

做门徒，为使人做门徒——马太福音 28:18-20

Discipled to Disciple—Matthew 28:18-20

Intro

- **We all set goals for ourselves. Tasks, milestones, we want to accomplish**
 - **Example:** Get a good job. Get married. Have a family. Retire. See grandkids grow up.
 - **Problem:** We can easily be consumed with pursuing our goals.
 - **Key:** But Christ actually left us with a goal to pursue. A mission worth our entire lives.
- **Background:** Jesus' life culminated at Cross & His resurrection. Accomplished salvation! But God didn't immediately take His people into His presence. He left us with a mission to complete
- **Matt 28:18-20:** And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- **Summary:** This goal/calling is to make disciples! (seen in 3 phases)

1) The Christ's Authority (v.18)

- **Background: Story concludes where it began, in the hills of Galilee (back home where mission started)**
 - A lot has happened in this Gospel to get us to this point...
- **Matthew has proven definitively that Jesus is the Messiah/Christ ("the anointed one")**
 - Matt has over 20 references to OT prophecies ("this was to fulfill")
 - Everything happened exactly as God predicted it would in OT. Demons cast out, diseases healed instantly. Greatest proof = Died on cross but came back to life. He's everything God's people have been waiting for.
 - **Matt 16:16 (Culmination):** You are the Christ, the Son of the living God (worship)
 - To sum up: He's the Savior and Lord of the world. The Messiah.
 - Now at end of Matt 28, disciples now finally know who He is.
- **Final Address: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (v.18)**
 - He has all power, control, & rule without limitation.
 - **"In heaven & on earth":** His dominion extends over entire plane of existence.
 - **Illustration:** Amazed by James Webb Telescope (successor to Hubble)
 - Incredible images. See just how vast the universe is. Could spend millions of years moving @ speed of light, barely move a speck on map. If placed anywhere else in universe, you'd die instantly.
 - More you peer into universe, the smaller, more powerless you feel.
 - **Point:** Jesus controls all of that! He reigns over all of the universe!
 - **Cf. Dan 7:14:** And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
 - His reign is universal. Everlasting. Unbreakable.
 - **Cf. Rev 1:13-18:** A son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. ¹⁴ The

hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. ¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

- You should get goosebumps when you hear that. Jesus is so glorious He can only be described in metaphors. Words fail to capture His glory.
- **Summary:** This is the king who has authority over all things
- **Application: Jesus’ total authority demands that we obey Him totally**
 - **Key:** Need heart posture of humility & total submission. Whatever He says, goes.
 - **Application:** We need posture of submission before we open God’s Word
 - **Application:** We can’t pick and choose what we want to hear & obey
 - **Example:** World bad (yes!), make kids moral (yes!), sports may be idol (no!), time/money (no!), suffer/bad health (no!)
 - True submission is willingness to submit even when we don’t like it.
 - **Luke 6:46:** Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?
 - **Q:** Are there parts of the Bible you’ve purposefully been ignoring? What idols have you been holding dear that you refuse to surrender to Christ’s authority?
- **Key: Jesus has all authority. So whatever He says, we must submit to**
 - Jesus gives us a specific command we must obey.

2) The Christian’s Application (v.19-20a)

- **V.19:** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
 - **Main Command:** Make disciples of all nations
 - Famous passage about sharing the Gospel. But more!
- **Background: Over His entire earthly life, Jesus taught what it means to be a disciple**
 - **Mark 8:34-35:** “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.
 - **Key:** To be a disciple – Deny self. Sacrifice all for His sake.
 - **Illustration:** Struggled as teenager – Would I still follow Jesus Christ if my entire Christian family forsook faith & threatened to kick me out of the house? That’s what being a Christian requires.
 - **Cf. Phil 1:21:** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
 - Death is better than life. In v.23, I’d rather die, but you need my help. Imagine having such a view of death!
 - **Key:** To be a disciple is to live in full surrender to the authority of Christ! He is Lord & Master.
- **Final command (v.19): “Make Disciples” (main verb)**
 - **Discipleship:** Help others follow Christ better. Because of your influence, people are becoming more like Christ & surrendering to Him. Help others mature.
 - **Key:** The Great Commission is not the call to be a disciple of Christ. It’s the call to make

disciples of Christ!

- **Application:** Paradigm shift. Can't just be content learning & growing yourself. But helping others do that too.
- **Background: Jesus explains discipleship with the surrounding words/phrases (3 participles)**
- **“Go” (v.19): Has force of “as you’re going.” (In the regular course of life, make disciples)**
 - **Key:** Discipleship must be your lifestyle. It's the call for every believer. As you plan & prioritize things in life, high on list is, “how am I discipling others to better follow Jesus”?
 - **Question/Example:** Parents: How are you discipling your kids? Not just Sunday school or VeggieTales. Husbands: how are you discipling your wife? Not just content that you're not fighting. Church members: How are you discipling other people? Not just attending Bible Studies & socials.
 - **Application:** You have a personal ministry to fulfill (Eph 4:12) You need to be building up the spiritual strength of others! Our lives as disciples must be discipleship-focused.
 - **Transition:** Process of discipleship broken down in the rest of v.19-20.
- **“Baptizing in name of Father, Son, HS” (v.19)**
 - **Background:** Baptism is the declaration that a person's life is for Jesus Christ. Internal faith is visibly demonstrated in physical action.
 - **Cf. Rom 6** – Baptism shows we've experienced death & resurrection of Jesus. No longer old self but new. Not enslaved to sin but alive to God (can please Him).
 - **Key:** Where does discipleship start? Through your relationship, people believe in Jesus & get baptized.
 - **Application:** You can't disciple someone who isn't saved! That's evangelism. But discipleship starts once they've surrendered their life & shown it through baptism.
 - **Application:** If you're a Christian but not baptized, go get baptized. Take the first step of obedience.
 - **Transition:** Discipleship starts with conversion, but continues with maturing.
- **“Teaching them to observe all I've commanded you” (v.20)**
 - **Key:** Discipleship means making teaching God's Word a lifestyle. The key way that you help others follow Christ better is by helping them understand His Word.
 - **Example:** Theology. How to live rightly. Nature of God. How to counter false beliefs.
 - **Application:** Real danger of leading people astray if you're not properly equipped. You can't just say “Jesus take the wheel!” and wing it. Need to grow in understanding so you're qualified & able to teach others.
 - **Question:** Are you in a place to teach/disciple others? How are you growing?
 - **Illustration:** Why we have Sunday School classes. To equip you to learn so you can help others.
 - **Transition:** But teaching isn't an end in itself. It must lead to something...
 - **V.20:** Teaching them to observe all I've commanded you
- **...Application: There's a difference between Bible-learning & Bible-living**
 - Lots of Christians want solid doctrine & teaching. But it's all head knowledge.
 - Truth doesn't change lives. It's truth applied that changes lives.
 - **Key:** Discipleship is not just knowing truth, but applying truth.

- **Example:** Bible study (not just info, live for Jesus). fellowship groups (not just feel warm & fuzzy, apply sermon), personal devotions (not just check off checklist, but know & love God more!)
- **Summary: The Great Commission: We're called, not just to be disciples of Christ, but to make disciples of Christ!**
 - We're called to help others follow Christ better
 - **Question:** How are you intentionally helping those in your life to be more like Christ?
- **Background: Ultimately, this charge is to send the Gospel to all the nations**
 - We should care to help missionaries preach Gospel in unreached nations!
 - Key: But global faithfulness starts with local faithfulness.
- **Transition: I recognize that's a daunting challenge for many of us**

3) Christ's Assurance (v.20b)

- **Illustration:** My brother Eric was incredibly shy as a kid. Run away from adults. Hide behind mom's skirt. (Very different now. Duke. Doctor. Just got back from Kenya. Doing just fine.)
 - Maybe you know someone like that.
 - Even for the most timid of people, a parent's presence gives peace & assurance. Something about being shielded by our mother made him feel safe & secure.
 - **Point:** We can be intimidated by discipleship. But God gives us that same assurance!
- **Disciple-making is a daunting task. But we're not alone.**
 - **V.20b:** And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age
 - **Key:** He is with us! Not "I will be with you" but "I am with you" (His presence is present)
 - **Application:** Magnificent assurance to the followers of Jesus that that presence will never be withdrawn; He will be with them always, to the end of the world and to the end of time.
 - **Cf. John 7** – We have the Holy Spirit as our helper. He enables us to change & to serve.
- **Background: Not a new thing! God has always given impossible tasks to inadequate servants.**
 - **Moses:** Told to liberate slaves from a global superpower. I am with you.
 - **Joshua:** Told to lead weak nation into foreign, hostile land. I am with you.
 - **You:** Told to proclaim the gospel, and to make disciples, till the gospel goes to ends of earth. I am with you.
 - **Key:** Impossible by human standards. But God is with us. You're not alone. His presence empowers & emboldens us.
 - **Question:** What situation, relationship, or person do you think you're totally unqualified to help?
 - **Application:** The comfort – God Himself is the one who will guarantee success of mission. We just have to be faithful to what He calls us to.
- **Application: How can He help us? Seek to abide in Christ.**
 - **John 15:3:** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.
 - Though Christ is always with us, we can do things that either welcome His help

or push His help away

- **Key:** Don't do it in your own effort. Depend on Him. Pray for help. Be saturated in His word. Etc. Don't be afraid. (to abide = make your home)
- **Illustration:** When a person is going through spiritual issues, one of most basic, important questions, "how's your walk with the Lord? How's your time in Word & prayer?" (more often than not, answer is "not very good").
 - **Point:** We need to abide in Christ.
- **Application:** This is the child-like posture of dependency we need to have on Christ. Like a child to a parent, cling to & stay behind Christ
- **It's fitting that Jesus' last words are "I am with you always, to the end of the age."**
 - They actually echo ones of the titles which first introduced Jesus.
 - **Background:** Gabriel to Joseph about Jesus. All the prophecies are about to be fulfilled.
 - **Matt 1:23** "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).
 - We're now back full circle. One of greatest blessings & comforts of the Gospel is that God is now with us. He helps us in our time of need.

Conclusion

- **And since we've come full circle, let me ask you a question: What goal are you aiming for?**
 - Not to live a comfortable life. But to actively make disciples.
 - For 3 years, Jesus has discipled His disciples. Now at the Great Commission, He's sending disciples out to make new disciples. They had been discipled to disciple. And so are we.
- **Close:** We're seeing this mission come to fruition. A journey that started on a hill in Galilee with 11 disciples leads us to a room in St. Louis where bunch of Gentiles are worshipping Him. God is faithful to His promises.
- So, let's be faithful to our Lord's call as well.

Revelation 7:9-12

- After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands,¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,¹² saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."