

**Third Presbyterian Church**  
**Midweek Bible Study**  
**Miracle Series**  
**Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem**  
**Lesson 15 – Jesus Rose, Now What**

**Matthew 28:1-20 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. <sup>2</sup> There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. <sup>3</sup> His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. <sup>4</sup> The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." <sup>8</sup> So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me." <sup>11</sup> While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. <sup>12</sup> When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, <sup>13</sup> telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' <sup>14</sup> If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." <sup>15</sup> So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day. <sup>16</sup> Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

1. Explain why the resurrection is the foundation of the Gospel.
2. What is the significance that the disciples Worshiped Jesus after the resurrection?
3. What does a life of unreserved worship of Jesus specifically look like in a disciple today?
4. The sermon talked about the difference of operating under the authority of Jesus vs. our own authority. Explain the difference. How do we know we are operating under the authority of Jesus?
5. What is an Initiator of the Faith?
6. What does it mean to “earn the right” to engage someone spiritually?
  - a. What happens when we don’t earn the right and just take the liberty to engage someone spiritually?
7. What does it mean to "make disciples"?
8. What role do you have in making disciples?
9. How can knowing that Jesus is always with us make a difference in our daily lives?
10. What specific teaching of Christ do you need to obey more consistently?
11. What step can you take this week in the process of making disciples?
12. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

## The Messiah's Resurrection: Surrounding Events, 28:1-15

(28:1-15) **Introduction:** Matthew reports five significant events surrounding the resurrection—events that stir interest and challenge action.

1. The time of the resurrection (v.1).
2. The first witnesses of the resurrection (v.1).
3. The miraculous events of the resurrection (v.2-4).
4. The appeals of the resurrection (v.5-10).
5. The attempt to discredit the resurrection (v.11-15).

**1. (28:1) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** the time of the resurrection. Jesus arose after the Sabbath was over, that is, on Sunday, the first day of the week. There are four facts to note about this.

1. Matthew said, "In the end of the Sabbath" which means late on the Sabbath. Matthew was not speaking of strict Jewish time. This would mean the Sabbath had ended at 6 p.m. the preceding evening of Saturday (see Deeper Study #1—Mark 6:48). He was using the common day to day idea of time. He was simply adding the night time to the preceding day (cp. Mark 16:1).

2. Jesus arose before dawn, before the sun arose on Sunday morning. This was significant to the early Christian believers, so significant that they broke away from the practice of worshipping on the Sabbath or Saturday. They began to worship on Sunday, the day of the resurrection of their Lord.

**"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).**

**"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. 16:2).**

3. Jesus arose on the first day of the week, on Sunday morning. This means that He arose on the third day just as He had said (Matthew 12:40; Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:19; Mark 9:31; Mark 10:34; Luke 9:22; Luke 18:33; Luke 24:7, 46). His arising from the dead is a triumph, a conquest over death. Death reigns no more. Its rule has been broken. (See note—Romans 8:2-4.)

**"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Cor. 1:9-10).**

**"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).**

**"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man....Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2:9, 14-15).**

4. Again, Jesus arose on the first day of the week, Sunday morning. He was in the grave on the Sabbath, unable to observe the laws governing the great season of the Passover and the Sabbath. He was dead; therefore, the law and its observances had no authority over Him. This is symbolic of the identification believers gain in

Christ. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, God identifies the man with Christ, in particular with the death of Christ. God counts the man as having died with Christ. Therefore, in Christ's death believers become dead to the law (see note—' Romans 7:4; Deeper Study #2—Romans 8:3; note—' Matthew 5:17-18 for more discussion).

**"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6).**

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).**

**"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments [elements, things] of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances" (Col. 2:20).**

## **2. (28:1) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** the first witnesses of the resurrection. Note several things.

1. The first witnesses were women, not men, not even his own disciples. The women took the lead in love and care for the Lord Jesus.
2. Two reasons are given for the women coming to the tomb of Jesus.
  - a. Matthew says the women "came...to see the sepulchre." The Greek word "to see" (*theōrēsai* <sup>PWS: 4000</sup>) means to contemplate, to gaze, to observe in order to grasp. They came to be close to their Lord, the One who meant so much to them, to mourn over Him, to think through all that had happened. This is an important point, for it perhaps explains why the women were more prepared to believe the miracle of the resurrection.

**"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not" (Mark 16:9-11).**

**"It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Luke 24:10-11).**

**Thought 1.** Thinking and meditating upon the Lord will help us to understand the Lord and prepare us to receive the great truth of His resurrection.

**"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).**

- b. Mark says the women came to "anoint Him" (Mark 16:1). They cared, so they wanted to take care of His body as loved ones do.

**Thought 1.** The women are an example to us in taking care of the bodies of our loved ones.

3. Mary Magdalene stands out as the most prominent of the women witnessing the resurrection of the Lord. Her love and devotion must have been deep, very deep. Mary had a very special quality about her, possessing a deeper love and devotion than most (cp. Mark 16:1, 9; Luke 24:10; John 20:11-18).

4. The other Mary was the mother of James and Joses. She just could not tear herself away from the body of Jesus which indicates a very special love and devotion for Him (Matthew 27:56, 61; Matthew 28:1; Mark 15:40; Luke 24:10). She was probably the mother of Cleopas as well (cp. John 19:25).

### **3. (28:2-4) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** the miraculous events of the resurrection.

1. There was the "great earthquake." Nothing more is said, only that it was *great*. The earthquake symbolized that a *historical convulsion* was taking place, an event that never before had happened: a man was rising from the dead, the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God Himself. Tragically He had been put to death by the hands of men, but gloriously He was being raised from the dead by the power of God (Romans 1:4; Ephes. 1:19-20). The historical event was a picture of the unbelievable convulsion that God was planning for the end time: the resurrection of all the dead. The resurrection of God's dear Son paved the way and prefigured the resurrection of all men. History was witnessing the most convulsive event of all time; the quaking of the earth was bound to happen.

2. There was the great stone rolled back (see Deeper Study #1—Matthew 27:65-66). The stone was not rolled back for the benefit of Christ, but for the witnesses to the resurrection. When Christ arose, He was in His resurrection body, the body of the spiritual dimension of being which has no physical bounds. But the witnesses needed to enter the tomb and see the truth (see outline—' John 20:1-10 and notes—' John 20:1-10).

3. There was the radiant figure, the angel of the Lord. Note two facts about the angel.

a. He rolled back the stone for the sake of the witnesses. He was a ministering spirit of God's, serving by helping God's people (see Deeper Study #1—Hebrews 1:4-14).

b. His appearance was dazzling:

⇒ just like lightning—visible, quick, startling, striking, frightening, brilliant.

⇒ just like snow—white, pure, glistening.

4. There were the guards and their terror. Matthew seems to indicate that the guards witnessed the flashing appearance of the angel and the rolling back of the stone. The suddenness of the event, the brilliant appearance and the enormous strength of the angel were like a volcanic eruption to them. They quaked, shook, and fell as dead men to the ground. They were either stricken unconscious or were so terrified they pretended to be unconscious.

**Thought 1.** The power of God is awesome and terrifying. The guards had been told they were to guard a dead body against thieving men. They were totally unprepared and unable to stand against the power of God and His messenger (angel). There is a strong lesson here for every unbeliever.

**"For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).**

**"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).**

**"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:18).**

**4. (28:5-10) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** the appeals of the resurrection. When the women arrived at the tomb, they saw the dazzling angel sitting on the stone. Mark says they saw "a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment" (Mark 16:5). Luke says "two men stood by them in shining garments" (Luke 24:4). Apparently, many angels were all about the tomb and the surrounding area attending Christ, joying and

rejoicing over what God had done. At the right time, one angel appeared to the women, then two. Note that they appeared as men, that is, as messengers of God.

The appeals of the resurrection are a message within themselves.

1. Fear not. There are three reasons why the person who seeks after Christ should not fear.
  - a. God knows the person who is seeking after the Messiah. He knows the movement of every heart. The person who seeks diligently shall find (Matthew 7:7).

**"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8).**

**"But if from thence [idolatry] thou shalt seek the LORD thy God thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 4:29).**

**"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:11-13).**

- b. Christ has been crucified to save every man.

**"Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:32-33).**

**"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6).**

**"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:15).**

**"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).**

**"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9).**

- c. Christ has now risen from the dead and conquered death.

**"But for us also, to whom it [righteousness] shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:24-25).**

**"[God's] power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephes. 1:19-20).**

2. Come, see: believe. Note that the angel reminded the women of the Lord's words: "He is risen, as He said" (cp. Matthew 16:21; Matthew 17:23; Matthew 20:19; Matthew 26:32). Note also that the women were told to "come, see the place." They were eyewitnesses of His resurrection.

**Thought 1.** Believers can become witnesses of the Lord's death and resurrection—clear witnesses. They can see as though they were eyewitnesses—all by God's Spirit.

**"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" (Galatians 3:1).**

**"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).**

**"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16).**

3. Go quickly and tell the glorious news. Sharing the glorious news is essential. It is the greatest news of all history: Christ is risen. He shall meet you and you shall see Him.

Note several things.

- a. The women obeyed. They became the very first witnesses for the risen Lord.
- b. The discouraged believers (disciples) were the first ones the women were to tell. The discouraged were to be encouraged and stirred to join the great force of witnesses.
- c. The witnessing was to be done quickly.
4. Hail: the glorious encounter with Jesus Himself. Note what happened when Christ was personally encountered.
  - a. He said, "All hail"; that is, rejoice.

**"Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).**

**"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).**

- b. There was the worship of Him: wonder, amazement, adoration, and awe.
- c. He said: "Be not afraid."

**"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7).**

- d. Go and tell my brothers: the commission was repeated because of the extreme importance of bearing the glorious news.

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).**

**"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).**

**"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).**

**"...Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:**

**whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:27-29).**

**5. (28:11-15) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** the attempt to discredit the resurrection. The outline above is adequate to see the event being described.

1. The guards reported the resurrection.
2. The authorities were baffled and they took counsel to decide what to do.
3. The authorities bribed and assured the soldiers of protection from Pilate.
4. The lie was found out; the truth marched on.

**Thought 1.** If the guards were asleep, how would they know what happened? Deception and lying are always contradicted by the truth.

**Thought 2.** Truth will always prevail (Matthew 28:15). It may take some time, but its triumph is assured.

**"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).**  
**"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness" (Ephes. 6:14).**

## **B. The Messiah's Final Commission to His Disciples, 28:16-20**

(28:16-20) **Introduction:** Matthew began his gospel by proclaiming that the baby Jesus was the Son of David, the promised King of Israel (Matthew 1:1-2). He now closes his gospel by proclaiming that the Lord Jesus possesses all power and authority in heaven and earth. The Lord Jesus had risen from the dead, and in the power of His resurrection His followers are to go forth proclaiming His glorious kingdom.

In this great passage Matthew covers the great commission of the resurrected Lord, the King to whom all power and authority belong.

1. The disciples met Jesus in Galilee (v.16-17).
2. He assured His followers of His power (v.18).
3. He commissioned His followers (v.19-20).
4. He promised to be with His followers—always (v.20).

**1. (28:16-17) Disciples:** the disciples met Jesus in Galilee. Note several background facts.

1. Matthew says the eleven disciples met Christ. The eleven were the prominent ones, but apparently there were over five hundred believers present, all seeing Him at once (1 Cor. 15:6). The reference to "they" and "some doubted" (Matthew 28:17) seems to indicate that this was the great appearance to the mass of believers mentioned by Paul. Christ had already appeared to the eleven on several occasions. They already knew the reality of His resurrection. It is unlikely that they were the ones who were questioning at this time (Mark 16:12-14; Luke 24:13-48; John 20:19-25; John 20:26-31; John 21:1-25).

2. The disciples met the Lord in Galilee on a pre-appointed mountain (cp. Matthew 26:32; Matthew 28:7, 10). The Lord had apparently instructed the apostles to pass the word along and to round up all His disciples to meet Him in a mass meeting in Galilee. A particular mountain was designated as the meeting place. Note that Galilee was where the Lord had conducted most of His ministry and where most of His disciples lived. It was also some distance from Jerusalem, a place somewhat safe from the immediate enemies of Christ.

**Thought 1.** There are appointed places where we are to meet the Lord: in prayer, devotions, worship, and Bible study. When we meet the Lord as He says, He meets us. We must meet the Lord as He instructs if we are to know the reality of His resurrection.

3. This is significant. They worshipped Him, but some doubted. They just were not sure. Note what Jesus did: He "came and spake to them" (Matthew 27:18). Apparently, His *coming and speaking to them* erased their doubt and questioning.

**Thought 1.** When we meet Christ as He instructs, He meets us. When He meets us, all fear and doubt vanish. The person who truly seeks after Christ, who truly seeks to meet Him, will have his doubts erased. Christ will *come and speak to him*.

## 2. (28:18) Power (*pasa exousia*<sup>PWS: 2981</sup>): Jesus assured His followers of His power.

1. Jesus' power or authority is a given power. It is given by God, and it is given for one reason: to exalt Christ above and over all.

**"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:8-9).**

2. Jesus' power is above and over all that is in heaven and in earth. His authority is over all the universe. His authority includes at least three areas.

- a. The Lord's authority includes the power to rule and reign...
  - to receive the worship and subjection of all men who willingly surrender to His dominion.

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).**

**"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20).**

**"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).**

**"Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12).**

- to bow the knee of all men and to receive their acknowledgement of His Lordship.

**"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in**



heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

- b. The Lord's authority includes the power to govern and direct...
- the affairs of men without violating man's freedom.

"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

"Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69).

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1).

"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him" (1 Peter 3:22).

- the affairs of nature and the world without violating the laws of nature.

"But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him!" (Matthew 8:27).

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Ephes. 1:22).

- c. The Lord's authority includes the power to forgive sins, to judge, receive and reject men, and to save and deliver men through life and death. (See outline—' Romans 8:28-39 and notes—' Romans 8:28-39.)

"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:6).

"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" (Luke 5:20-21).

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22).

"And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:27).

3. Jesus' power assures the believer of deliverance. Note *when* Jesus "came and spake" of His power: immediately upon the heels of some doubting and immediately before charging His disciples to go into a hostile world. He proclaimed His power in order to erase doubt and to strengthen His disciples in going forth. His power was the disciples' assurance of victory.

Now, in dealing with the supreme power and authority of Jesus Christ, there are two points that must always be remembered.

1. The Lord's supreme reign is not yet fully seen. God has not yet revealed His Son's supremacy in an absolute sense. However, there is *a striking reason* for God delaying the visible enthronement of His Son. God wants His Son to still be seen as the Savior of the world. He wants more and more persons to be saved before He ends the world and begins the sovereign reign of His Son upon earth.

**"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation....But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-9).**

2. The Lord's supreme reign over all the universe is assured.

**"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new \**

**3. (28:19-20) Commission, Great— Disciples, Making:** Jesus commissioned His followers. He commissioned not only the eleven apostles, but all who were present, more than five hundred disciples. However, note something of crucial importance: it was impossible for that generation to reach the whole world in its lifetime. Therefore, the commission given to the first generation of believers extends beyond to all generations of believers. The very same charge given to them is given to us. Our Lord charges us with the very same words, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations...."

The Lord's commission was threefold.

1. He commissions us to "go ye...and make disciples of all nations." This is one of the crucial verses in the Bible. No verse is more important for genuine believers.

Teaching and baptizing are not enough to reach the world for Christ. Both are important, and Christ commissions both; but He says something else must precede both: discipleship. "Go ye therefore and 'metheteusate' all nations" (Matthew 28:19). "*Mathēteusate* <sup>PWS: 3898</sup>" means to make disciples. Thus the verse accurately reads, "Go ye therefore and 'make disciples' of all nations...." Most messages that are preached on this passage stress the objective of our Lord, the reaching of all nations, as though this is what our Lord had in mind. There is no question, the great commission is what Christ had in mind. He has instructed us to go to all nations and evangelize them. But there is the strong conviction that He had more than that objective in mind, more than just an overriding purpose—much more.

Our Lord was not only telling us "to go and evangelize," He was telling us *how* to go and *how* to evangelize. He was not only giving His ultimate *objective* and overriding purpose, He was giving *the method* to use in evangelizing the world.

Think about the word "*mathēteusate*" (make disciples). What does our Lord mean by "make disciples"? Does it not mean that we are to do what He did: make disciples and do things with them as He did. Is He not telling us to do exactly as He did?

What *did* He do? Christ "came to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He sought the lost, those who were willing to commit their lives to Him. And when He found such a person, He saved that person. When

Christ found a person who was willing to commit his life, Christ attached Himself to that person. Christ began to mold and make that person into His image. The word *attach* is the key word. It is probably the word that best describes discipleship. Christ made disciples of men by attaching Himself to them; and through that personal attachment, they were able to observe His life and conversation; and in seeing and hearing, they began to absorb and assimilate His very character and behavior. They began to follow Him and to serve Him more closely. In simple terms this is what our Lord did. This is the way He made disciples. This was His mission and His method, His obsession: to attach Himself to willing believers.

There is another way to describe what Christ did. Christ envisioned something beyond Himself and beyond His day and time. He envisioned an *extension* of Himself, an *extension* of His very being, and an *extension* of His mission and method. The way He chose to extend Himself was discipleship, attaching Himself to committed persons, and through attachment, the persons absorbed and assimilated the Lord's very character and mission. They in turn attached themselves to others and discipled them. They, too, expected their disciples to make disciples of others who were willing to commit their lives to Christ. Thus was the glorious message of Christ to march down through the centuries (2 Tim. 2:2).

There is no question what our Lord's commission is: we are to go; but more than that, we are to make disciples, to attach ourselves to those persons who will follow our Lord until they in turn can make disciples (2 Tim. 2:2).

**"And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 10:7).**

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).**

**"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).**

**"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**

**"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life" (Acts 5:20).**

**"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2).**

**"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).**

2. He commissioned us to baptize all nations (see Deeper Study #1—Mark 16:16; note—' Luke 3:21; Deeper Study #1—Acts 2:38). Two things need to be noted here.

- a. Baptism is of crucial importance. Christ says that it is as essential as teaching, despite the fact that it is a one-time act. It is as much a part of the commission of Christ as discipling and teaching. Christ is definitely teaching that baptism is to be the immediate sign and the identifying sign that a person is now stepping out of the heathen (unbelieving) ranks and taking his stand with Christ.
- b. Baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" means more than just saying a formula as one is baptized, much more. It means...
  - a statement of faith: of belief in God as the true Father of Jesus Christ; of belief in Christ as the true Son of God, the Savior of the world; of belief in the Holy Spirit as the Comforter of the believer.
  - a commitment to follow God: to follow Him as revealed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (cp. Christ's constant references to God as His Father, to Himself as the Son, and to the

Holy Spirit throughout the Gospel of John. Also cp. Matthew 11:27; Matthew 24:36. Also see outline—' John 14:15-26 and notes, Holy Spirit—' John 14:15-26; outline—' John 16:7-15 and notes—' John 16:7-15 ; outline—' Romans 8:1-17 and notes—' Romans 8:1-17.)

**"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).**

**"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).**

**"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" (Acts 10:48).**

**"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).**

3. He commissioned us to teach all that Christ had commanded. Teaching is just as essential as making disciples and baptizing. One is not to be emphasized over the other. All are part of the commission of our Lord. Note what is to be taught (*edidaske*): "all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).**

**"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:45).**

**"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16).**

**"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim. 4:6).**

**"These things command and teach" (1 Tim. 4:11).**

**"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (2 Tim. 2:24).**

**"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:6-7).**

**"And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean" (Ezekiel 44:23).**

**Thought 1.** What Christ taught and commanded must be studied and studied, to the point of learning and knowing and practicing. The commandments of Christ will be the first things taught. They should be the rule of society.

**Thought 2.** Society deteriorates and crumbles when it neglects the teaching and commandments of Christ.

**4. (28:20) Jesus Christ, Presence:** Jesus promised to be with His followers—always.

1. Note the word "lo," or behold. Christ used this striking word to get the attention of His followers, to startle them to wake up and listen. He was about to encourage them in the great task He had charged to their care.

2. Note the great promise: "I am with you." He gave emphatic assurance: not "I will be with you," but "I am with you." Christ is with the believer as the believer goes forth to make disciples of all nations. Christ is with us...

- every step
- every decision
- every trial
- every joy
- every day
- every hour
- every sorrow
- when without
- when poor
- when having nothing
- when having plenty
- when abused
- when sick
- when facing death

3. Note the boundless promise: "always, even unto the end of the world." There is not a moment when Christ is not with the believer to help him in his witness, even if his witness means abuse, persecution, and martyrdom.

**"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).**

**"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).**

**"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Hebrews 13:5-6).**

**"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of" (Genesis 28:15).**

**"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).**

**"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).**