



Scotts Hill Baptist Church

DEEPER • WE LIVE ON MISSION! • MATTHEW 28:16-20 • 11/17/2024

MAIN POINT

Christ commissioned every church and church member with the task of living on mission.

INTRODUCTION

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

Brainstorm a list of reasons people go to church and functions of the church, both appropriate and off base. Why does church have such a broad appeal to people?

What is the most important reason for being a part of a church?

What is the most important role of the church in the world?

The world needs to know who Jesus really is and what the benefits are of putting faith in Him. Jesus gave us—His church—the responsibility to make those truths known. God could have chosen to work in the world independent of His people, yet He chose to engage us in accomplishing His will. As the church, we represent God to people who need to know and understand Him. The potential impact of obedience to that calling is world-changing. This study will challenge you to allow Jesus to work through you as you live on mission.

UNDERSTANDING

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

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 28:16-18.

Why did Jesus lead His command with a statement of His authority?

In what is His authority rooted?

In this familiar passage, known as the Great Commission, Jesus first reminds us that everything He commands us to do is through the authority He was given from God the Father. God doesn't make promises He won't keep and doesn't give commands we can't obey. If He tells us to go and make disciples of all nations, then it must be possible to reach the world by obeying His commands.

What do you think it means to have all authority "in heaven and on earth"?

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

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 all authority over everything rested with Him. Then 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 "authority to rule, and glory, and a kingdom; so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve Him" (Dan. 7:14). The scope of His authority encompasses everything in heaven and on earth.

Why is it important that we understand the authority of Jesus? How does this truth impact our mission?

To carry out the Great Commission Jesus was about to give, the disciples had to clarify their belief about Him. They had to believe deeply that this One standing resurrected before them was more than just a man. He truly was God in flesh, God in power, and God in authority. As Jesus' disciples today, we have been given the same command of discipleship, and understanding and believing in the authority of Jesus must precede our obedience.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 28:19-20.

Let's take a minute to reflect upon the magnitude of this passage. After each of the following, discuss 1) what each command means, 2) how the church can follow, and 3) what role you personally have in obeying: go; make disciples; baptize them; teach them; remember His presence.

What, in your opinion, are the main challenges or barriers that keep us from obeying and fulfilling the Great Commission today by living on mission?

Each one of these commands is an important component of the Great Commission. If you remove any one of these, then reaching all nations with the gospel of Christ is compromised. It is vitally important that the church actively participate in all of these commands on the macro level. In addition, we as individual believers must help our local church fulfill this commission on the micro level. Each and every church, and thus each and every member of those churches, shares in the responsibility of taking the good news of Jesus to the world.

In which of these areas are you most involved?

In which area would you like to get more involved?

Why is it important for every believer to get involved in the Great Commission? What happens when you don't own your part of the effort?

The Great Commission reminds us that we truly can take the gospel to the nations. But to have that worldwide impact, we must first acknowledge that the world needs to know who Jesus is and commit to telling them. If we do this, not only will our personal faith grow, but the Christian faith will expand around the world.

How does Jesus' promise of His presence (v. 20) influence our attitude in making disciples?

How is Jesus with us today? Read John 14:25-26 to help you answer.

Jesus' authority and presence empowered His disciples then and still empowers followers now to fulfill His commission. Jesus' first disciples did not evangelize and disciple based on their strength. Jesus empowered them with courage, love, and joy. In the same way He empowers all believers.

APPLICATION

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

What does God desire for you personally and the church corporately to do in response to Sunday's sermon?

How does knowing you are called by God to participate in living on mission change the way you think about your role in the missions endeavors of Scotts Hill Baptist Church?

In this season of your life, how do you sense God leading you to be involved in missions? What do you think your next practical step might be?

What would it look like if the Great Commission inspired you daily to reach those around you for the Lord?

What kinds of opportunities are around you to live missionally through your small group as you consider the upcoming Community Serve Days in 2025?

PRAYER

Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from our sins and give us new life. Pray that God would help us to see ourselves as His disciples charged with the task of joining in the Great Commission. Ask God to make us mindful of the fact that He is with us as we seek to spread the gospel. Pray that the Lord would give us a heart for missions and make us active participants in the missions endeavors of our church.

COMMENTARY

| MATTHEW 28:16-20

28:16-17. Some time during the forty days of Jesus' post-resurrection stay on earth (probably soon after they heard the news that Sunday), the eleven disciples and many more of Jesus' followers proceeded to Galilee, where Jesus had instructed them to go (26:32; 28:7, 10). Here Matthew's focus was back on the eleven, the foundation stones of his church. Jesus had apparently specified a particular mountain as their meeting place. At the end of the journey, presumably on the designated mountain, they saw him. Imagine their joy! It was only natural that they worshiped him. But some doubted (the word doubt means "to duplicate," "to be of two minds," or "to waver, hesitate"). All wanted to believe, but their faith was weak. Some experienced the internal tug-of-war between "two minds"—the one wanting to follow their fledgling faith and the other wanting to follow "reason." Even those presented with clear evidence for the truth can still have doubts. But the word some implied there were others who believed everything they saw. These were the followers of the Messiah-King who would continue on into Acts, willing to take any risk in obedience to their master. This was true faith in action, living on the edge of "risky" obedience.

28:18. Matthew noted that Jesus came near or approached. Here was no case of mistaken identity. The disciples could look Jesus in the eye and see that this One was the same

Person whom Pilate had arrested. They could hear the voice clearly and know it was the voice they had listened to for several years. Jesus' claim made the need for decision even clearer: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." The kingdom Jesus talked about (4:17) had been established. The King had received authority to reign. This kingdom far exceeded the size of the Roman Empire. Only God could make such a declaration. Only One who ruled in heaven as well as on earth could claim such power.

28:19-20. On the basis of His authority, Jesus issued the Great Commission. Disciples had to accept the authority if they were to accept the commission. The commission is intricately formulated in the Greek. Stated somewhat literally as translated from the Greek language, the Great Commission reads as follows: "Therefore, having gone, disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to keep (or to persistently obey) as much as I commanded you. And look here, I am with you all the days, until the completion (or perfection) of the age." The introductory "therefore" connects the Great Commission to Jesus' authority established in verse 18. The phrase "having gone" assumes obedience to the Commission. This phrase is not so much a call to go as it is a command to do certain things on the way. Disciples who recognize Christ's authority have one major task. The only imperative verb form in these verses formulates that task. Disciples under Christ's authority disciple the nations. That is, they share the gospel and help believers grow in Christ. Building the church by discipling the nations expands the disciple's journey. It sends them to the nations. Here is the universal nature of the gospel made explicit and clear. Disciples under Christ's authority must leave their comfort zones and the people with whom they feel at home. They must expand their horizons to incorporate every nation of people on earth. The church must devise plans and strategies to use the talents, gifts, energies, and resources of every one of its members. Every member must be on the move, discipling the nations.

In addition to going, discipling involves two other actions. The first is baptizing, which is to occur only after a person has acknowledged Jesus, the risen Savior, as his or her personal Savior. Baptism incorporates the new believer officially into the church. Baptism is also one means of making a public confession of faith. Baptism pictures or symbolizes what Jesus did and what the new Christian is doing. Jesus died for our sins. He was buried in the tomb. God raised Him from death to life. Baptism also pictures the believer's having died to sin and being raised to a new life in Christ, a life that is eternal through the ages.

The second action in discipling is teaching. This instruction reaches back to the earthly ministry of Jesus. It takes every parable, every sermon, every word Jesus said and teaches them to the church. It seeks to develop Christlike individuals. The teaching ministry begins

with the New Testament accounts of the life and death of Jesus Christ. It expands to the rest of the New Testament and then incorporates the Old Testament as the foundation of who God is and what God planned long before He sent Jesus to fulfill Old Testament prophecies. This entire Word of God is the curriculum each disciple is charged to teach to new believers.