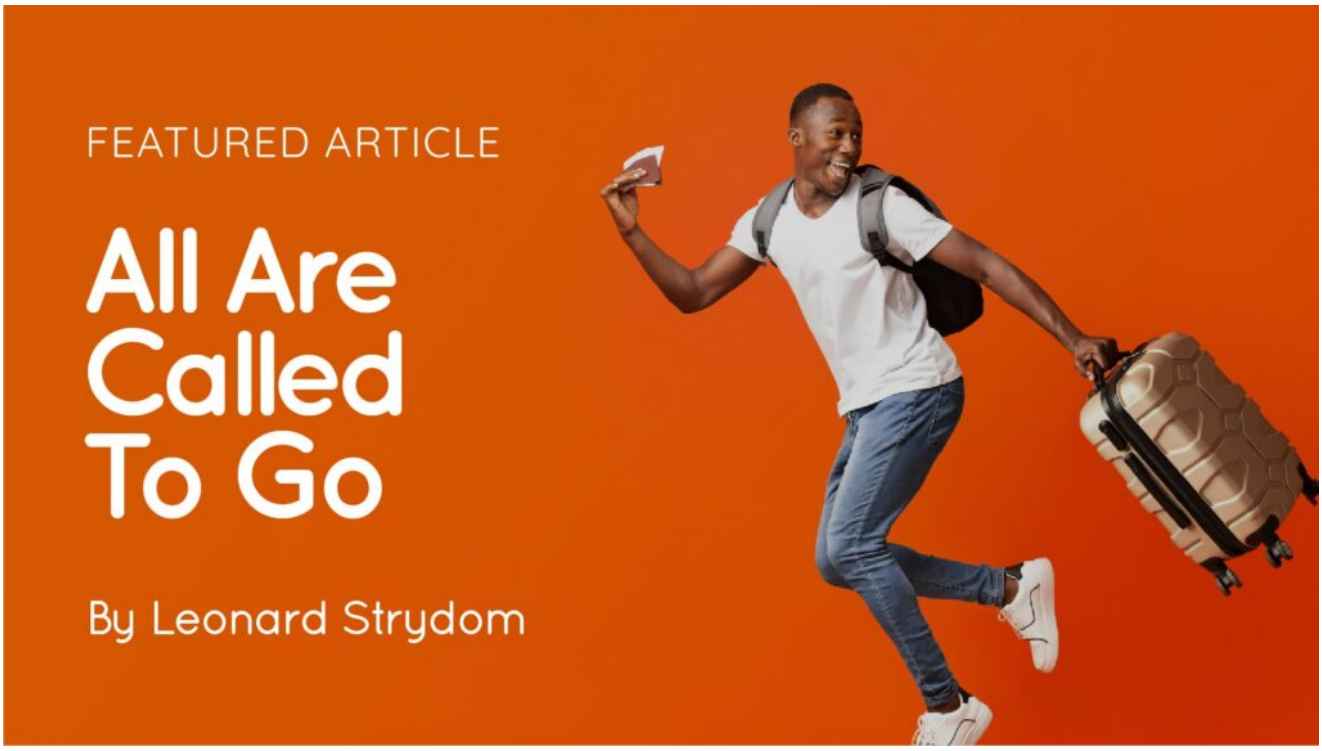
All Are Called to Go

Leonard Strydom 12 December 2024



The command to “go” is not optional—it’s central to our faith. Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:18-20, known as the Great Commission, leave no ambiguity.

> ‘And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”’ (NIV)

Every Christian is called to make disciples of all nations, baptising them and teaching them to obey everything He commanded. “Going” isn’t just for apostles or evangelists—it’s for every believer. While some may struggle to see themselves in traditional missionary roles, the command remains clear. Thankfully, “going” can take many forms, shaped by our context and season of life.

Witnessing in Judea, Samaria and to the Ends of the Earth

Acts 1:8 provides a framework for how we think about “going.” Jesus tells His disciples they will

be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. For the early disciples, these categories had clear meanings:

Jerusalem: Their immediate community, where they lived and worshipped.

Judea: Their broader cultural and regional context, familiar yet slightly removed.

Samaria: Crossing boundaries—geographic, cultural, or relational—to engage those considered outsiders.

Ends of the Earth: Taking the Gospel to distant and unknown nations.

This framework reminds us that "going" starts where we are but doesn't end there. It challenges us to think about those in our neighbourhood, our country, and far-off nations who need the Gospel.

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Adjusting the Method, Not the Mission

Having led different churches over the last few years, I've seen how "going" varies with context. With university students, extended holidays made it possible to send teams to other parts of South Africa and places like Brazil, Malawi, Zambia, the UK, Ireland, and the USA. Students boldly raised finances and went on these outreaches for two to three weeks at a time, experiencing God's power as they ministered to others.

Now, leading a church of working adults, I've had to rethink how we obey the Great Commission. While international outreaches remain valuable, they're not always feasible. For many, "going" looks more like shorter, community-focused missions. The mission hasn't changed, but the method has.

Practical Ways to "Go"

There are several ways of "going" beyond international outreaches. Hosting children's holiday clubs, handing out church invitations at university events, or other local initiatives are excellent examples. One way we've implemented this is through **Family Visits** and **Family Weekend Visits:**

Family Visits: A single-day Sunday visit to another church within the Four12 field of churches. These shorter trips allow us to encourage and serve another congregation while building

relationships. Often, these trips coincide with an invitation for me to minister at a different church.

Family Weekend Visits: A deeper experience where teams spend an entire weekend with another church. Members are hosted by church families, joining prayer meetings, Sunday services, and shared meals. These visits foster deeper connections and leave a lasting impact.

Before these visits, we train participants in practical ways to serve—how to join and participate in prayer meetings, how to welcome visitors, and how to be a blessing to those hosting them. It's probably obvious to recognise that these training areas are valuable to learn and apply in a local context too, which makes the entire process even more effective.

We've also had instances where we sent the entire church on Family Visits on a rotational basis so as to not deplete our own Sunday meetings. We opted to do this in smaller groups, sending one community (or home group) at a time to another church. After speaking with the lead elder of the host church and identifying specific ways we could bless them, we trained each community before sending them on their visit. The results have been remarkable, with deeper connections formed and the mission of "going" embraced by many.

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A Call to Equip and Activate

For church leaders, equipping and activating others to "go" is essential. We must not only teach about the Great Commission but also create opportunities for people to obey it.

This calling comes with an incredible promise: Jesus is with us as we go. This assurance is not just a distant encouragement but a promise of experiencing His presence and power in unique ways. When members of the church step out of their comfort zones, they often experience the truth of Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (NIV)

The beauty of "going" is that it's never a one-way street. As we aim to impact others, we are positively impacted in return, growing in faith and experiencing God's power in new ways.

Start Where You Are

You don't need to wait for the perfect moment to begin "going." Start in your "Jerusalem"—your immediate community. Reach out to neighbours, coworkers, or friends who need to know Jesus. Then, look for opportunities in your "Judea" and "Samaria," crossing boundaries to engage with

those different from you. Finally, consider how you might contribute to reaching the ends of the earth—through prayer, financial support, or going yourself.

The command to “go” is for all of us. Let’s embrace it with faith and boldness, knowing that as we obey, Jesus is with us every step of the way.