission with us.

Scripture

Matthew 28:16-20; Romans 10:14;
1 Corinthians 3:6-7

[Teacher note: please refer to Coleader Teaching Format document for a better understanding of the five teaching sections used. Also, our prayer is that you will feel tremendous freedom to adapt this content to best fit your unique context. No one knows your students better than you, so make this content your own.]

CAPTURE ► (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)

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Have you ever played a game of Simon Says? If not, it's a game where one person becomes a dictator for a few moments, and the rest of us turn into their mindless robots. "Simon says touch your nose." We all touch our noses. "Simon says hop on one foot." And there we are, all hopping around like a pack of kangaroos with an itch.

[Teacher note: you can either tell your own Simon Says story or personalize this one for yourself or skip it, as the above paragraph may be enough for you to jump into the message.]

I recall one legendary Simon Says showdown when I was a kid. My older cousin was "Simon" – a role he loved, probably too much. The guy should have won an award for the fastest and trickiest "Simon" in history.

He fired off commands like a drill sergeant: "Simon says touch your toes! Simon says spin around! Now, JUMP!" And BAM! Just like that, half of us were out because we jumped without the all-important, "Simon says." The game was like a tornado - chaotic, fast, and unpredictable. If you blinked, you lost. It was like The Hunger Games but with less archery and more nose-touching.

In this whirlwind of commands, you needed the reflexes of a cat, the focus of a ninja, and an unwavering commitment to the voice of “Simon.” If you got distracted, doubted, or took too long to react, you were out. Toast. Game over.

Imagine if we thought about following Jesus like we were playing the world’s most important game of Simon Says. I love the story told at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark, which is like a Simon Says experience, or more correctly, a “Jesus Says” experience. Jesus had just begun His ministry, and one day He was walking along the beach on the Sea of Galilee when He saw Simon and his brother Andrew out in a boat fishing, which was their line of work. Jesus called out to them, “Come, follow me, and I’ll show you how to fish for people!”

What’s wild to me is that they didn’t ask any questions. Jesus Says, “Follow,” and they just followed. At that moment, they decided to give up their livelihood, walk away from everything they knew, and become Jesus’ disciples.

And just a bit farther up the shore, Jesus saw the brothers James and John, also fishermen, sitting in a boat mending their nets. Jesus called out to them with the same offer; Jesus Says, “Follow.” And at once, they left their father and the other hired men in the boat and followed Jesus.

Honestly, I don’t know if I would have done that. Jesus Says, “Follow” Uhm, not so fast there, stranger. I would have wanted to know all the details of what I would be getting myself into before making an informed decision. Do you think you would have followed Jesus? I wouldn’t blame you if you said you wouldn’t have.

These first followers of Jesus left their homes and businesses instantly. It’s amazing! With God’s help, they immediately recognized that Jesus was Someone special. And from there, they followed Jesus into becoming new kinds of fishermen. And over 2,000 years later, Jesus, the GOAT, is still calling His followers to be fishers of people.

In our GOAT series, we’ve been looking at statements from Jesus found in the Gospel of Matthew that focus on greatness. We’ve seen that the greatest commandments, as taught by Jesus, are to love God and our neighbors. We’ve also noticed that the path to greatness, as demonstrated by Jesus, is the path of servanthood and humility. And today, as we conclude our series, we will look at our final GOAT statement from Jesus and how it directly connects with the “Jesus Says” command: “Follow me, and I’ll show you how to fish for people.”

SCRIPTURE ► What does God’s Word say?

For centuries, Bible scholars have labeled the section of Scripture we will look at today as “The Great Commission.” “Commission” in the context of “The Great Commission” is a bit like a critical mission or task given to you by someone with the authority to do so. It’s not just a regular assignment; it’s a profound and meaningful job entrusted to you.

For example, imagine if your school's principal personally asked you to lead a big school project or an event; that could be seen as a "commission."

So, when we talk about "The Great Commission" in the Bible, it refers to the GOAT task that Jesus gave His disciples before He ascended to heaven. It was their ultimate mission given directly by Jesus – the GOAT. These were some of His final and most important words He had ever told them. And right before the book of Matthew ends, we find these vital words that I'm excited to talk about today:

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16 Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted! 18 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 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. 20 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. (Matthew 28:16-20 – NLT)

INSIGHTS ► What might this scripture mean?

Jesus' final words to His closest followers commanded them to play a role in spreading the life-changing good news about Him. And as we read that same passage now (two thousand years later), there are a couple of things that would be helpful for us to keep in mind:

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1. The Great Commission is for you.

The Great Commission wasn't only meant for those first disciples. It's intended for you, too! Picture this: Jesus' disciples, likely teenagers or in their early twenties, were given this monumental task - to fulfill His mission and connect with the entire world. And the most astonishing part? Jesus' grand strategy to touch the lives of people all around the globe relied on these young disciples.

But here's the critical point we need to grasp, when Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations," He wasn't only speaking to the group of disciples physically present with Him at that time. It is a powerful mission that Jesus intends for His followers to continue, even today.

Jesus' Great Commission isn't some ancient instruction locked away in history; it's a vibrant call to action meant for all His followers, including us, right here and now in the 21st century. It's our shared mission to spread His teachings and make disciples worldwide.

So, if you have said yes to following Jesus, His plan to reach the world is YOU.

You may look at me and say, “How can I go to all nations? I have to go to school tomorrow!” And that is true. I can see where we might be tempted to think this Scripture only applies to missionaries traveling outside their home country. It’s because we are drawn to the word nations, but let’s pay attention instead to the word that comes before nations: all. All nations include every nation, right? So, all nations means our country, too, right? And therefore your school!

You see, God has a plan to reach the students in your schools with His good news, and according to the Great Commission, that plan is YOU!

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2. This Great Commission becomes a Co-mission with Jesus.

You are Jesus’ plan for reaching the world with His life-changing good news. I am His plan. And together, WE are His plan. Wait. What? Whoa! I don’t know how you feel about this, but when I think that Jesus intends for me to be His means for reaching the world, it makes me a little queasy. I mean, seriously, I know myself. I’m not some great evangelist who preaches the gospel to crowds, and hundreds of people come forward when I invite them to follow Jesus. I know my limitations all too well. So, I get why you might also feel anxious when you hear that YOU are Jesus’ plan for reaching the world.

I think two big things can cause you to resist the opportunity to take the good news of Jesus to your schools: DOUBT & FEAR. Maybe you think you don’t have what it takes. You aren’t sure what to say. Or you feel like you are a bad example. Or maybe you’re afraid of rejection or getting laughed at. Or maybe, if you’re being honest, you’re scared you’ll fail.

I have good news for you; you are in good company with these feelings. I want to remind you of the verses before Jesus’ Great Commission.

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16 Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted! 18 Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 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. 20 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. (Matthew 28:16-20 – NLT)

I love how real this was! There were still doubts (and most likely fears) that the disciples felt as they stood before Someone who had just risen from the dead to prove He was the world’s Savior! Yet, despite their doubts and fear, something caused them to continue moving forward with the GOAT’s assignment of the Great Commission. And I believe I know what it was.

Let's check out the final words of Jesus' commission:

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And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20b (NLT)

I love how real this was! There were still doubts (and most likely fears) that the disciples felt as they stood before Someone who had just risen from the dead to prove He was the world's Savior! Yet, despite their doubts and fear, something caused them to continue moving forward with the GOAT's assignment of the Great Commission. And I believe I know what it was.

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And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20b (NLT)

We see here that Matthew 28:18-20 isn't just the Great Commission; it is also "The Great Co-Mission." Jesus' final words to His disciples were not, "I'm out of here. Now, go away." Instead, they were, "GO, and I'm going to be with you."

Allow that to settle in. Wherever He's calling you to go, He will be with you and walk alongside you. Your mission is His mission, too.

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Jesus has commissioned us to reach this world, and He walks in Co-mission with us!

[Teacher note: the following illustration comes from a parent's perspective. If you aren't a parent, you could share from the perspective of a child with one of your parents or just give the general observation of parents around you, such as, "Have you ever watched what happens when a child reaches out to hold a parent's hand?"]

As a parent, I love walking with my kids and holding their hands. I've seen two things happen as we walk hand-in-hand. First, they find comfort. In a moment of uncertainty or fear, they reach out, grab hold, and breathe relief as if to say, "I'm safe." Second, it boosts confidence. As they walk into the unknown, knowing someone they trust walks beside them makes them walk with more confidence.

We know that Jesus stopped walking physically beside the disciples soon after this moment in Matthew. But He didn't leave them. Through the supernatural presence of the Holy Spirit, He walked with them differently but no less powerfully. In fact, the disciples' authority and power increased when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. He does the same thing with you as you obey Jesus' command to "go and make disciples."

ACTION ► How can we live this out?

So, what should we do with this idea of being sent out on a Co-mission to reach the world for Jesus? We'd probably agree that this is the worthiest GOAT-iest mission ever. But because of our doubts and fears that I mentioned earlier, saying, "I'm all in," is much easier said than done.

What does taking the good news of Jesus to the people in your world look like? How can you actually do it?

Some years ago, some people set out to research* what youth groups who were found to be successful in reaching students with the gospel and making disciples all had in common. And from their research, they identified clear action steps for groups and students who seek to reach others with the same measure of success.

[*Dave Rahn and Terry Linhart performed the research project, and their findings are shared in the book *Evangelism Remixed*.]

I want to share with you three practical choices you can make as an individual and some ways we can all team up together to participate in fulfilling this great co-mission with Jesus.

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1. Choose to PRAY for people who don't know Jesus: We can all think of some people we'd like to see come to know Jesus, right? And we can all pray, right? Choosing to pray for these people is a super-simple way to get started.

Whether we pray alone as individuals or pray together in groups, we should never underestimate the power of prayer that God uses to work in people's lives. In prayer, let's ask God to move in the lives of those who don't know Him and to give us opportunities to share about Jesus with them.

The role of prayer is so important to grasp! If you study history to find seasons where God showed up and moved in a big way, these events (often called revivals or awakenings) were consistently preceded by a movement of prayer (and often among young people). So, if we want to see God move miraculously and see the people we love come to know Jesus as their savior, we should start by praying for those people as often as possible.

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2. Choose to INVITE friends who don't know Jesus: This action requires some courage on your part. Quite simply, if we genuinely want to see people decide to follow Jesus, we should choose to invite friends to youth group and our other events to hear, learn, and discover more about Jesus. And I know that can sound a little scary, but inviting your

friends to youth group doesn't have to be this big, difficult thing. It can be as simple as saying, "Hey, do you want to go to my youth group with me?" And if they say "yes," that's awesome! And if they say "no," that's okay, too.

You need to know that you're not responsible for whether that friend agrees to attend with you. Your assignment is simply to invite them. If they attend, they'll hear something through our teaching time or small groups about Jesus. Plus, they'll be rubbing shoulders with plenty of Jesus followers, and hopefully, they'll see that there's something different (in a good way) about Christians.

So, take the initiative and choose to be intentional by inviting your friends, and in doing so, you'll be actively participating in the great Co-mission.

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3. Choose to TELL others what Jesus has done in your life: Okay, this is the big one, right? It's the point where fear usually arrives. I get it! But, if Jesus has changed your life, just share that personal story or testimony.

In the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul got right to the bottom line of this when he wrote about the importance of telling others about Jesus:

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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?
(Romans 10:14 – NLT)

If you want to faithfully fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples, there must come a time for people to "HEAR" who Jesus is and what He's done. Your story of how you came to know and follow Jesus is the story you're equipped to tell.

As you share your "Jesus story," remember you're not alone. Jesus promised to "be with you always," and I want you to know He 100% meant it.

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, lives within you. And I believe the Spirit will give you the right words when the opportunity arises to "tell" someone about Jesus. You don't have to trust in your ability to share the good news of Jesus clearly and flawlessly with others. You can relax and trust that the Holy Spirit will give you the right words for that moment.

And another bit of good news is that we're not responsible for changing people's lives. We're just Jesus' messengers. We don't "save" anyone. God alone saves people. Let's just choose to be faithful to share the message of Jesus with others, as if we are merely planting seeds that God will grow in His timing.

The Apostle Paul put it this way,

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6 I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. 7 It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. (1 Corinthians 3:6-7 – NLT)

It is such an incredible opportunity that Jesus – the GOAT – has invited you and me into to participate in His co-mission, and we believe this greatest-of-all-time message of the gospel truly has the power to transform people's lives as God causes the growth.

[Teacher note: tell a personal story of how you've shared your testimony and sensed God's presence in your life.]

Now that's a big job, but I want you to imagine Jesus looking you in the eyes and saying, "I believe in you." He's not just telling us to go and do a difficult job. He's telling us that He believes we are the best people for that job. He believes in us. And the best part? As you step out on this mission, He's right there with you, guiding your steps every step of the way.

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Let's make a pact to pray, invite, and tell right now. I challenge you to identify five people who don't know Jesus. They could be your friends, family members, coaches, neighbors, or maybe even someone you've only interacted with online. Your mission, should you accept it, is to embark on a journey of prayer, invitation, and connection with these five people over the next 30 days.

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To help you on your journey, we've created a devotional called "My 5". This devotional will guide you daily on how to live out everything we've discussed over the past few weeks: to love God and others, to find your greatness through service, and to live out the Great Commission with the five people you've chosen. This devotional will guide you through the process, but don't go it alone. Invite others to join you on this journey. Share your experiences and what you're learning, gather to pray for your "My 5," and support each other in this mission.

To wrap things up, your leaders and I want to do something special that Christians have been doing for a long time when they're about to start a journey like this one. We want to pray a special "commissioning" prayer for all of you who are ready and willing to live out this Great Commission. Let's stand in unity as we step into this mission together.

[Close in prayer.]

DISCUSS ► (What can we learn from one another?)

[Note: These discussion questions are designed to be used in a Small Group setting. We have also included a phone-friendly PDF version of the discussion questions in the Small Group section of this series in Coleader.co.]

1. What has impacted you the most in this GOAT series?
2. Finish this statement. "I would say the current spiritual state of my school is..."
3. We were given this statement: God plans to reach this world with His message, and the plan is you. What are your thoughts about that?
4. What are your biggest doubts or fears when sharing your faith with others?
5. We have been invited to identify five individuals who don't know Jesus and do something about it. If we are willing to walk through the devotional, we'll have time to identify those individuals tomorrow. I'm wondering if any of you immediately knew of one person that would be a part of your "My 5" and if you'd be willing to share, in a non-judging way, who that is and why you chose that person.
6. Who is interested in going on the 30-day journey with the "My 5" journal, and how can we work together on that?