



Understanding of The Mission of Processing the Gospel in Indonesia According to the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20)

Siti Hadijah

Harvest International Theological Seminary, Jl. Gunung Rinjani No. 6, Taman Himalaya, Lippo Village, Tangerang
15811, Indonesia

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Abstract

The Gospel must be preached until all mankind on earth hears the good news from heaven. The Gospel Proclamation in Matthew 24:14 states: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a proof to all nations, and after that the end will come." The Gospel is the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ contained in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is a global mission, because in it, Jesus speaks about authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus is not only a teacher of the word, but He is God. Currently, many Christians and fellow Muslims in Indonesia misinterpret evangelism as a form of Christianization. This is an effort to suppress and hinder the preaching of the Gospel in Indonesia in various fields of life, such as politics, economics, religion, education and other fields as well as limiting movement and hindering the progress of the Gospel. Meanwhile fellow Muslims spread Islam in Christian pockets without any obstacles and are considered legitimate activities, such as, (1) North Sumatra, (2) Kalimantan, (3) North Sulawesi, (4) West Sulawesi, (5) Maluku, (6) Papua and (7) Flores, (8) Sumba and West Timor in East Nusa Tenggara. The research was conducted with the aim of encouraging believers in Indonesia to be sensitive in responding to God's call through evangelism, in accordance with the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 with the hope that the church understands its role in mission and evangelism, and explores strategies for capturing souls. new soul in Indonesia. The Great Commission of the Lord Jesus is recorded in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, namely Matthew 28:16 – 20, Mark 16:15 – 18, Luke 24:44 – 49, John 20:19 – 23; 21:15 – 29, and Acts 1:6 – 8. These five parts were written by four authors in different visions and aspects to complement each other. This research uses a literature study method. The research results show that fear in carrying out the Great Commission arises from various factors, including threats to safety, lack of understanding of Jesus' commands, lack of church support, obstacles to customary law and the government due to lack in understanding of the mission of the gospel in Indonesia according to the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20).

Keywords: *Jesus; Gospel; Missionary; Great Commission; Christianity; Indonesia*

1. Introduction

The Gospel must be preached until all mankind on earth hears the good news from heaven. The Gospel Proclamation in Matthew 24:14 states: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a testimony to all nations, and after that the end will come.” The Gospel is the commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ contained in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is a command given by Jesus to His followers to make disciples of all nations and teach them everything that Jesus had commanded. This command of Jesus plays an important role as a motif in almost every Christian gathering, causing people to recall the importance of His mission and evangelism. This command of Jesus serves as support and even a command that allows Christians to legitimize almost every type of missionary work to force non-Christians to become disciples of Jesus (Chung, 2015: 276).

Currently, many Christians and fellow Muslims in Indonesia have misinterpreted evangelism as a form of Christianization. This is an effort to suppress and hinder the preaching of the Gospel in Indonesia in various fields of life, such as politics, economics, religion, education and other fields as well as limiting movement and hindering the progress of the Gospel. Meanwhile, fellow Muslims spread Islam in regions (Table 1) and Christian enclaves (Map 1) without any obstacles and are considered legitimate activities. Aditiya (2022) reported that based on data from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the number of Christians spread across 10 provinces as of June 2021 (Table 1). Meanwhile, locations with quite large Christian communities are (1) North Sumatra, (2) Kalimantan, (3) North Sulawesi, (4) West Sulawesi, (5) Maluku, (6) Papua and (7-9) East Nusa Tenggara (Map 1).

Table 1. 10 Provinces with the Most Christians in Indonesia in June 2021 (Aditiya, 2022).

No.	Province	Total Christians
1.	Sumatera Utara	4.1 Juta
2.	Papua	3 Juta
3.	Nusa Tenggara Timur	2 Juta
4.	Sulawesi Utara	1,7 Juta
5.	Jakarta	962.190
6.	Jawa Barat	859.369
7.	Maluku	739.367
8.	Sulawesi Selatan	693.511
9.	Jawa Timur	683. 772
10.	Kalimantan Barat	631.788



Map 1. Locations with large Christian communities (Indonesia Investments, n.d.).

On the other hand, Christians are prohibited from doing this in Muslim areas. The Church and Christians must not be influenced by criticism of Christianization which could hinder the process of spreading the Gospel. The Gospel must be preached so that people realize that without God's intervention in saving humanity from the power of Satan and sin, no matter what human plans there is, there is no salvation in it. The Gospel provides a way out for humans to be free and escape the grip of Satan, namely sin that brings death (Romans 6:23) (Haans, 2021: 109).

In general, the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dirjen Dukcapil) of the Indonesian Ministry of Home Affairs released Indonesia's net population data (DKB) for semester 1 of 2024 regarding data on the number of religious adherents in Indonesia. Islam is the majority with 87.08 percent or 245,973,915 people. Then, Christians 7.40 percent or 20,911,697 people, Catholics 3.07 percent or 8,667,619 people. Then Hindus 1.68 percent or 4,744,543 people, Buddhists 0.71 percent or 2,004,352 people, Confucians 0.03 percent or 76,636 people, and believers 0.03 percent or 98,822 people. The Muslim population is overwhelmingly Sunni. An estimated one to five million Muslims are Shia. Many smaller Muslim groups exist. There are 400 Ahmadiyyah communities with approximately 55,000 registered members, although some estimates put the total number of practicing Ahmadi Muslims at 200,000 to 500,000 (Figure 2).

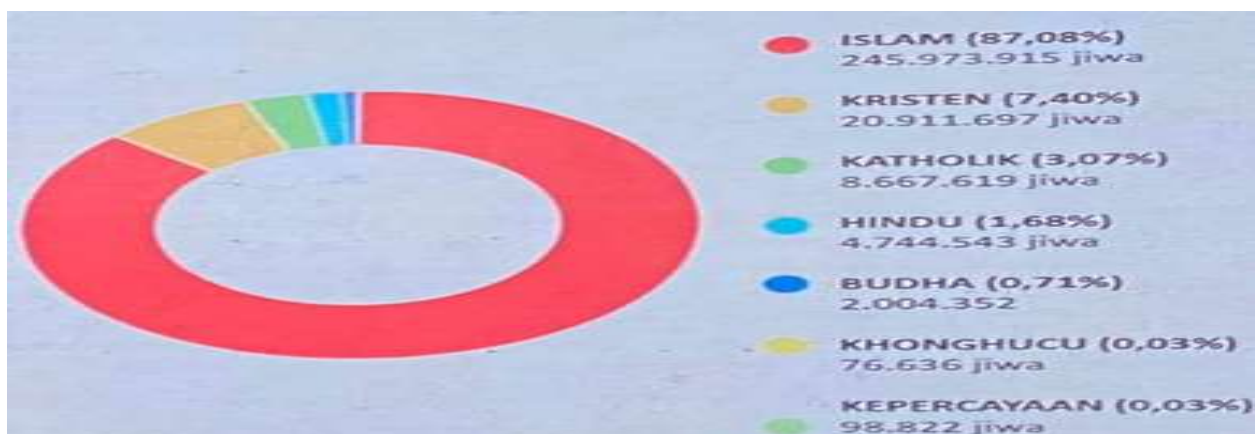


Figure 2. Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia, followed by 245 million people according to 2024 Dukcapil data (KumparanNews, 2024).

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is not only an integral part of the entire Gospel, but the evangelist intended it to be a summary and support for the Gospel. No other book in all of scripture comes to such a satisfying conclusion as Matthew with Jesus' command to keep His word and make disciples through baptism and His promise to accompany the church until the present age ends. The evangelist never tells his readers whether the apostles actually followed the command to make disciples of the Gentile nations (Scaer, 1991:246). Therefore, Jesus commanded his followers to go and make disciples of all nations by creating communities of obedience among the nations. 'Mission is replicated discipleship, learned through ethical obedience and passed on through teaching' (White and Assimeng, 2017:5). The Great Commission is the duty to proclaim the Gospel which involves proclaiming the good news, testifying from personal experience and relationship with God, loving others effectively through the power of the Holy Spirit, and undergoing the process of discipleship and growth to become a church (Jambrek, 2016:155). The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is a global mission, because in it, Jesus speaks about authority in heaven and on earth. Jesus is not only a teacher of the word, but He is God. Jesus had universal authority that He received from His Father which He then gave to His followers. This authority also speaks volumes about the defeat of the devil and his evil powers. Jesus has authority over sickness, sin, and other disorders. After His resurrection, Jesus had authority over death. That means that no power can hinder the spread of the Gospel. Jesus assured His followers that no devil in hell could stop them from preaching the Gospel. The Great Commission in this section is a global mission, because Jesus' disciples were called to make disciples of all nations. Mission was not limited to one particular nation, but included all nations, including Jews and non-Jews. The Gospel should be spread to people of all ages, races, religions, colors, classes, and so on. The Gospel must reach all the world's ethnic groups in their different languages, cultures and beliefs. The Gospel must spread to every geographic context in the world. This is a worldwide mission (Kgatle, 2018).

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 is a command given by Jesus to his followers so that they can continue to multiply as long as Christ desires. Matthew uses five lines to present this scenario. First, it discusses the characters and setting, then moves on to the circumstances. Then they are given motivation to act, order them what to do and how to do it, and finally, close with a promise that only God can give (Phelps, 2011: 17). The research was conducted with the aim of encouraging believers to be sensitive in responding to God's call through evangelism, in accordance with the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 with the hope that the church will understand its role in mission and evangelism, and explore strategies to attract new souls. in Indonesia.

2. Research Method

Broadly speaking, there are three types of research methods, namely: quantitative research methods, qualitative research methods, and combined research methods (Sugiyono, 2012: 9). From the three types of research, for this study, the researcher chose to use qualitative research methods that were literature studies. This method is done by taking data from textbooks and other literature as the main object. For the needs of this research, the researcher uses secondary data sources that seek and collect data from written materials, such as textbooks, scientific journals, and others. In the descriptive method will first review the mission concept according to the Great Commission Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:18-20. Next, it will be explained in detail explores strategies to attract new souls in Indonesia (Parapat dan Eliasaputra, 2021: 47).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Understanding Mission and the Great Commission

The word mission comes from the Latin word *missio*, which is the substantive form of *mittere*, a verb. In both languages, Latin and Greek, mission tends to have the meaning of sending or sending. Specifically, in the Greek text, other words related to mission are 'apostello' (often translated send) and 'pempo' (more like send). Broadly speaking, the word mission itself was only used by the Church starting in the 17th century (Oci, 2019). Mission is God's initiative in history which is rooted in His purpose to restore and heal creation and is a central biblical theme (Onwunta and Hendriks, 2013: 314). In the reality of life, it cannot be denied that God's mission takes place amidst the confrontation of historical forces including ideology, politics, economic systems, as well as religious movements and various social conditions (Simon, 2013).

Mission is inseparable from the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus because it is the essence and center of the message itself. The Great Commission commanded by Jesus Christ is essentially a call and call to global mission. The great commission referred to here is the term used for the command of Jesus Christ after He was resurrected, to spread the Gospel throughout the world. There are several versions of this commandment in the Bible, but the most widely used is Matthew 28:18–20 (Kgatle, 2018). Until now, the mission based on the Great Commission has been emphasized by going out to preach the Gospel and bringing new souls to Christ. Jesus' great commission is mandatory-estaphetical which is expressed in four verbs; go, make, baptize and teach. Of the four verbs, the main and important command is to make someone His disciple. In principle, long before someone is sent as a preacher of the Gospel, he must be disciplined first. Therefore, it can be concluded that before leaving, and then baptizing and teaching, there was a process of discipleship. This means that the individual becomes a student who learns from a teacher. So there is a kind of relay that must be taken (Subekti, 2019). When a person or group of people anywhere in this world has accepted Christ as Lord and savior from preaching the Gospel, is baptized and will be taught to become a disciple of Christ through the church, there is a relatively long process and time. In this regard, it is impossible for the church to ignore its social responsibilities, especially to those who are disadvantaged, experiencing physical and psychological problems, family rejection, and economic problems (Parapat and Eliasaputra, 2021). According to Nkansah-Obrempong (2017), the mission of the church in the context of the Great Commission clearly has two goals, namely outreach to souls and social responsibility. Both are equally critical as church mission activities.

3.2. The Concept of the Great Commission in the Bible

The concept of the Great Commission is not something new for all churches in the world. The Great Commission is a very important concept and is taught in the Bible. The Gospel writers themselves indicated how important the Great Commission was. The Great Commission of the Lord Jesus is recorded in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, namely Matthew 28:16 – 20, Mark 16:15 – 18, Luke 24:44 – 49, John 20:19 – 23; 21:15 – 29, and Acts 1:6 – 8. These five parts were written by four authors in different visions and aspects to complement each other (Tomatala, 2004: 25-25).

In general, Matthew emphasizes the authority, complete purpose and extended temporal scope of the work. Markus emphasizes the urgency, method and geographical scope of the work. Luke emphasizes the universal mandate of the work and John emphasizes the spiritual nature and equipment of the work. The four Gospel writers present the Lord Jesus in their own unique ways. The greatness of the Lord Jesus cannot be captured with just one image. Therefore, the Bible presents four images, each of which reveals a different aspect of the character of the Lord Jesus (Peters, 2006: 211-212). The Great Commission is not just great but the greatest mandate in history (Tong, 2004: 62). It is said to be great if you really realize who the Person giving this mandate is. It is also said to be great considering how big this mandate is (Petersen and Shamy, 2007: 9). These data show how important the Great Commission is for all believers on earth.

3.3. Exposition of the Great Commission According to Matthew 28: 18-20

“Jesus approached them and said: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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, and teaching them to do everything that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always until the end of time." (Matthew 28: 18-20). In this part of the Word, Jesus, who has risen from the dead, stands on a mountaintop in Galilee to give His final message to His disciples. The Great Commission consists of three important parts. The three important parts are the giving of authority from Jesus, Jesus' continuing mandate, and the giving of a promise of inclusion by Jesus (Verkuyl, 2007: 73-75). Bartholomew (2014: 21-25) has explained separately the three verses of the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18 – 20) as follows:

- (1) Giving authority from Jesus (verse 18).
- (2) After His resurrection, Jesus had authority over the entire world. The mission mandate is not the basis for His coronation, but rather the mandate is based on His authority. Thus, there is no region, nation, or culture that is not within His area of power and authority. His utterance of authority is reminiscent of Daniel 7:13 – 14 and His words before the Sanhedrin as written in Matthew 26:64.
- (3) Jesus' continuing mandate for mission (verse 19).

After obtaining full authority, Jesus then gave the mandate/mandate/command to His disciples. God's universal power leads to the church's universal duty to preach the Gospel. The mandate consists of four verbs, namely: (1) Go, (2) Make Disciples, (3) Baptize and (4) Teach.

- (4) Giving a promise by Jesus (verse 20).

Before giving the promise by Jesus, He gave the command in the form of the fourth verb, namely to teach everything. This word must be analyzed the same as the word baptizontes. This means that teaching activities are directly linked to baptism activities. In other words, after baptism is performed, the next activity that must be carried out is teaching it. Jesus ordered that the new converts be helped by being taught all the things He commanded. Here it is clear that Jesus' emphasis is on sound and continuous teaching. Good teaching will produce students who in time will also make disciples of others.

4. Conclusion

Currently, many Christians and fellow Muslims in Indonesia misinterpret evangelism as a form of Christianization. This is an effort to suppress and hinder the preaching of the Gospel in Indonesia in various fields of life, such as politics, economics, religion, education and other fields as well as limiting movement and hindering the progress of the Gospel. Meanwhile fellow Muslims spread Islam in Christian pockets without any obstacles and are considered legitimate activities, such as, (1) North Sumatra, (2) Kalimantan, (3) North Sulawesi, (4) West Sulawesi, (5) Maluku, (6) Papua and (7) Flores, (8) Sumba and West Timor in East Nusa Tenggara. The Great Commission of the Lord Jesus is recorded in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, namely Matthew 28:16 – 20, Mark 16:15 – 18, Luke 24:44 – 49, John 20:19 – 23; 21:15 – 29, and Acts 1:6 – 8. These five parts were written by four authors in different visions and aspects to complement each other. When a person or group of people anywhere in this world has accepted Christ as Lord and savior from preaching the Gospel, is baptized and will be taught to become a disciple of Christ through the church, there is a relatively long process and time. In this regard, it is impossible for the church to ignore its social responsibilities, especially to those who are disadvantaged, experiencing physical and psychological problems, family rejection, and economic problems. Fear in carrying out the Great Commission arises from various factors, including threats to safety, lack of understanding of Jesus' commands, lack of church support, obstacles to customary law and

the government due to lack in understanding of the mission of the gospel in Indonesia according to the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20).

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