

Matthew Ch28v16-20 - Jesus Sends

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[0 : 00] This is Matthew chapter 28, Matthew chapter 28. So Matthew's Gospel chapter 28.

And we're going to read the last few verses.

Matthew 28 starting at verse 16. Let's hear God's word together.

Starting at verse 16. Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted.

Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

[1 : 54] And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. Well, let's pray. Our Father, as we have just read your word, it is so familiar to us.

We can say the verses perhaps by heart, or at least we know the main points of what we've just read. They're etched in our memory.

And yet they are so crucial to us today that it can just wash over us and it can soon be forgotten.

And so we pray that what is known to us, what we hear and what we know to be true, that by your Spirit you would drive this home to our hearts.

and you would work in us, not just individually, but corporately as your family here today.

[3 : 21] And do a great work that would lead to people coming to faith in this town and will lead to people coming to faith in other parts of the world.

So we ask, pour out your Spirit upon us today. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Well, over the month of April, we've been looking at the Easter account. We jumped from chapter 13 to the end of Matthew and we'll be going back again next week to pick up where we left off.

And in particular, we've been looking at the trial, death and resurrection of Jesus. But the Easter account is not over when the resurrection happens.

There's one more vital piece of the story. You remember last week that we looked at the women being the first eyewitnesses of the risen Jesus.

[4 : 23] We pick it up in verse 9, chapter 28. The angels had told them to go and they met Jesus and Jesus said, Greetings. And they came to him, clasped his feet and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said to the women, Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers, that's the disciples, to go to Galilee, which was about a three-day walk north of Jerusalem and there they will see me.

So, back down to verse 16, the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. And what follows in these verses are the words of the risen Jesus and they have huge significance for each one of us today.

Three things Jesus tells us. Submit to my authority, obey my command and trust my promise.

Submit, obey and trust. So first, submit to the authority of the risen Jesus.

[5 : 41] Look at verse 18. Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Now that's an extraordinary statement for someone to say. Jesus claims to have a universal authority over all things and all people.

In heaven and on earth. nothing and no one he says is outside my rule or my control. Now you go and say that to somebody tomorrow and see what kind of response you get.

You see, it's one thing to claim supreme authority but how on earth do you prove it? Well, three things I think will help us see the authority of Jesus.

First, it's received from the Father. Did you see what he says in verse 18? This authority has been given to me.

[6 : 46] Jesus receives his authority from God the Father. And for us to understand what this means we need to go to Acts 2 where this is explained.

So just jump forward to Acts 2. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and then Acts. So in Acts 2 this is about six weeks after the events that Matthew records.

So it's about six weeks later. And Peter, one of the disciples who's listened to Jesus on the mountain is preaching about the death and resurrection of Jesus.

And this is what he says. We pick it up in verse 32. God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses to it.

Exalted to the right hand of God. So to be exalted to the right hand of God is to be given the position of authority and power. Verse 36.

[8 : 01] Therefore, let all Israel, this is his audience at the time, let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.

God declares that the crucified Jesus is now the risen Lord and Messiah. This is not an opinion poll. It's not a case of hands up here who thinks Jesus has authority. No, Jesus has been given authority. He is declared to be the God King who rules over all things and all people.

So he receives it from the Father and it is proved by the resurrection. So again, look at verse 32. God has raised this Jesus to life and we are witnesses of it.

Jesus had submitted himself to death on the cross trusting that the Father would raise him from the dead and that's what God the Father did. He raised Jesus and people like the disciples saw him, heard him, ate with him, touched him.

[9 : 19] This was the physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus. He was dead and he is now raised never to die again. So the resurrection proves the authority that he has received.

So if you were to ask Jesus, Jesus, how do you have all authority? Well, because I was raised by the Father to rule over all people and all powers.

Without the resurrection, Jesus is just another crackpot. But he was seen to be raised and he now has all authority.

So it was received from the Father, proved by the resurrection and then third, declared on the mountain. Let's go back to Matthew chapter 28.

Back at verse 16. The disciples, Jesus says, I want you, I'm going to meet you up the mountain. Why go up a mountain?

[10 : 31] Now we've already learned this from Matthew, remember back in chapter 5, that mountains have huge significance in the Bible. And Jesus is taking us back once again to a significant event back at Mount Sinai in Exodus in the Old Testament where God had rescued his people from slavery and God called Moses up the mountain to speak to him.

And this is what God said. Here it is on the screen. Out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Because I've saved you, God says, you will be my treasured possession. You will be a kingdom of priests. You are to represent God to the people.

You are a holy nation. You are to reflect God to the people. But now what do we see at the end of Matthew chapter 28? Jesus once again gathers his disciples, his treasured possession on the mountain.

He speaks with a divine authority. Be my people. Represent me. Reflect me in the world into which I am going to send you.

[11 : 59] Jesus comes as the risen king who has saved us from sin and death and has given us new life. You see, this is not a democracy where we go to the ballot box and we vote whether Jesus has authority or not.

This is about sovereignty. It means he does rule whether we accept it or reject it. he rules over my life and he rules over your life.

He rules over your work, over your free time, over your money, every second of every day. He rules it. Your life belongs to him.

So what is our response to the one with absolute power and supreme authority? What's our response? well the only right response is to submit to him, to bow in joyful submission to the God King who submitted himself to death for you and for me.

In thankfulness I surrender my life to the one who gave me life. So first we submit to the authority of the risen Jesus.

[13:26] Second, we obey the command of the risen Jesus. You see, if Jesus has all authority, then he has the right to command things.

I don't have any right to command anybody. But what do we see verse 19? Jesus says, therefore, because I have this authority, 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 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

The command is not difficult, is it? It's crystal clear and as I went through this, my main thing I kept telling myself was, don't make it complicated.

Don't mess up what is already simple and clear. So let's look at what these commands are. There's three main ones. First, make disciples. This is the primary and central command of this text, making disciples.

That's our purpose. If you're wondering what your purpose is, that's what disciples do. We make more disciples. A disciple is someone who simply follows Jesus and therefore calls others to follow Jesus.

[14:51] Remember what Jesus said to his disciples when he first called them, come follow me and I will what? I will make you fishers of people.

That's the king's desire and that's what the king's people should desire. Make disciples. But how do we make a disciple?

How does that happen? Well, first we announce the gospel. Look at verse 19 because you're saying, well, where does it say that?

Well, we're told to baptise people. And what's baptism? Baptism is a response to the gospel. Verse 20, we're to teach people.

Who are we teaching? Those who have believed the gospel. Therefore, the implication is we first need to announce the gospel. Disciples are ambassadors.

[15:50] We started with that in 2 Corinthians 5. We're ambassadors bringing an announcement from the king. What are you if you're a Christian?

You're an ambassador. We announce the good news that Jesus is king and that he's going to be king forever. God's king who has come to redeem broken lives and restore this disordered world. We declare that God through Jesus has crushed evil, defeated death, so that we could enter into his eternal kingdom.

And one day this risen king is going to come back in power and glory and he's going to put everything right. This is what God has achieved and will achieve through his son.

You see Christianity is never anything we do for God. Christianity is always about what God has done for us.

[16:58] So we simply announce this good news about Jesus. We announce the gospel and we baptise verse 19.

We baptise them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit because baptism is a public declaration of an internal reality. It's saying that I've now turned from living my own way and living under my own authority and submitting to my life but now I've turned and I trust in Jesus the King and I submit to his authority and I obey his commands.

So as I go under the water in baptism I am declaring that Jesus died for me and as I come out of the water I am declaring Jesus was raised for me.

It's an outward expression of my trust in Jesus. So let me ask you how will people know if you're a follower of Jesus and that you're a disciple through our baptism?

If you're a Christian how will people know you're a Christian? Through baptism because baptism marks out those who are his disciples.

[18:24] It identifies who follows Jesus. So if you're a Christian here today and you say yes I'm a disciple I follow Jesus.

well have you been baptized? And what possible answer are you going to give to that question?

We're baptized in response to what Jesus has done for us. To declare to identify to hold our cards up high to say yes I'm a follower of Jesus.

So why don't you talk to me afterwards? If you say you're a disciple and you're not yet baptized come talk to me.

I'd love to talk to you about that. Third we teach we baptize we teach and let's get this clear we don't teach people to obey who are not disciples.

[19 : 37] We're not going out there and saying listen you're to do this and you're to do that. No we announce to unbelievers what Jesus has done and when people have received when people believe in Jesus then we live a life of obedience and we want to learn more about Jesus and that's what we're doing right now.

We're a gathering of disciples who are learning what it means to obey and follow Jesus. what are his commands? We read them in his word. How am I going to follow them and put them into practice?

We learn together and that's what we do in our home groups. We're together studying God's word to learn about all the things that he commands us to do as his people and how we should live as a Christian in the world.

That's why we make it a priority to gather together as his people. So we announce the good news, we baptize people as a sign of their faith and we teach them the word of God of what it means to follow Jesus.

It's really not complicated is it? It's really simple. But that's not all. We make disciples of who? of all nations.

[21 : 03] Verse 19. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations. Nations here is not the political divisions and the geographical borders and lines that we see in our maps today.

It's the different people groups of the world of which there's well there's more than 15,000 different people groups.

In other words there's no tribe or language or people that are excluded from hearing about the good news of Christ.

In particular the people groups that don't have any or very few disciples in them. So we heard if you were listening to Leticia the Berber is that right?

The Berber people and the people from Kabul. Yeah? So these are all people groups. Or we think of the people group in Azad Kashmir where we pray for Mickey.

[22 : 10] That land sandwiched between India and Pakistan. There's about five million people living there and four hundred disciples.

people of every tribe and every language and every people group gathering together to be his disciples to be with him in his eternal kingdom.

A people from all over the world from Karigaline and beyond who will follow him and worship him. That's God's desire.

That's his plan. And how do we do it? How do we make disciples of all nations? As we go.

That's the meaning of verse 19. It's better to think of it like this. As you go, make disciples of all nations. In other words, it's not an activity to add to the list when we have time.

[23 : 24] It's what we do as we go about our lives. Our priority as a disciple is to make more disciples. Now that should change everything.

Our priority in life is not to get a job and earn a good salary, as important as that is, but as we work and as we earn our salaries to make disciples.

That's what we do. Our purpose is not to give our children the very best possible education that we can give them, but as we raise our children to make them disciples.

Our goal in life is not to get married and live a comfortable life, but wherever we live and whatever our status in life may be, to make disciples.

Our aim each week is not to get healthier and fitter, but as we eat our salads and as we go to the gym, make disciples.

[24 : 33] You see, unless we're making disciples, we're not a disciple. Or let me put it another way, we cannot be disciples and not make disciples.

Yes, we can pray for people to go, yes, we can support people financially, those things are vital and crucial, we can open up our homes to people, we can agree and say, yes, yes, yes, the nations, the unreached people groups of the world, they must be reached.

But unless we are personally involved, unless we are intentionally, each one of us, introducing people to Jesus and helping others to follow Jesus, we're not a disciple because that's what a disciple is.

making disciples is not for the gifted few, but for the privilege of every single one of us. So what's our response to the one with all authority, the risen Jesus who commands us to go and make disciples?

What are you going to say to that command today? yes, I will obey. We will gladly and willingly prioritise my life around this one command.

[26 : 14] where you say, how do I do that? How could I be involved in making disciples? Well, have you heard of the rock?

Have you heard of rooted? Have you heard of polo? They're all things that happen and they would all love to have other people help out.

that's one way. It might work for you, but that is one way to think about. That each one of us can be involved in picking up our Bibles with another person in the life of the church, meeting with them to read it and to pray together as we encourage each other to obey everything and to teach each other God's word.

that's making a disciple, gathering around his word and encouraging others in that word. What better or greater offering of thanks can we give to God than to make another person a disciple? That would be the greatest offering that we could ever give. love. It's what God is doing and it's what he's calling us to do. So we obey the command of Jesus.

[27 : 52] Third, we trust the promise of the risen Jesus. Thankfully, this command to go is not something we're to do alone.

look at the end of verse 20. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. Now, there's two promises here given for our encouragement.

Here's the first promise. I am with you always. Remember who Jesus is talking to, first of all, in verse 17.

Do you see who he's talking to? When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. Now, isn't that interesting?

The disciples that he's calling to go into world mission some worshipped, some doubted. Or again, the translation is more, they believe, but they don't believe.

[28 : 57] There's a mixture of trusting and doubting. Yes, yes, we can do this. No, I can't do this. Yes, I want to follow.

I'm not sure I can follow. Sound a bit like me. Sounds a bit like you. Isn't that us? Worshipers and doubters, yes, no.

We struggle, don't we? That's why these words are so comforting. He says, I will be with you always. The promise that he will be with us in the task of making disciples.

That doesn't mean he's physically with us, holding us by the hand, but he's present in every one of us by the power of his Holy Spirit. That means the one with all authority goes with us with his authority.

The God King who rules over all things in heaven and on earth is present with me. There is no situation or circumstance of which he doesn't have control of.

[30 : 09] There is no power or person over which he does not reign. there is no barrier or obstacle which he cannot overcome. He crushed evil and he defeated death.

Who else do you want to go with you? And he is with you. He is present. This God is with you always.

Who made the universe is with you. You see he not only commands me to go, he enables me and equips me as I go.

He will help me in my fears and boy do I fear. And he will help me what to say because I never know what to say.

Trust his promise and he will be with you. But there is another promise to the ends of the age.

[31 : 12] I am with you always to the very ends of the age. You are saying this is for the disciples. No it is not. It is for all disciples to the very ends of the age.

You see this is a promise that the task of disciple making will be fulfilled. Because a day is coming when the Lord Jesus is going to return again and he will welcome all his disciples into his eternal kingdom.

I am looking forward to that. But it hasn't happened just yet. Because the work is still going on. And his plan and his purpose is not going to fail.

In fact his promise is a reminder that this is primarily God's work. It is not that God assists us in making disciples and it is not that we somehow have to assist God in making disciples. It pleases God to do his work through us. Through people like you and me. You see if anyone is to become a disciple.

[32 : 26] It is God working through them. The point is that what he has promised he will accomplish. Jesus has already told us this.

Go back to chapter 24 and verse 14. chapter 24 and verse 14.

Here Jesus has been talking about the end of time and he tells us all sorts of different things that we can see happening and will happen.

There will be wars, there will be disasters, all kinds of things will be going on and that's what we see happening right now. But he also tells us this in chapter 24 verse 14.

In the midst of all the turmoil he says and this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.

[33 : 38] That's the promise. this gospel of the kingdom is going to be proclaimed to all nations and there is no one and nothing that can ever stop it.

Even over those people where there's a threat over their life for holding a Bible in their hand those people are being reached with the gospel.

God will work through his people he will make disciples and when that job is fulfilled then Jesus will return again.

When is he coming? I don't know. But while we're waiting we're making disciples. So as you go as we go as God's people believe the promise I am with you always.

to the very end of the age. I hope I haven't complicated it because it's really clear isn't it?

[34 : 51] And it all hinges on the resurrection. Do you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? Do you believe he's risen?

What difference is that going to make to us? I must submit to him. Submit to his authority. I must obey his command and I must trust his promise.

We're disciple makers. That's our job. Let's pray for his help. Father God, thank you for the disciples that you have brought into our life.

People who announced the gospel to us. Thank you for people who disciplined us and taught us your word to give us understanding of what it means to follow you.

We thank you for them. Perhaps some of them have already passed and are now with the Lord. We remember them.

[36 : 23] And we thank you for them, whether it was a parent, a friend, somebody in our church. Thank you for those that bothered to teach us and make it their priority.

Father, we are today living in our generation. Help us together to be about your work, your business of making disciples.

Help us to trust you, that you are with us to the very end of the age and the very end of our life.

Until we are with you, we will see you. So go before us. Help us to be your disciple makers for your glory and for your praise.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, we are going to sing in response.

[37 : 39] And as we sing, let this song be your prayer. Let this song be a prayer for all of us together. The task is unfinished.

The Lord is not yet returned. Let us go into this week and make Christ known.

Let's stand together as we sing.