



12 GREAT COMMISSION DECISIONS YOU NEED TO MAKE

12 Great Commission Decisions You Need to Make

created by Clayton Dye and Steve Shadrach

Jesus radically changed my life while in college. I wanted to learn and grow and impact the world for Christ, but I realized I needed to live the Christian life...one day at a time. One speaker impressed me with his decision to move to Australia to become a missionary, sharing: "In college, I began to make small daily decisions to follow Jesus. After decades of these small decisions, by the time this opportunity came to move to Australia, it was just another small daily decision to follow Jesus." It was an intriguing and eye-opening concept for me. I determined I would affix a "Jesus lens" filter on everything, including evaluating the smallest of decisions and tasks. When I heard Steve Shadrach present "The 12 Great Commission Decisions" talk at a conference I was convicted by the word "decision" and we immediately developed this tool to take students through. College students make thousands of decisions on an hourly, daily, weekly, and annual basis. As a Christian, here are twelve decisions that could forever affect everything about your life. Prepare for impact!

The 12 Decisions

1. Is Jesus Lord of every area of my life?

In Luke chapter 6, Jesus shares an illustration to show His followers the difference between a life that focuses on following Jesus or one that does not. He preaches that those who follow Him will have an abundant life. But this can only happen when He is the Lord of everything. And I mean everything. Think specifically about the areas of your life you treasure the most. This might be your family, future, dating relationships, security, or even approval of others. Have these areas truly and wholly been surrendered to the Lordship of Christ?

Verse: Look up Luke 6:46. Answer these questions:

What does the word "Lord" mean?

What does our obedience have to do with Jesus' Lordship?

Identify at least one area of your life that needs to be brought under the Lordship of Christ.

NEXT STEPS: Once you answer, share this with the staff or student leader who is helping you grow in Christ. Ask that person to regularly and intentionally train you to be a sold-out follower of Jesus, surrendering all areas of your life to Him. One day at a time.

2. What new commitments do I need to make in my relationship with Christ?

Bill Hull (Author of *The Disciple-Making Pastor*) regularly says, “Follow Jesus today and He will teach you everything you need to know.” As a college student, this is one of the most opportune times of your life to build a foundation on the rock of Jesus Christ. Once you have fully surrendered, deliberately look for new commitments you can make to dig deeper and keep growing. One example might be to acquire a steady diet of God’s Word in both study and application.

Verses: Look up Philippians 3:7-8. Answer these questions:

What did Paul give up in order to “gain Christ”?

Why was he willing to make those sacrifices?

What sacrifices or commitments do you need to make to go deeper with Jesus?

NEXT STEPS: Begin a “read through the Bible in a year” plan. Daily ask the Holy Spirit for insights that you can journal and make specific applications. Studying God’s Word always brings clarity. If this has been part of your life in the past, revitalize this commitment!

3. Have I taken personal responsibility for the Great Commission?

As you make new commitments grounded in God’s Word, Jesus’ call to make disciples of all nations will quickly loom large for you. Cultural Christianity will want you to believe that this is either for the “professional Christian” or the “super serious Christian.” You need to renounce those lies because the Great Commission is for all followers of Jesus. I believe you, as a college student, have the most strategic opportunity in all human history to impact the world. Jesus calls His disciples to look up and see that the fields are ripe for harvest! In His gentle and loving voice, He is calling you to now co-labor with Him in those fields.

Verses: Look up Matthew 28:18-20. Answer these questions:

Why would this command be one of the last things Jesus said to His disciples?

From this passage, how can you tell this command applies to all Christians?

Which person(s) in your sphere of influence could you initiate a discipling relationship with?

NEXT STEPS: Ask the Holy Spirit (and your discipler!) for guidance as to where your personal influence is. Start to develop a plan to share the good news of Jesus with those in your relational network. Don't ignore the ones the Lord has put all around you to focus on outside groups or social media followers. If you can allow the Lord to use you in small groups and one on one with those right in your immediate sphere of influence, this will be a conviction and skill you can use for the rest of your life to make disciples.

4. What is the vision that God has placed on my heart to use me in ministry?

Take a minute and dream. Look ahead at your life in forty years. What do you see? Is there a spouse? Do you see kids or even grandkids? Do you own a home? Do you have a comfortable retirement plan? Revelations chapters 5 and 7 looks ahead, too, and describes visions of King Jesus sitting on His throne. Chapter 5 refers to the past, at the cross, 2,000 years ago where Christ exchanged His life and blood to pay for the sins of individuals from every tongue, tribe, and nation. He accomplished our redemption before we were even born, which is true for all of God's people. Revelation 7, though, shows a future event, not yet taken place, when all of God's people are gathered around Jesus' throne. If you have taken Jesus as your Lord and Savior, we will be there together, worshipping Him for all eternity. Only God knows the time or place Revelation 7 occurs, but let's say it happens in forty years. How does that impact the future life you envisioned? Your retirement is no longer needed. Your home has just been exchanged for a heavenly home. All your relationships have been divided up as those in Christ, and those not in Christ. Understanding that God's plan trumps our plan necessitates us building a vision and foundation for our life that is eternal, not temporal. Is this year (and the next forty!) of your life rooted in the world's view of success or in co-laboring with God to fulfill Revelation 5 and 7?

Verses: Look up Jeremiah 29:1-13. Answer these questions:

What does God know about you?

How does He want us to respond to Him?

What can you do today that will help you discover and fulfill God's plan for your life?

NEXT STEPS: Build a vision for your future by reorienting your life's aim. Focus on the day when all our earthly possessions and accomplishments will be replaced by the glory of God depicted in Revelation 7. Ask yourself, "Which of my pursuits are temporal and which ones eternal?" Pray and work toward transitioning your goals and motives toward the person and purposes of Jesus Christ.

5. Are there other decisions I need to make to strip away every entanglement to follow Christ and win and disciple others?

Ten years ago, I came to the realization most college students have spent more years being trained in darkness than living in the light of following Jesus. If you are born again, and have experienced newness of life in Christ, you now have a full-time adversary named Satan. His goal is not just to discourage you, but to "kill, steal, and destroy" you (John 10:10). At the very least the enemy of your soul is trying to keep you trapped in your old life and habits. But Jesus has bought our freedom from this bondage, and those sin patterns no longer have power over us. You were once imprisoned to sin and the ways of this world. At the cross Christ broke those chains and set you free from sin and death. Now, in the power of the Holy Spirit, you and I can walk in victory.

Verses: Look up Hebrews 12:1-2. Answer these questions:

Why does the writer use the metaphor of a race to describe the Christian life?

According to the passage, what will help you win your race?

How did Jesus go about winning His race?

NEXT STEPS: What are the specific sin patterns, relationships, or idols in your life Satan uses to keep you from wholeheartedly pursuing Christ? Make a decision and develop a clear plan to flee from these hindrances and turn to Jesus. Share with your discipler and ask that person to hold you accountable.

6. How long will I be committed to laboring for Jesus Christ?

Most students seek a degree that will allow them to get a good job, nice salary, and benefits. You'll set goals, make a plan, and commit to working hard for your paycheck. I get it. There was a lot of money paid in tuition to help you to land that job. The sooner you can tackle those student loans and get on your feet financially, the better. Those are good things, but I want you to check your priorities. In his book *The Call*, Os Guinness teaches your job should be a secondary calling. Your primary calling is to obey Jesus and make disciples of all nations the rest of your life. So, when you step out into the working world, don't view yourself as a banker, who happens to be a Christian. No, you are a child of God and follower of Jesus, who happens to work at a bank during the week!

Verses: Look up 2 Timothy 4:5-8. Answer these questions:

As Paul looked back on his life and ministry, how did he describe it?

In light of that, what exhortations did he give his young disciple, Timothy?

How can you be sure you will still be following Christ and making disciples at 65, the age Paul was when he died?

NEXT STEPS: Commit to partnering with Jesus Christ in His harvest fields. Forever. Determine now not allow a secondary calling take over the primary role. Make a plan with your discipler on how you can begin this lifelong perspective and habit now, while in college, to prioritize the various responsibilities according to the Matthew 6:33 mandate of "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

7. Which dorms, teams, or groups am I called to participate in helping advance the kingdom?

The first six Great Commission decisions offer a solid foundation when making practical decisions to be a laborer for Jesus. God has planted you on the college campus within reach of one or more specific student groups. Those various affinity groups are made up of students with similar interests and goals. Joining a group (or befriending members) creates one of the most natural and effective ways to do evangelism and disciple-making. On most campuses, there have been dedicated intercessors, who have earnestly prayed Matthew 9:35-38, asking the Lord of the harvest to send you out as a laborer in His harvest field. Just know you are an answered prayer!

Verse: Look up Acts 1:8. Answer these questions:

What effect does the Holy Spirit have in our lives?

Where are Jesus' disciples to witness?

How can you be obedient to fulfill this final command Jesus gave us before He ascended?

NEXT STEPS: Avoid the temptation of sliding into cruise control the first couple of years of school and not really plugging into some relational network. Name the dorm, team, club, or social group the Lord has given you contacts in and opportunity to influence. With your discipler, craft a plan to order your life around reaching and discipline students in that group. Ask God to use this plan to start a process of multiplication within this group to see laborers raised up and sent out from your campus to touch the world for Christ.

8. Who is the individual student or students who I will seek out to win and/or disciple?

Jesus' master plan of reaching the world is not primarily through the words of a gifted leader or speaker. He mainly uses ordinary people like you and me, who are focused on loving individuals, as well as building truth into their lives. The three-year ministry of Jesus described in the Gospels gives all of us a model of ministry we can emulate. As you think about the various affinity groups you are part of, or know people in, start to make a "top five" list in each (Who are the top five people in my Spanish Club I am closest to? Who are the top five guys on my intramural team I have really clicked with? etc.). These individuals will be the most receptive to your testimony, the sharing of the gospel, or an invitation to an investigative Bible study. Major on praying for, serving, and loving these students and the Lord will open the doors of their heart (and that group!) like never before.

Verses: Look up Matthew 9:36-38. Answer these questions:

How did Jesus feel about all the people He saw around Him?

In this passage, what is the problem and what is the solution?

What does it mean to be a "laborer" and how do you become one?

NEXT STEPS: Think about the person(s) who have reached out to you in the past to love or serve or witness or disciple you. How is your life different because of them taking an interest in you? Make a prayer journal and give a page for each student you are seeking to win and/or disciple and start to record specific prayer requests for them and verses of Scripture to pray into their lives.

9. Where will I live next school year?

I will never forget the day I watched two Sam Houston State University juniors make a huge decision to go above and beyond the call. Garret and Martin moved back into the freshmen dorm intentionally to reach and disciple there with a vision to see Lone Star Dorm become a launching pad to the nations. This one decision has led to generations of disciples being raised up and sent out. In a disciple-making ministry, the place where you physically live determines the amount of time you will have to build relationships with those you seek to win to Christ. Don't fall into the trap of moving off campus just to have your own privacy and "apartment amenities." One characteristic of a disciple-maker is that they are willing to make any sacrifice to help another person grow. You'll be living in houses and apartments the rest of your life! Decide to move from selfishness to selflessness and identify the most strategic place you can live during your college years to maximize your impact for Christ—and do it!

Verses: Look up Philippians 1:12-13. Answer these questions:

In this passage, where was Paul residing...and why?

What sacrifices was he willing to make to be a witness to these Roman soldiers?

What comforts would you be willing to give up to reach others for Christ?

NEXT STEPS: If possible, live with the student group you are ministering to. Eat meals at the dining hall. Join their intramural team. Don't go home on the weekends; instead, gather students for activities. Become the host and ringleader of that group. Watch what the Lord will do in and through you!

10. At what local church will I worship and serve? Why this church?

Your involvement in a local body of believers is essential for your development as a follower of Jesus. As great as your campus ministry staff and programs are, there are great benefits to finding, attending, and serving in a local church there in your college town. You will be exposed to great teaching, to believers of all ages, and to families that provide good role models for you. Besides, when you get out of college, and move to some new city to start working, there probably won't be a "singles" version of your campus ministry for you to plug into. No, you will need to have the wisdom and experience to identify a good Bible-believing church to join and serve.

Verses: Look up Hebrews 10:24-25. Answer these questions:

Why did the writer exhort believers to gather together?

What was the impact of their coming together?

What could happen in and through your life if you gathered with other believers on a regular basis?

NEXT STEPS: Start discussing this topic with your discipler as to the qualities to look for in a good church. Discern which church—or churches—you want to visit and/or commit to and to which you would feel comfortable bringing other students with you. Be faithful to worship there, to give there, and find a way to serve. Make sure they feel good and support your own personal discipleship and disciple-making ministry.

11. What kind of training will I need to help me be successful in winning my world for Christ?

Ephesians 4 lists out gifts Jesus gives certain believers to equip the saints to do the work of ministry, especially disciple-making. During your college years, seek out training from these gifted leaders to equip you in your life and ministry. Training can be broken down into knowledge, skills, character, and vision. You can learn the first two rather easily from key leaders (and resources) around you, but the next two areas (character and vision) are more caught than taught. So, don't just look for charismatic leaders or teachers, but genuine and Christlike practitioners who are willing to spend extensive time equipping you in very practical ways. It's safe to say if you're reading this article the person who gave it to you is focused on the Master's plan of making disciples. Look no further. Be all in with this group!

Verse: Look up 2 Timothy 2:2. Answer these questions:

Paul and Timothy spent approximately 17 years together. From this verse (and others) what did Paul do to disciple Timothy?

What did Paul command Timothy to do with the training he had received?

Paul wanted Timothy to “entrust” himself and his teachings to other believers. How can you do that as well?

NEXT STEPS: If you don't have a solid disciple/equiper, start to pray and look around your campus, and the ministries and churches, to identify who is living out the kind of life and ministry you desire. Initiate with them and get a feel for whether you want to start getting some equipping and training from them. Make sure the focus is becoming a more ardent follower of Jesus, how to make disciples (who make disciples!), and gaining a variety of transferable tools for personal growth and ministry.

12. What will I do with my summer?

From this point on, you will probably only have three or four summers left where you have some discretion how to spend them. After these precious seasons fly by, you will be joining the rest of the working world, with maybe two weeks vacation each year! How will you spend these few summer months? Resting and enjoying seeing family and high school friends is great. But let's be honest, anything over two weeks can produce more harm than good as we are tempted to drift back into old habits and patterns. And yes, working a job or an internship has its benefits, but keep in mind you have the next fifty years to build a career. I would encourage you to “gear up” during the summer, not “gear down,” and to maximize that long break to build a strong foundation in life...and ministry. You will have some regrets if you choose to waste it!

Verses: Look up Colossians 2:6-7. Answer these questions:

What did Paul want the new believers to focus on after they had come to Christ?

What does it mean to be “rooted, built up, and established” in your faith?

What activities could you pursue that would rapidly and deeply produce that in your life?

NEXT STEPS: As a student disciple-maker, take advantage of these fantastic summer training opportunities from your campus ministry. Sign up well ahead of time and begin to recruit your discipleship group for the summer. If your ministry doesn't have a summer training program, contact us at CMT and let us give you some options. Spending six, eight, even ten weeks building a deep and abiding foundation in your walk with the Lord and the how-tos of multiplying your life into others is a very wise choice!

Kyndall's Story

Kyndall was a gifted student with a bright future, even being elected president of her sorority. She had several options how to spend her summer, but made the tough decision to attend a ten-week training project with the campus ministry she had gotten involved with. By mid-July Kyndall was so impacted by the vision and the equipping she was receiving, she determined she needed another full year and a summer to really be prepared to make disciples for a lifetime. She began her Great Commission decision making immediately, calling both her parents and academic advisor to rearrange her school schedule. During those next 15 months, Kyndall ordered her whole life around taking full advantage of the opportunities to be further trained and raise up many disciples in her sorority. She understood college was the very best time to lay a foundation for walking with Christ and multiplying her life. Kyndall took these 12 Great Commission decisions very seriously and the results were powerful. Why can't that be your story too?

NEXT STEPS: Look at all 12 questions we've listed:

Which one(s) will require a radical decision on your part?

Which one will you start on this week?

Which one will you begin next week?

What committed believer will you share the decisions you want to make and the timeline for implementing them?

When will you do that?