

A REPLY TO KEITH MOSHER, THE MSOP FACULTY, AND OTHERS

By: Marion R. Fox

Keith Mosher and several of the speakers on the 2009 MSOP Lectureship made several arguments in the 2009 MSOP lectureship (pp. 265-275 etc.). Several of these arguments are unsound; therefore we shall address them in this treatise. Keith printed false charges about what I teach in the 2009 MSOP lectureship book and these false charges need to be publicly corrected.

Keith wrote: “Some today think that the commission from Jesus only applied to the apostles and, therefore, is abrogated.” (p. 259) Although I believe The Great Commission was limited to the apostles; I do not think I would use the word “abrogated” to describe the limited nature of the commission. Merriam-Webster defines the word “abrogate” as: “**1:** to abolish by authoritative action: ANNUL **2:** to treat as nonexistent ...” It is clear that The Ten Commandments were part of the Law of Moses that ended at the cross, but would Keith say that The Ten Commandments were abrogated? It is plain that nine of the Ten Commandments are still in effect (because they are part of The Law of Christ). It is evident that some parts of The Great Commission are still in effect (because other parts of the New Testament either implicitly or explicitly binds them upon mankind). This was discussed more thoroughly in my volume: *The Great Commission* (pp. 8-10, 60-61, and 90-93). It is plain that Keith’s use of the word “abrogate” confuses the issue and tends to “poison the well” with regard to this matter. Keith leaves the false impression (whether intentionally or unintentionally) that we do not believe in preaching/teaching the gospel to the lost. Surely, Keith would not intentionally mislead people with regard to what we teach.

Keith quoted Moffitt to prove that The Great Commission is for all Christians (p. 259). Is this not an appeal to human authority to prove his claim that The Great Commission is binding today? This quote of Moffitt proves absolutely nothing. It is merely the fallacy of an “Appeal to authority *ad verecundiam* (appeal to reverence).” Keith did not cite the reference of Moffitt in the bibliography, so we are unable to check his reference.

Keith included Mt. 28:18-20, Mk. 16:15-20, and Lk. 24:47-49 as being references to The Great Commission (p. 260). Since most translations (cf. KJV, ASV, NASB, etc.) have Lk. 24:45-47 as one sentence, it is unreasonable not to include Lk. 24:45-46 in The Great Commission. I wonder if Keith includes Jn. 20:21-23 as part of The Great Commission.

I agree with Keith that Mk. 16:17-20 is part of The Great Commission, but was surprised that he included these verses. By making these verses applicable to all 21st century Christians, Keith has **implicitly** embraced Pentecostalism (cf. Fox, 2007, pp. 85, 92, and 99).

By including Lk.24:47 and 49 as part of The Great Commission, Keith has **implicitly** condemned most 21st century members of the Lord’s church. This follows because most 21st century members of the Lord’s church have not begun their preaching in Jerusalem

(cf. Fox, 2007, pp. 67-69). Is it possible that Keith would claim that this part of The Great Commission is abrogated? Is Keith guilty of the logical fallacy of “special pleading?”

By including Lk. 24:48 as part of The Great Commission, Keith has **implicitly** endorsed the denominational practice of witnessing (cf. Fox, 2007, p. 66 and Fox, 2005, Chapter 13).

By including Lk. 24:49 as part of The Great Commission, Keith has **implicitly** endorsed Mac Deaver’s direct operation error. I linked this passage with being baptized in the Holy Spirit (cf. Fox, 2003, pp. 279-281 and Fox, 2007, pp. 68-69, 73-74, and 135). Note my argument of Fox, 2007, pp. 68-69:

Note the following argument:

First Premise: If 21st century Christians are not obligated to: “... tarry in Jerusalem until they are endued with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49 and Acts 1:8), then 21st century Christians are not obligated to obey the Great Commission.

Second Premise: 21st century Christians are not obligated to: “... tarry in Jerusalem until they are endued with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49 and Acts 1:8).

Conclusion: 21st century Christians are not obligated to obey the Great Commission.
CHART GC-2

Keith commits the logical fallacy of “forgetful generalization” (cf. Fox, 2007, pp. 8-10). This fallacy is sometimes called “forgetful induction.” His basic argument is:

First Premise: If The Great Commission was only for the apostles, then only the apostles were obligated to obey the commandments of The Great Commission.

Second Premise: The Great Commission was only for the apostles.

Conclusion: Only the apostles were obligated to obey the commandments of The Great Commission.

Note my argument illustrating how Keith has committed this fallacy:

First Premise: If The Ten Commandments were only for the Jews, then only the Jews were obligated to obey the commandments of The Ten Commandments.

Second Premise: The Ten Commandments were only for the Jews.

Conclusion: Only the Jews were obligated to obey the commandments of The Ten Commandments.

I have encountered many denominational people who have made same this argument, but I am dismayed to see a prominent preacher in the Lord’s church committing the same logical fallacy these denominational people make! The problem with Keith’s argument is in the fact that he makes a forgetful generalization. We (Christians) are obligated to obey nine of The Ten Commandments (because they are in the New Testament), but one of The Ten Commandments is not in the New Testament (meaning that Christians are not to keep the Sabbath). Even though The Great Commission (in its entirety) was given only to the apostles, there are parts of it that are binding upon various 21st century Christians (because these parts are found in other passages in the New Testament [just like The Ten Commandments]).

Keith also makes a fallacious argument that contains the fallacy of “affirming the consequent. Note Keith’s argument:

First Premise: If the Great Commission is binding upon 21st century Christians, then 21st century Christians are obligated to teach the gospel to the whole world. (Axiomatic)

Second Premise: 21st century Christians are obligated to teach the gospel to the whole world. (True, with certain limitations -limitations for women etc.)

Conclusion: The Great Commission is binding upon 21st century Christians.

Anyone who knows elementary logic knows that this argument proves absolutely nothing because it contains the logical fallacy of “affirming the consequent.” This fallacy was discussed in Fox (2003, Appendix A.)

Keith argues that if The Great Commission were only given (explicitly) to eleven of the apostles (pp. 262-263), this should exclude Matthias and Paul (if the Great Commission was limited to the apostles). Keith has forgotten that the Scriptures teach that The Great Commission included: (1) Witnessing (Lk. 24:48 and Acts 1:8), (2) being clothed with power from on high (Lk. 24:49 and Acts 1:8), (3) reception of the promise of the Father (Lk. 24:49 and Acts 1:4-5), (4) being baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5), etc. All of these things are linked with the miraculous gift of apostleship. If The Great Commission were equal to The Apostolic Commission, then it was for all apostles. This is Keith’s argument to prove that more than those to whom it was spoken were under The Great Commission. To be fair with Keith, he is at least trying to give a reason for making it applicable to more than those to whom it was explicitly spoken. (Most preachers in the church “beg the question” that is, they merely assert that The Great Commission is for non-apostles [without even trying to give a proof].) My method of proving that The Great Commission was limited to the apostles was quite simple: First, I showed the logical implications of making it applicable to more than the apostles (cf. Chart 1) and Second, I showed that the passages included in The Great Commission prove that it was limited to the apostles (cf. Chart 2). In order to view these charts the reader should go to: <http://members.cox.net/mrfox1/extras.html> and then to the great commission and download the charts.

Keith wrote:

And, the brethren (male and female) scattered by persecution went ‘every where preaching the word’ (Acts 8:4). The apostles were not forced out of Jerusalem by the persecution (Acts 8:1). By what authority did those scattered disciples go every where? It is a historical fact that the Gospel According to Matthew was written to the church at least three decades after the start of the church (Acts 2). God does all things economically, so why tell the church about the need to preach to everyone; if such a command were abrogated after the eleven apostles heard it? (p. 263)

Jim Dearman also made this same unsound argument:

The commission to carry the gospel to all creation originated with the apostles, but it was perpetuated by the early Christians. Upon the first major persecution against the church, Acts 8:1 informs us that the apostles remained in Jerusalem while their fellow Christians were scattered abroad. Verse four reveals that, as they were scattered, they went everywhere preaching the Word. If the commission applied only to the apostles, these early Christians did not know it. (p. 195)

Both Keith and Jim commit a simple logical fallacy. Their argument is:

First Premise: If non-apostles preached the gospel, then The Great Commission was binding upon all non-apostles.

Second Premise: Non-apostles preach the gospel.

Conclusion: The Great Commission was binding upon all non-apostles.

This first premise (in categorical form) is: "All non-apostles who preached the gospel are those who preached the gospel under the authority of The Great Commission." This argument "begs the question" (it assumes what they are trying to prove). Allow me to set forth another argument (of this same form) to show the irrational nature of this argument.

First Premise: If non-apostles worked miracles, then either the baptism in the Holy Spirit or the laying-on-of-hands was promised to all non-apostles.

Second Premise: Non-apostles worked miracles. (axiomatic)

Conclusion: Either the baptism in the Holy Spirit or the laying-on-of-hands was promised to all non-apostles.

How would Keith and Jim reply to this same (in form) argument if it were made by a Pentecostal? It is evident to a child that the non-apostles might have been preaching the gospel in obedience to other passages of Scripture. (I have proven this in Fox, 2007, Chap. 3.) Allow me to set forth another argument that exposes the fallacy committed by both Keith and Jim:

First Premise: If non-Jews obeyed part of The Ten Commandments, then non-Jews are under The Ten Commandments.

Second Premise: Non-Jews obeyed part of The Ten Commandments (nine are given in the New Testament).

Conclusion: Non-Jews are under The Ten Commandments.

Both Keith and Jim have **implicitly** endorsed Sabbatarianism by their arguments.

In the prior paragraph, Keith Mosher wrote: "... the brethren (male and female) ... went 'every where preaching the word' (Acts 8:4)." Garland Elkins wrote: "The great commission applies to both men and women. There are those who actually contend that the great commission does not apply to women." (p. 100) Garland also wrote: "We need to learn that the great commission applies to all of us. There are no exceptions. Jesus said, 'Go ... preach the gospel' (Mark 16:15); ..." (p. 101) The reader should note that The Great Commission says: "15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (ASV) or "15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (KJV) Garland left out part of Mk. 16:15: "... to every creature." Garland **implicitly** has women being obligated to preach the gospel to every creature (this includes both men and women). Charles Box wrote: "Christians must understand that the great commission also applies to those in prison. Teaching all nations or preaching the gospel to every creature applies to all Christians and we must go to every lost person." (p. 428) Charles has women (the expression "all Christians" includes women) being obligated to preach the gospel to every creature (this includes both men and women). From this it is clear that these men are **implicitly** advocating women preachers. (A preacher is one who preaches and these men have women being obligated to preach the gospel to every creature [including men].) Note my argument:

First Premise: If women are obligated to obey The Great Commission, then women are obligated to preach the gospel to every creature.

Second Premise: Women are obligated to obey The Great Commission. (*Their false claim*)

Conclusion: Women are obligated to preach the gospel to every creature.

From this conclusion we derive the following argument:

First Premise: If women are obligated to preach the gospel to every creature and men are included in the expression “every creature,” then women are obligated to preach the gospel to men.

Second Premise: Women are obligated to preach the gospel to every creature and men are included in the expression “every creature. (The first part of this conjunction is their false claim and the second part is axiomatic.)

Conclusion: Women are obligated to preach the gospel to men.

It is manifest why these men have opposed what I have written in my two volumes on *The Role of Women*. Are these men “closet change agents?”

Keith Mosher wrote: “In fact, all taught persons were commanded to ‘obey all things commanded’ (emphasis added, K. M.) to the apostles (Mat. 28:20).” (p. 264) Timothy Wilkes wrote:

They were commanded to go and make disciples of all the nations (Mat. 28:19 ASV), teaching those whom they converted to observe all things that they were commanded to do; one of which was to teach the gospel. By this command the Lord perpetuated evangelism until His return. (p. 249)

Keith Mosher wrote:

The above question about authority today is that for the church is found at 2 Timothy 2:2. ‘And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also’ (Fox, 30). The problem with using 2 Timothy 2:2 instead of the Great Commission is that only the ‘faithful’ could be taught. One teaching sinners is hardly teaching faithful¹ people! And, the term, *men*, following faithful in 2 Timothy 2:2 is *anthroopois*, which is a reference to mankind inclusive of males and females. Therefore another question arises. Are women under the commands of the Great Commission? (p. 264)

Keith refers to the article by Wayne Jackson for an answer to this last question, but Wayne does not answer this question. From this quote we do not know if Keith claims that women are under the injunction to “preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15-16). From other sermons/lectures that Keith has delivered we know that he claims that women are under this injunction. If Keith makes the claim that women must “preach the gospel to every creature” (including men), then Keith is **implicitly** advocating women preachers. From this it is clear why these men have opposed what I have written in my two books: *The Role of Women*, Vols. 1 & 2. Why was Keith so unclear in what he teaches here? Is Keith backing away from what he has taught at other times?

¹ I will deal with this argument in my upcoming volume: *The Role of Women, Vol. 3*. (I plan to print it with Vols. 1 and 2 and merge these three volumes into one book.) My reply to this argument has already been written.

Keith Mosher includes an article by Wayne Jackson in his chapter of this volume (pp. 265-270). Keith changed the format of Wayne's article and collapsed many of the paragraphs together (from the original article). Keith also corrected several typo and factual errors that Wayne had made in the original article. I wrote a fairly thorough reply to Wayne's article: <http://members.cox.net/mrfox1/jackson1.pdf> In addition, Melvin Elliott also wrote a fairly thorough reply to Wayne's misrepresentation of what Melvin wrote: <http://members.cox.net/mrfox1/jackson2.pdf> I point out that Keith changed the format of Wayne's article because my reply refers to the paragraphs by number and it is more difficult to follow my answers to Wayne (if one does not have a copy with the same paragraph arrangement).

Keith Mosher also made another argument that contains another logical fallacy. Keith wrote:

It is a historical fact that the Gospel According to Matthew was written to the church at least three decades after the start of the church (Acts 2). God does all things economically, so why tell the church about the need to preach to everyone; if such a command were abrogated after the eleven apostles heard it? (p. 263)

I ask Keith: "Why tell the church about the need to 'tarry in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.'" (Lk. 24:49)? This is one of the arguments (in form) that Mac Deaver has made when he encounters a person who properly teaches that "the gift of the Holy Spirit" was miraculous endowments. This is the same basic argument that Keith and those who teach some of the same errors that he teaches on the role of women make when they claim that 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 is limited to the First Century. (I dealt with this argument in Fox, Vol. 2, Chap. 7, 2006.) Keith asks the following question: "... so why tell the church about the need to preach to everyone; if such a command were abrogated after the eleven apostles heard it?" We teach that there is a need to preach to everyone because other passages obligate us to preach/teach the gospel to others. I could ask Keith: "So why tell the church about the need to honor your father and mother since The Ten Commandments were abrogated?" Is this the kind of reasoning being taught to the students at the MSOP?

Note how Keith uses the word "abrogate" which poisons the well. The word "abrogate" means: "**1:** to abolish by authoritative action: ANNUL **2:** to treat as nonexistent" (Merriam-Webster). Are we to believe that a man with a doctorate degree accidentally chose this word to use here? Does he not understand the connotative meaning of this word? Certainly The Great Commission was no more abrogated than The Ten Commandments were abrogated. Would Keith claim that all parts of The New Testament relating to miracles were abrogated? Would Keith claim that all prophecies that have been fulfilled were abrogated?

Robert Taylor made several of these same arguments in his open forum speech at the 2008 Online Academy of Biblical Studies lectures. He began answering a question on The Great Commission 4:27 minutes into the forum and ended it at 8:53 minutes into the forum. Robert also made a false claim that Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott knew they were under The Great Commission (at 7:15 minutes into the forum). We sent Robert a copy of my book: *The Great Commission* and a revised copy of Appendix A of this

book. However, Robert did not reply to us. You can view Robert's speech at the following link: <http://www.oabs.org/ondemand/phillips2008/pslec080418Forum.aspx> You can view the revised copy of Appendix A at the link in the following paragraph (below). I once held Robert Taylor in high esteem, but I am now greatly disappointed in his actions in this matter.

Both the Online Academy of Biblical Studies (OABS) director (Tom Bright) and faculty and the Memphis School of Preaching (MSOP) director and faculty have made it a test of fellowship to believe that The Great Commission was limited to the apostles. However, these men are inconsistent in that they will not mark the numerous preachers who taught that The Great Commission was limited to the apostles. I teach the same thing taught by: E. M. Borden, C. E. W. Dorris, Ben Franklin, W. T. Hamilton, Ashley Johnson, David Lipscomb, J. W. McGarvey, Robert Milligan, C. R. Nichol, Gus Nichols, Cornelius Quick, J. W. Shepherd, Foy E. Wallace Jr., and R. L. Whiteside. Those who have made this a test of fellowship (those from OABS and MSOP) are hypocritical in that they will not mark these men as false teachers. For evidence that these men limited The Great Commission to the apostles refer to the revised Appendix A of my book: *The Great Commission*: <http://members.cox.net/mrfox1/appa.pdf> . In their inconsistency, by definition, they are unrighteous (cf. my articles on righteousness in the *One Heart Journal*):

<http://www.okcsbs.com/oneheart/win07.pdf> (page 1)

<http://www.okcsbs.com/oneheart/spr07.pdf> (page 1)

<http://www.okcsbs.com/oneheart/sum07.pdf> (page 1)

<http://www.okcsbs.com/oneheart/fal07.pdf> (page 1)

<http://www.okcsbs.com/oneheart/sum08.pdf> (page 9)

CHALLENGES TO DEBATE THIS MATTER

We have encountered several men who appeared to be willing to debate the role of women and/or The Great Commission. The devil is in the details. Since the expression "The Great Commission" is not a biblical expression, I have demanded that these men specifically list all passages that they claim are part of The Great Commission. These men usually refuse to list the passages or they want to limit the discussion to Mk. 16:15-16 and Mt. 28:18-20.

I have not refused to define what I teach and what verses I claim constitute "The Great Commission" (or The Apostolic Commission as I would name it). I have written a book on this subject for the whole world to see what I teach. Except for Wayne Jackson and his reply (that is filled with: factual errors, logical errors, and false claims about what I teach) virtually no one had publicly dealt with my writings (on the role of women and The Great Commission) until Keith Mosher and the MSOP had their speakers to deal with my writings in the 2009 lectureship book. I am sorely disappointed in the lack of sound reasoning on the part of these men. I pray that they will learn the truth on this matter and restore the fellowship that we no longer have (by repenting and confessing their sin in teaching this error and making false charges about what I teach).

I wonder if: (1) the misrepresentation of what others teach, (2) the usage of unsound hermeneutics, and (3) the committing of logical fallacies is a fair representation of what is being taught and practiced at The Memphis School of Preaching? To this I say:
μη γενοιτο!

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