

Disciples of All Nations

Matthew 28:16-20

June 23rd, 2019

Big idea: Christ authoritatively commands us to make disciples by baptizing and teaching them and He promises us His presence as we go about the mission.

Intro –

In August 1998 I moved to Pocatello to attend ISU. 2 years earlier I had started the Christian life after hearing the gospel from a friend when I was 16. I knew Christ, but I didn't know much else. My freshman year of college a guy named Kelly Shoemaker met with me weekly for part of the year to go through a little 3 ring binder on the basics of the Christian life and belief. The next year I spent many Friday nights at the home of Kevin and DeAn Pettit. I watched how Kevin talked to DeAn and interacted with his kids. I learned not just what to believe but how to put it into practice in real life as I followed Jesus. Quite simply, that's discipleship. And that's how Matthew ends his book.

John MacArthur – If a Christian understands all the rest of the gospel of Matthew but fails to understand this closing passage, he has missed the point of the entire book. This passage is the climax and major focal point not only of this gospel but of the entire New Testament. It is not an exaggeration to say that, in its broadest sense, it is the focal point of all Scripture, Old Testament as well as New.

1. **Worship** and **doubt** in Galilee (28:16-17)

a. The eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee (v. 16)

i. Eleven... not twelve

1. Matthew 26:14 one of the twelve,
2. Matthew 26:20 Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples.
3. Matthew 26:47 Judas, one of the twelve

ii. The journey was about 100 miles.

1. Galilee was in the northern part of Israel

iii. They had already seen the resurrected Jesus in Jerusalem, but He told them before His death that he would go ahead of them to Galilee after he was raised

1. **Matthew 26:31-32** Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.' ³² "But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."
2. He told the two women who saw Him on the journey from the empty tomb to the disciples to tell them to leave for Galilee and they would see Him there. (28:10)
3. What must that week-long walk have been like?
 - a. Quiet and reflective? Anxious? Would He reprimand them for their failings? Could they have imagined all this?
 - b. It was an act of faith merely to travel to Galilee from Jerusalem.

b. When they saw Him, they worshiped but some were doubtful (v. 17)

- i. Think of the significance that fiercely mono-theistic Jews who were warned about idolatry and false worship all their lives would have worshiped Jesus.
 1. Did they hear the stories of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego who refused to worship the golden image of king Nebuchadnezzar? (Daniel 3)
 2. Did they know of Daniel who went to the lion's den rather than pray to the king? (Daniel 6)
 3. Jesus himself had said to worship the Lord your God and serve Him only
 - a. **Matthew 4:10** Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"
- ii. But some doubted.
 1. Powerful, honest admission.
 2. The word as used here has more the idea of hesitated – they worshiped, but some hesitated.
 - a. Not saying they outright rejected Jesus, not the same as unbelief.
 - b. But there was a hesitation.
 3. Doesn't tell us why –
 - a. Perhaps it still seemed too amazing to be true; could this still be a dream?
 - b. They aren't gullible, that's for sure.
 4. We've seen doubt in the gospels a couple times
 - a. **Matthew 14:30-31** But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" ³¹ Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"
 - b. **Mark 9:22-24** "And it has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!" ²³ And Jesus said to him, "'If You can!' All things are possible to him who believes." ²⁴ Immediately the boy's father cried out and began saying, "I do believe; help my unbelief."
 - i. Some of you might resonate with that, just as you may resonate with the man who said to Jesus, "I believe, help my unbelief."
 - ii. You don't need more faith in faith, you need humble faith in Jesus.
 - c. **Jude 1:22** And have mercy on some, who are doubting;
 5. That's not to say doubt is held up as a virtue that we should remain in this perpetual mode of doubt. There can be a type of faux-humility that glories in casting doubt on core beliefs.
 6. But the Bible describes real people and is written to real people so it acknowledges the real experience of doubt, of hesitation, as we journey toward solid faith.
 - a. Thomas famously doubted, but ended his life in modern day India where he journeyed to take the gospel.

2. Making Disciples of All Nations (28:18-20)

a. One command: Make disciples

- i. In the structure of this passage, here's the command – not 4 commands but 1 – make disciples.
 1. The other verbs are participles that describe how to carry this command out.
- ii. Doriani – the essential commission is not “tell people about Jesus. Not preach the gospel. No grow your church. Not make converts. Jesus’ commission assumes all these, but goes deeper, commanding that we make disciples.
 1. To make disciples is to lead new believers to maturity, so they understand and follow Jesus and eventually make disciples too. By making disciples, the church stays strong over the generations. (adapted from Doriani)
- iii. A disciple is literally a “learner” and it developed the idea of being a “follower.”
 1. Today people attend certain schools – a local school might have a stereotype or kids might choose for academics or sports. Colleges might be chosen on desired profession or networking. Someone might go to ISU or Harvard or Patrick Henry or Masters Seminary. In the 1st century a person enrolled not with a school but with a teacher.
- iv. A disciple of Jesus is one who
 1. Believes what Jesus believed (transformed mind)
 2. Lives as Jesus lived (transformed character)
 3. Serves as Jesus served (transformed service)
- v. *Document – a Snapshot of Maturity (back of the notes)*
 1. Developed several years ago with our board
 2. Consider looking through this and marking a couple areas in each category that you would like to grow and asking a brother or sister in Christ who is strong in that area to give you some Biblical input.
- vi. These disciples are to come from all nations.
 1. They were not to remain in Jerusalem or Judea. The mission wasn't limited to only their own Jewish countrymen, although it was to start there.
 2. The mission stretched to all nations.
 3. We see this beginning in the book of Acts. In Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit enables the early disciples to communicate in languages they didn't know in a miraculous work on the Spirit, those who heard were from modern day Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Egypt, and Italy.
 4. Socio-economic diversity was also a byproduct as churches were composed of rich and poor, masters and servants we know from the various commands for how to treat people without partiality (James 2:8-9).
 5. Rebecca McLaughlin – “... Christianity is the most ethnically dispersed major world religion...” pg 38
 - a. A 2012 Pew Forum study on the Global Religious Landscape found that while other major world religions are closely tied to one part of the world, Christianity is evenly dispersed with 26% in Europe, 24% in Latin America and the Caribbean,

and 24% in sub-Saharan Africa.

(<https://www.pewforum.org/2012/12/18/global-religious-landscape-exec/>)

- b. Christianity is growing rapidly in Iran, Sub-Saharan Africa, China (68 million in 2010, growing 10 percent yearly, may be more Christians in China than US by 2030, could be majority Christian by 2050)
- 6. Korea is the second largest sending nation after America
 - a. In Atlanta, Georgia last summer stayed with a Korean Christian family (wife Korean, husband American). She said there are so many Korean churches with such a heart for evangelism in Atlanta that they schedule days and times to set up outreach tables at the Korean grocery store so they aren't all there at the same time
 - b. In Azerbaijan I met a South Korean missionary
- 7. Disciples of Jesus have been made around the globe and yet it is a task unfinished.
 - a. "For evangelization purposes, a people group is the largest group within which the Gospel can spread as a church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance" (Source: 1982 Lausanne Committee Chicago meeting.)
 - b. Depending on how exactly you define a people group and the various barriers, there are between 12,000 and 24,000 total people groups in the world and 7,000-8,000 of those people groups are unreached representing 3.2 billion people.
 - i. See joshuaproject.net for excellent resources on how to pray and get involved.
- b. Three aspects: **Go**, **baptize**, and **teach**
 - i. "Go" is translated as a command because of the structure of the sentence.
 - 1. It is clear that the gospel is to go beyond the borders of Israel.
 - 2. **Acts 1:8** but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
 - 3. That's the story line in the book of Acts as the gospel reaches people in Jerusalem and then in the surrounding region and then persecution pushes believers out and they take the gospel with them. And then Paul is converted and the storyline in the second half of the book of Acts is the gospel going to the Gentiles even all the way to Rome.
 - 4. The model isn't "wait for them to come" but "go."
 - a. Effects even the way we view church in our local community. We are to gather to worship, hear the Word, encourage one another, and pray and we are to scatter to take the gospel to our neighborhoods, schools, and jobs.
 - b. Certainly we are mindful of those who come who don't yet know Christ and we want to make the message understandable, but the model isn't primarily "come" but "go," as in "go make disciples."
 - c. And yet, the local church is critically important for the fulfillment of this great commission.

- d. Mark Dever: “The Great Commission is normally fulfilled through planting and growing local churches. . . . So the Great Commission involves you, the individual Christian. But the Great Commission also involves you through your local church. That is the normal way God means for us to go, make disciples, baptize, and teach.” (2) “The story of the gospel’s spread is the story of the spread of churches. . . . [In the book of Acts], wherever the gospel goes, churches show up. . . . Churches are at the center of God’s Great Commission plan.” (18, 19)
- ii. Those who believe are baptized as a sign of their faith in Jesus and commitment to Him.
 1. Just as Jesus died, was buried, and rose again, so in baptism the Christian is immersed in water and brought back up, picturing their union with Jesus and new life in him.
 2. It is public before the body because it is a public declaration of an internal reality.
- iii. Those who believe and are baptized are to be taught to obey all that Jesus told His disciples.
 1. This is one reason that a significant portion of our time on Sunday morning is given to teaching the Word. It’s what Jesus told us to do.
 - a. Even as “teaching” takes different contexts, both formal and informal.
 2. But notice He doesn’t say “teach them to understand” but “teach them to obey.”
 - a. A disciple is saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, but true faith produces change over time.
 - b. Matt Smethurst – if you’re not pursuing holiness, the great commission remains unfulfilled in your life.
 3. We always have a responsibility to make disciples of the next generation, within our families and within the church.
 - a. **Judges 2:10** All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.
 - b. **2 Timothy 1:13-14** Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*.
 - c. If you are in your 20’s, consider what type of spiritual treasure you want to pass on to your grandkids.
- c. Two promises: Jesus has all **authority** and is always **with us**
 - i. The command to make disciples and the description of how we are to make disciples is sandwiched between two critical promises or facts.
 - ii. His authority leads directly to the command to make disciples (notice the “therefore”)
 1. As the great Creator-King over all the earth, He has absolute right to command His people.
 2. But more than that, they can go with confidence that He is in control and the end is sure.
 - iii. But He ends not with a command but a heart-stirring promise of His presence.
 1. Literally, He promises to be with each believer “the whole of every day.”

2. Kids looking with fear on a new school year – in a new school, in a new city, away from your parents during the day – you're not alone.
 3. **Matthew 1:23** "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."
 4. He who is introduced to us in the prologue as Immanuel, God with us, is still God with us to the very end of the age.
 5. The promise continues to the very end of the age – meaning until He returns.
 - a. The gospel will not become outdated, needless, or irrelevant. Those making disciples will not be on the "wrong side of history."
 - iv. There is a Jesus-centeredness to these verses – He has authority, make disciples by baptizing them into the name of Father, Son, and Spirit (equating himself on equal footing with the father), teach them to obey all that He has commanded them, He is with them always to the end of the age.
3. The recurring themes of Matthew
- a. All **authority**
 - i. Jesus is presented as THE King.
 - ii. The family lineage of King David in ch 1
 - iii. His statements in the Sermon on the Mount in 5-7
 1. You've heard it said, but I say to you . . .
 - a. Claiming to be for the torah, but greater than the torah. For the OT, but greater than the OT.
 2. Entrance in to the kingdom is related to Him
 3. **Matthew 7:28-29** When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; ²⁹ for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes.
 - iv. He has authority to forgive sins (9:6-8)
 - v. Authority over demons (10:1)
 - b. All **nations**
 - i. This gospel is clearly targeted at a Jewish audience, showing how Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies of the Messiah but . . .
 - ii. His genealogy will feature Israelites as well as Canaanites, Hittites, and Moabites (ch. 1)
 - iii. Heals a Greek soldier's servant and commends his faith (ch. 8)
 - iv. Much of His ministry will take place in Galilee of the Gentiles (4:15)
 - v. Culminates in the call for the gospel to go to all nations
 - c. All **allegiance** (observe all that I commanded you)
 - i. Related to His authority
 - ii. Compares the one who listens to His words and acts on them as a wise builder who constructs his house on a rock (ch 7)

- iii. Those who call Him Lord follow Him.
- d. Always **with you**
 - i. Perhaps a fourth melody
 - ii. He is Immanuel, God with us (ch 1)
 - iii. And He will be with us always, even to the end of the age (ch 28)

KNOWLEDGE	CHARACTER	PRACTICE
What should a mature Christian <i>understand</i> and <i>believe</i> ?	What character qualities should a mature Christian possess?	What should a mature Christian <i>know how to do</i> and <i>be doing</i> ?
The Triune God The person and work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit	Humility Teachable, not argumentative, submissive to authority, not self-promoting (Phil. 2:3-7; 1 Pet. 2:13ff)	Prayer Regularly and intentionally prays with thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6-7; 1 Thess. 4:17)
The Bible The sufficiency, inerrancy, and authority of the Bible; a general overview of its layout and content (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:20-21)	Kindness Gentle, considerate of others (Gal. 5:22; Pro. 19:22)	Personal Devotions Spends consistent time reading, considering, and prayerfully applying God's Word (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1)
The Nature Of Salvation By grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9)	Servant's Heart Willing to put the needs of others before their own, not seeking personal glory (Mark 9:35)	Evangelism Takes initiative to share the gospel with people around them (Matt. 28:18-20)
Security Of Salvation A believer's salvation is secure and cannot be lost (John 10:27-30; 1 Pet. 1:3-5)	Self-control Not quick tempered or easily angered, not lead by emotions (Gal. 5:23; Pro. 25:28)	Fellowship Spends time with other believers to build each other up in the Lord (Heb. 10:23-25)
The Church The purpose of the church; characteristics of a healthy church (Acts 2:42)	Godly family relationships Faithful to their role in the relationships God has placed in their life (husband, wife, parent, child, friend, employee) (Eph. 5:22-6:9)	Discernment Identifies and distinguishes between error and truth (Phil. 1:9; Heb. 5:14)
The Nature Of Man Made in the image of God but possessing a sinful nature (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 5:12)	Commitment Places high importance on the Lord and His work; willing to sacrifice (Mt. 10:37-39)	Wise Decision Making Applies Biblical principles to life issues, seeks good counsel (Prov. 1:5; 16:9)
Basic Apologetics Able to give evidences for the faith and respond to questions about the problem of evil and suffering, the existence of God, comparisons with other worldviews and religions, and more. (1 Pet. 3:15)	Stewardship Recognizes that their time, money, relationships, and possessions come from the Lord and must be used wisely; hospitable (Mt. 25:14-30; Psalm 24:1)	Obedience to the Lord "Walking the talk" by obeying the Lord at work, home, at church, and other areas of life. (John 14:15; Titus 2:11-12)
Basic Theology Understand other basic Biblical doctrines, including angels, demons, prophecy, creation, and end times. (1 Tim. 4:6)	Integrity Trustworthy, honest, possessing a good reputation inside and outside of the church (Titus 1:6)	Service Uses their spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12:3-8)
Continued Dependence On Grace Believers continue to grow and serve by God's grace, not merely their own efforts. (Gal. 3:3)	Dependable Faithful, reliable, follows through with his/her word (Pro. 20:6; Lu. 16:10)	Scripture Memorization Regularly commits God's Word to memory (Psalm 119:11)
	Faith Trusts in the Lord in all areas of life (Pro. 3:5-6)	Discipling Others Looks for opportunities to help disciple the next generation of Christians (Matt. 28:18; 2 Tim. 2:2)



1

1. Worship and doubt in Galilee
(28:16-17)

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b. Three aspects: Go, baptize, and teach

Acts 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

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9

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3. The recurring themes of Matthew

a. All authority

b. All nations

c. All allegiance (observe all that I commanded you)

d. Always with you

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