

Christ's Last Order

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Introduction

One of the key words utilised in the affairs of any army or military unit is the word *order*. Every soldier is responsible for knowing what is on orders for himself and his unit. Ignorance of orders is not a legitimate excuse for not executing them. A soldier is required to know them.

I have deliberately chosen as the title for this book “Christ’s Last Order.” As you may know, I am from a military background. Not only were many of my family members in the military, but I also spent five and a half years myself in the British army.

In every army, one of the common slogans you regularly encounter is the following: *ignorance of orders is no excuse*. Once again, a soldier is responsible for finding out what the orders are. If you don’t know, the fact that you didn’t see the noticeboard with the orders on it

or you didn't hear the word of command given is never an excuse.

True for Christians

I believe this same principle is true for us as Christians. If Christ has given us orders, we cannot excuse ourselves by saying, "I never knew about that." God's answer is: "It is all there in the New Testament. You are responsible to acquaint yourself with My orders."

Another principle in the New Testament (and in the army as well) is that orders remain in force until they are officially cancelled. It doesn't matter whether an order was given five minutes ago or five years ago. It is still in force.

Many Christians seem to have an attitude that says, "Everything written in the New Testament was said such a long while ago. It probably doesn't apply to us today." However, every order Christ gave us is still in force unless it has been cancelled by someone with authority to do it. Frankly, I do not know who that someone would be. Nor do I have any idea of when such a cancellation could have happened.

I believe the orders Christ gave are still in force today. We are responsible for two actions in regard to these orders. First of all, to know them; and second, to do them. Please remember what I said in the beginning: *ignorance of these orders is no excuse for not doing them.*

Chapter 1

Christ's Orders

In this book, the order from Jesus Christ which I am going to highlight is commonly known as the *Great Commission*. You will notice from the theme, however, that I have deliberately changed the word *commission* to *orders*. In my view, the word “commission” doesn’t have a sufficiently authoritative sense to it.

Therefore, I want to present the content of this book under the title of “Christ’s Orders.” They are *not* optional and thus we are not offered any alternatives. These are directives which Jesus requires us to carry out.

All Authority

As the foundation of our study, we will examine three passages in the New Testament. These passages will give us a clear understanding of exactly what Christ’s last

order is. First, though, it is important to establish by what authority Christ issues these directives.

The mention of authority is revealed in the first of the passages we will cover in Matthew 28:18–20:

Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore . . .”

I believe that the word “therefore” is very important. I have often said, “Whenever you find a therefore in the Bible, you want to find out what it’s *there for*.”

The statement Jesus has just made is connected by the word *therefore* to the order that He goes on to give. To paraphrase, He says, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. In the light of that fact, you need to go and exercise that authority by demonstrating it.”

You see, authority is completely ineffective unless it is exercised. People may have authority and never use it at any point in their lives. For them, it would be just as if they never had the authority to begin with.