



## WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Jesus expects His followers to seek to be disciple-makers of all people.

### MATTHEW 28:16-20

#### FIRST THOUGHTS

When young people receive a **commission** as officers in the U.S. military, it's a proud day and a wonderful honor. What is a *commission*? When they are given their commission, they receive a task to defend their country and to lead young soldiers. We have a higher honor as Christians. We serve a living King who has given us a spiritual commission. What commission has Jesus given us? This session is about our commission as Jesus' followers.

#### UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

Jesus was crucified on Friday. After Jesus' death, Jesus' followers hid. They were afraid of being arrested for their connection with Jesus as His followers. Then on Sunday, Jesus rose from the dead. Two women went to His tomb and an angel told the women the great news that Jesus was alive. The two women went and told Jesus' followers. This session starts where the followers go to meet Jesus.

## EXPLORE THE TEXT (MATTHEW 28:16-20)

### 1. Worship (Matthew 28:16-17)

#### VERSE 16.

<sup>16</sup> *The eleven followers went to Galilee to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.*

The eleven disciples obeyed Jesus. Jesus had told them to go to a specific mountain. The Gospel of Mark tells us Jesus explained, before His death, where the disciples were to meet Him after He rose from the dead (Mark 16:7). Galilee was a familiar place for the disciples. They must have felt safe and comforted to meet Jesus again in a familiar area. The disciples went there to meet with Jesus again.

#### VERSE 17.

<sup>17</sup> *On the mountain they saw Jesus and worshiped Him, but some of them did not believe it was really Jesus.*

The disciples saw Jesus on the mountain. What was the first thing they did when they saw Jesus? They worshiped Jesus. What does it mean to worship Jesus? *Worship* means “to praise Jesus and thank Him for what He has done for us.” Worship means to focus on Jesus and tell Jesus how wonderful He is. The disciples were in awe of Jesus. Jesus had died and come back to life again. What a wonderful Savior and Lord! What a wonderful hope Jesus gave to His disciples and to us, too. We can experience eternal life! We will not stay dead. If we are Jesus’ followers we too will rise from the grave and live forever.

It is important to understand that the disciples worshiped Jesus because they realized that Jesus was God. When the disciples saw that Jesus was risen from the dead, the disciples understood that Jesus was not just a man. Jesus was God Himself.

Note the sad contrast—the disciples worshiped Jesus, but some did not believe that it was really Jesus standing there with them. Worship and doubt cannot go together. If you have doubt in your heart, then you cannot truly worship Jesus. The writer of Hebrews said that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). We must have faith in Jesus to make God happy with us.

True worship also leads to obedience. The disciples saw that Jesus was truly God and worshiped Him. Next, the disciples were ready to obey and serve Jesus. Jesus had brought joy and hope into their lives. The disciples were willing to do whatever Jesus wanted them to do, even if it meant dying for Jesus. Jesus soon told the disciples what He wanted them to do for Him.

Can you worship Jesus and doubt that He is God? Why or why not?

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How did knowing Jesus was alive change the disciples?

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How should knowing Jesus is alive change how we live?

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Discuss your answers with your group.

**BIBLE SKILL:** *Compare Verses*

The word *Trinity* is not in the Bible, but the concept is clear. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one. Matthew 28:19 mentions all three persons of the Trinity. There are some other places in the Bible where all three persons of the Trinity are mentioned or where the plural nature of God is mentioned. Look up these verses and write down what they have to say about God as Three persons.

Genesis 1:26 \_\_\_\_\_

Genesis 11:7 \_\_\_\_\_

John 14:26 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 13:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1:17 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 9:14 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 1:2 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 3:18 \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Power (Matthew 28:18)

### VERSE 18.

<sup>18</sup> *Then Jesus came to them and said, “All power in heaven and on earth is given to Me.*

What was the first thing Jesus told His disciples? Jesus said all power in heaven and earth was His. Wow! Jesus had all the power in the whole universe! That power was given to Jesus because of His death on the cross and His triumphant resurrection. Remember when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness? Satan tried to offer Jesus a shortcut to power, but Jesus refused. Jesus was patient and obeyed God completely. Jesus suffered and died for us. In the end, God rewarded Jesus and gave Jesus all power.

Wait a minute! Some disciples might have been tempted to argue with Jesus. It would have been easy for people to say, “I thought Jesus already had all power in the world and the universe?” What was Jesus talking about here? Because Jesus has always been God from the beginning and still was God, how could Jesus have more power? The issue here is that when Adam sinned and fell, the whole human race came under the control of Satan. When Adam sinned, he placed himself under Satan’s rule. Ever since Adam, all humans have been in bondage to Satan’s rule and no one could defeat Satan. Jesus was the first and only man who came along who lived a perfect life and was able to defeat Satan. However, for that victory to be complete, Jesus had to die on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins. When Jesus died and rose again, He forever destroyed Satan’s rule over people. This is what Jesus meant that all power was now His. Jesus was talking about authority. Satan no longer had authority to rule over humans. Jesus now rightfully had that authority.

Paul called Jesus the last Adam in 1 Corinthians 15:45. Because of Paul’s explanations about the last Adam, many Bible scholars call Jesus the **Second Adam**. The first Adam brought death. The Second Adam (Jesus) brought life. Satan tempted the first Adam and Adam fell into sin. Satan tempted the Second Adam (Jesus) and Jesus defeated Satan. With Jesus’ death on the cross and resurrection, Jesus took back the authority that Adam lost.

**Jesus said He has all power. What does this mean?**

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**Why was it important for Jesus to remind the disciples of His authority?**

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**Discuss your answers with your group.**

## KEY DOCTRINE: *Making Disciples*

God expects healthy Christians to reproduce. **Reproduce** means “to create new life.” A healthy apple tree will produce apples. Apples have seeds that can grow new apples trees. God expects Christians to reproduce by leading others to faith in Jesus. This is called making disciples. Christians should also accept their responsibility to care for these new Christians. Caring for new followers means teaching these new followers how to grow in their faith. It means being involved in their lives, praying for them and guiding them. It is not enough to be born again, but Christians need to grow and become mature believers.

### 3. Mission (Matthew 28:19-20a)

#### VERSE 19.

<sup>19</sup> *“So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

Jesus gave His disciples a command. Jesus did not tell His disciples to make followers of only Jewish people. He commanded them to go to all people in the world. Maybe this did not sink into the disciples’ minds immediately, but later the early church would have to interpret and apply Jesus’ command.

This command applies to us, too. What did Jesus say to do? Jesus said to “go and make followers of all people in the world.” What does that mean? We are to share the Good News of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection with everyone. We are to convert people to Christianity everywhere we go. When people decide to follow Jesus, we are to baptize them in the name of our **Triune God**—meaning in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

#### VERSE 20a.

<sup>20</sup> *“Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you,*

Jesus continued His command to His disciples and to us. His disciples were

to teach the new believers to obey everything that Jesus taught them. We have the same responsibility. First, we are to obey everything that Jesus taught. Second, we are to teach others to obey everything that Jesus taught in the Scriptures.

Jesus' followers are supposed to be obedient followers. People cannot follow Jesus without obeying His commands. Many people have a wrong concept of what it means to follow Jesus. People think attending church is the same as following Jesus. That is not true. Followers of Jesus study the Bible to learn everything they can about Jesus and God. Then the followers obey everything they have learned. Jesus requires obedience from His followers. That is the true test of a follower of Jesus—obedience. The Bible teaches us that you will know Jesus' followers by their fruit. Jesus said, "You should produce much fruit and show that you are my followers, which brings glory to my Father" (John 15:8). That fruit will be their obedience to God's Word.

Sometimes churches are weak in teaching new believers how to follow Christ. New believers need help so they can learn how to study the Bible. They need help learning how to pray. They need tools so that they can grow strong in their Christian lives. It is difficult to obey if we do not know what God wants from us. Christians need to help each other so that we can follow God's plan and obey His will. If you are a new Christian, ask another Christian to help you become a strong follower. If you have been a Christian for a long time, find someone that you can help to grow as a Christian.

Jesus' command in verses 19 and 20 is called the **Great Commission**. What is a **commission**? It is "an order to do something and includes the authority to complete the task." A person joining the military may receive a commission, a position and authority to perform certain duties. An artist may be **commissioned** to do a painting. Churches commission missionaries to go and share about God with the people of the world. God **commissions** Christians to make disciples and to train them.

## 4. Presence (Matthew 28:20b)

### VERSE 20b.

<sup>20</sup> *"and I will be with you always, even until the end of this age."*

Jesus followed up His command with a promise. What was that promise? Jesus told His disciples, "I will be with you always." What a promise! The disciples knew obeying the command from Jesus would not be easy. They knew it could be dangerous. Seeing Jesus alive again, and having this promise from Him made the task easier.

Jesus will always be with us! We do not have to walk this Christian path alone. Jesus is with us every step of the way in our journey of life. This

promise isn't for everyone. This promise is only for those who follow Jesus and obey His commands.

**How are the things Jesus told the disciples to do being carried out today?**

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**How are you helping carry out these actions?**

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**How does knowing Jesus will be with us give us courage to make disciples?**

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**Discuss your answers with your group.**

## IN MY CONTEXT

Think about how the disciples felt. Think about how their world had been turned upside down. What was Jesus' last command to them? Jesus would soon be returning to heaven. How would the disciples feel about Jesus' last words to them? How do those last words affect you today and your church? What are you and your church doing to obey Jesus' command to make new followers? Answer the questions below and discuss them with your group to think about how your church is **fulfilling** the **Great Commission**.

**Does your church have a mission statement? YES NO**

**What is the mission of your church?**

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**How is your church's mission connected with the Great Commission?**

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**What are some specific ways you and your church are obeying the Great Commission?**

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**Are there some new ways you and your church can obey the Great Commission?**

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## MEMORY VERSE

*So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you, and I will be with you always, even until the end of this age"*

—Matthew 28:19-20



# Easter

## WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Jesus expects His followers to seek to be disciple-makers of all people.

### MATTHEW 28:16-20

#### PLAN AHEAD

- Pray for group members. Pray they will understand the **Great Commission**.
- Ask one or two members to share their baptism experience.
- Locate Galilee on the map on the inside back cover. This is where Jesus told the disciples to go.

#### FOCUS ATTENTION

Remind the group that we learned about the resurrection of Jesus on Easter. Today's session continues that story. It is only five verses, but these verses are very important. They include the Great Commission, which is the job God gives all of His people.

### EXPLORE THE TEXT (MATTHEW 28:16-20)

#### 1. Worship (Matthew 28:16-17)

Sign verses 16-17. *When the disciples saw Jesus, what did they do first?* (They worshiped Him.) The verses say that some of the disciples doubted. *What do you think that means?*

*Because we know who Jesus is and what He did, how should we respond?* (We should worship Him and obey Him.) *What does worship mean?* (It means to love, adore, honor, serve...) *How can we worship God?* Give examples and encourage discussion.

## 2. Power (Matthew 28:18)

Sign verse 18. Jesus tells the disciples that He has all power. *How much power does Jesus have?* (Power over heaven and earth—all of creation.) Jesus always had power. He was reminding them that He has the power, the right, to tell them what to do.

## 3. Mission (Matthew 28:19-20a)

Sign verses 19-20a. Jesus gives the disciples clear directions. It is not complicated. *Are these directions meant for Christians today too? How do we make followers?* (We share Jesus with others and help them understand how to follow Him.) Notice that we are supposed to baptize the new believers. *Why is baptism important?* (It is a picture to others that we made the decision to follow Christ.) Often when a pastor baptizes a new believer, he will say, “I baptize you, my brother/sister, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Buried with Him in baptism, raised to walk in the newness of life.” Have you seen this before? It is a good way to remember the Trinity, and to understand our old life is gone and we are new (2 Corinthians 5:17). Ask the volunteers to share their baptism experience.

## 4. Presence (Matthew 28:20b)

One of the most wonderful promises in the Bible is this one. Jesus promised to be with us always. We are never alone. Jesus lives in His followers. We can trust that He will never leave us.

*Are there things you are afraid to do by yourself, but you will do those things if someone is with you?* Give examples. We may be afraid to talk about Jesus. We may worry that people will make fun of us. It would be hard to do this alone, but Jesus promised to be with us. We can also take another Christian friend with us when we talk with others about Jesus. We will feel stronger together.

## IN MY CONTEXT

Discuss the questions from In My Context in the Personal Study Guide. They are excellent topics for your church to think about.

Spend time praying for pastors and missionaries who serve in other countries. Pray for pastors and missionaries who serve in the United States. Pray for pastors in your state. Pray for each other. Pray that all will spread the Good News of salvation.

Tell group members that the next lessons will be on different psalms. Encourage them to review the session about Psalm 1.