

Following the King – study two

Our Mission – Matthew 28:16 – 20

In our first study in this series we looked at our Biblical vision (from Revelation 5). Remember that a vision can be defined as *a compelling picture of the future that drives us in the present*. This week we turn to the subject of our mission as Christ's disciples. While our Biblical vision is a picture of what awaits us in the future, ***our Biblical mission is what Jesus wants us to do here and now***. In other words, our vision is like the heavenly reward on the other side of the finish line, but our mission is like the present earthly race that we're now striving to complete.

Action oriented people might be tempted to get their marching orders by going straight to Christ's statement, "*Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations*" (Matthew 28:19). However, this command begins with the word '*Therefore*' (and whenever we see the word '*therefore*' we need to find out what it is *there for*). In doing so we discover that Jesus makes two all-important statements on either side of this great command. The first of these two statements is, "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*" (28:18). The second is, "*And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*" (28:20). These two statements frame Jesus' command and remind us that the risen Christ is the *power* and the *presence* behind all his Church's evangelistic efforts. We are called to proclaim Christ's salvation, but only Christ has the righteous power to save us from our sins. We are called to invite people to the heavenly banquet at the end of this age, but only Christ has the authority to open the door to his Father's kingdom. Finally, we're called to tell people about Jesus, but true faith is born when a person actually meets Jesus through the presence of the Holy Spirit. In other words, the kingdom and the power and the glory are his, *both now and forever*. With this in mind, let's begin to further explore our Biblical mission. ***Some good study notes on this passage can be found on the following website:*** <http://davidpfield.com/other/matt-28-notes.pdf>

1. Read Matthew 28:8 – 10, 16. What are the circumstances of this meeting between Christ and his disciples? (I.e. When and where did this meeting take place?)¹
2. Read 28:17. Taking into account your answer from question 1, why isn't it surprising that some of his disciples worshipped Jesus while others doubted?
3. Read 28:18 - 19. Why is Christ's ultimate authority over heaven and earth fundamental to his command that we make disciples of all nations?
4. Beyond the physical methodology of baptism, what does it mean to be baptised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? (28:19)
5. Read 28:20. Jesus' words also imply that we need to learn all that Jesus taught to his original disciples. How do you keep Christ's command to teach and learn?
6. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is always with his disciples?

¹ This seems to be one of the first times that Jesus appeared to his disciples (as a group). It probably takes place about 5 weeks earlier than his final meeting with them, described in Acts 1:6 – 9 (which takes place 40 days after Christ resurrection, just before he ascended into heaven).