



# DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

SERIES: "THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING" •

MESSAGE: "THE RESURRECTION" • MATTHEW 28:1-20 •

4/17/2022

## MAIN POINT

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The resurrection of Jesus is first and foremost about God's purpose being fulfilled.

## INTRODUCTION

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As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the most memorable funeral you've ever been to? Why?**

**Why do you think the grieving process is different for different people?**

Grieving the loss of those we love is one of the most heart-wrenching trials we can undergo on earth, even if we can claim full confidence and hope in his or her eternal destination. Similarly, when the women somberly traveled to Jesus' tomb on resurrection morning with spices, they did so in great sorrow, intending to wrap Jesus' dead body properly before saying goodbye.

# UNDERSTANDING

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Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

**READ MATTHEW 28:1-7.**

**What did the women expect to find at the tomb on resurrection morning? What might this indicate about the way they viewed the finality of Jesus' death?**

**In what way did God change the women's hearts and faith through all they saw that morning at the tomb? How did it affect their witness and lives as followers of Jesus?**

As the women traveled to the tomb to wrap Jesus' body, they did so peacefully as mourners. But peace and quiet was far from what they experienced there. Instead, the women encountered an earthquake, an angel, stunned guards, and a commission to carry the message of Jesus' resurrection ahead to Galilee. Here, God answered the unspoken questions of Jesus' followers and the spoken question of Jesus Himself on the cross—why He had forsaken His son. As a result, the God who appeared silent on Good Friday had the final word on resurrection morning.

**READ MATTHEW 28:8-18.**

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus called His disciples to follow Him. He expected His disciples to obey His radically new teachings out of their love for the Father and their trust in His unfailing goodness and even greater love for them. As He taught, Jesus prepared the disciples for the time He would no longer be with them in human

form. These themes reach a climax in the final verses of Matthew 28, when Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples following His resurrection.

**Why did Jesus lead His command with a statement of His authority? In what is His authority rooted? (See Phil. 2:5-11.)**

**What do you think it means for Jesus to have been given all authority “in heaven and on earth”? How should this affect the way we follow Him today?**

Jesus told His disciples He had received all authority “in heaven and on earth.” Jesus’ resurrection validated His teachings and deeds and proved to the disciples that all authority over everything rested with Him. As a result, the disciples knew the true nature of Christ. Hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, Daniel had prophesied that the Messiah would be given “dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him” (Dan. 7:14). The scope of His authority encompasses everything in heaven and on earth.

**What did the authority of Jesus do to the confidence level of His disciples?**

**In what way did it give them purpose and hope for this life and the life to come? How should it give us the same as followers of Jesus today?**

To carry out the Great Commission Jesus was about to give, the disciples had to clarify and solidify their understanding of Him, believing deeply that the “man” standing resurrected before them was more than just a man. Jesus truly was and is God in flesh, God in power, and God in authority. And as His disciples today, we have been given the same command of following Him; understanding and belief in the authority of Jesus must precede our obedience. In verses 19-20, Jesus detailed what following Him involves. He mentioned three specific things that together become the method of discipleship: evangelism, baptism, and teaching.

**Of the three aspects of the Great Commission—evangelism, baptism, and teaching—which is the most natural for you? Which is the most difficult?**

**What is the purpose of baptism? What happens to a person through that expression of faith?**

We are called to go and tell others the good news both next door and to the nations. We are also called to encourage others to accept baptism as an outward display of their new lives in Christ. In baptism, we recognize and acknowledge the fullness of God, providing and working our salvation as followers of Jesus.

**How does Jesus' promise of His presence influence our mission and purpose as followers? What does it speak into our fears, anxieties, or doubts?**

**How does Jesus remain with us today? (See John 14:25-26.)**

**In what way does this make Him more than just a good historical figure? How does it distinguish Jesus from all other religious leaders, whose graves we can visit here on earth?**

Jesus' authority and presence empowers His followers then and now to fulfill His ultimate commission. But Jesus' first followers did not attempt to fulfill this Great Commission through their own strength. The Spirit of God worked in their weaknesses to provide courage, love, and joy—the same way He empowers us today as we seek to proclaim His truth throughout our community and to the very ends of the earth.

## **APPLICATION**

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Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**How are our daily encounters with Jesus today different than those of the women on resurrection morning? What can we do to be just as close to Jesus**

today until we too have the chance to meet Him face-to-face?

How can we explain to others the way we are enabled to meet and know Him in the Spirit, worshiping and learning from Him, tasting and seeing that He is good? Can we do so through our own efforts, or by grace alone?

What role must our personal relationships with the living God play in our lives as a followers of Christ? How does the world often tempt us to isolate or contain this relationship instead?

What does Jesus' eternal presence and resurrection indicate about the hope we can have in this life? What hope does it give us for the life to come?

## PRAYER

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Thank God for the all-satisfying intimacy we are offered in Christ and the spiritual empowerment of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives through grace—not through works, so that none of us can boast. Pray that all will have the faith and courage to share that gospel of salvation, freedom and life to the full with others.

## COMMENTARY

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MATTHEW 28:1-20

28:1. The Greek phrase translated as “after the Sabbath” refers to sundown on Saturday. In Mark, the Greek phrase refers to sunrise on Sunday. There is much confusion in the chronology of the last week of Jesus' life, especially events

surrounding the resurrection. It is the mentioning of the term “dawning” that causes one to think that the reference may be to Roman time, not Jewish time. There are instances of both being used in the Gospels.

28:2. Two explanations for how the stone was removed are given side by side. There must have been two earthquakes: one at Jesus’ death in 27:54, and another to remove the stone and allow Jesus’ followers inside the empty tomb.

28:3-4. The angel at the tomb was wearing white linen cloth, a symbol of purity. Luke 24:4 and John 20:12 record two angels. This variation between one or two persons or angels is common among the Gospels. Other examples are: (1) the Gadarene demoniac (Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26) and the two demoniacs (Matt. 8:28); and (2) the blind man (Mark 10:46; Luke 18:35) and two blind men (Matt. 20:30).

28:5. The words of the angel echo what Jesus told them in verse 10. It was the common statement when the supernatural realm broke into the natural (cf. Jesus’ words in Matt. 14:27; 17:7; 28:10; Mark 6:50; Luke 5:10; 12:32; John 6:20; Rev. 1:17; and angels in Matt. 28:5; Luke 1:13, 30; 2:10).

28:6-7. The Father’s acceptance and approval of the Son’s words and works are expressed in two great events: Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and His ascension to the Father’s right hand. Jesus had told them He would meet them on a mountain in Galilee (cf. 26:32, 28:7, 10; 1 Cor. 15:6). This was a way to assert His resurrection and give them hope.

28:8-11. Jesus greeted them in His usual way. It came from a word that meant “rejoice.” Characteristically, Mark and Luke named one woman while Matthew named two. John 20:17 records only Mary taking hold of Jesus’ feet. This was the oriental way of showing submission, respect, and even worship. What a designation for these fearful disciples (cf. 12:15).

28:12-16. What these soldiers must have thought, knowing the truth and telling a lie! If they were sleeping, how did they know the disciples stole His body? Roman guards falling asleep at their posts was a grave offense, sometimes punishable by death. Remember that Matthew was written for a Jewish audience. John 20:19-23 says this took place on a Sunday. This was not the mount of Ascension. Jesus’ ascension took place on the Mount of Olives forty days after the resurrection (cf. Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:4-11).

28:17. The disciples in this verse does not refer to the disciples who had seen Him three times in Jerusalem in the Upper Room. Possibly it refers to the larger number of followers (upward of 500) that Paul mentioned in 1 Cor. 15:6. Apparently Jesus appeared at a distance and walked closer to them. There was some physical difference in Jesus' appearance after the resurrection (cf. John 20:14; 21:4; Luke 24:13, 31). The significance of this is that the Great Commission was not given to the Apostles alone—not even the hundred and twenty disciples of the Upper Room, but to the whole church. It is for all Christians, not just the church's leadership! It was given on at least three different occasions: (1) in the upper room on resurrection evening (cf. John 20:21), (2) on a mountain in Galilee (cf. Matt. 28), and (3) on the Mount of Olives (cf. Acts 1:8).

28:18. What a tremendous statement (cf. Matt. 11:27; Eph. 1:22; Col. 2:10; 1 Pet. 3:22)! Jesus must have been either the Messiah or a liar. His resurrection confirmed His claims!

28:19. The phrase in this verse should not be interpreted “as you are going.” “Going” may be the most accurate option. All Christians are commanded to be lifestyle witnesses (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15 and possibly Col. 4:2–6). It is a priority. This is the Great Commission—not the Great Option. The term “disciples” meant “learners.” The Bible does not emphasize decisions, but lifestyle faith. The key to evangelism is discipleship. However, discipleship must start with a repentant faith profession and continue in the same way unto obedience and perseverance.

“All of the nations” must have been a shocking statement to the Jews, but it follows Dan. 7:14 which speaks of a universal, eternal kingdom (cf. Rev. 5). Notice the number of times that the inclusive “all” appears in this paragraph. The two purposes of the Church are evangelism and discipleship. They are two sides of one coin. They cannot and must not be separated! Notice the phrase “in the name” is singular. The name of God is Triune. The baptismal formula of Acts 2:38, “in Jesus' name,” cannot be exclusive of the Great Commission. Salvation is a series of acts both initial and continual: repentance, faith, obedience, and perseverance. It is not a liturgical formula or sacramental procedure.

28:20. Notice that “what we teach” is not simply facts about Jesus, but obedience to all of His teachings. Christian maturity involves (1) a repentant faith profession, (2) a life of Christlike living, and (3) a growing doctrinal understanding. “I am with you always” is emphatic. The personal presence of Jesus is always with believers. There is

a real fluidity between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling Son (cf. Rom. 8:9–10; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19; Col. 1:27). In John 14:23 both the Father and the Son indwell believers. In reality all three persons of the divine essence participate in all redemptive events. The One who has “all authority” and who is “with us always” has commanded us to evangelize and disciple; with His presence and power we can do it! “To the end of the age” refers to the two Jewish ages and was a reference to the Second Coming or consummation of the Kingdom of God.