

Matthew Chapter 28

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[0 : 00] We turn to the reading from the Gospel, Matthew, chapter 28. Matthew, chapter 28. This is the Word of God.

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here.

[1 : 14] He has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, He has risen from the dead, and is going ahead of you into Galilee.

There you will see him. Now I have told you. So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid, yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly, Jesus met them. Greetings, he said. They came to him, clasped his feet, and worshipped him.

Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me.

While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, telling them, You are to say, His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.

[2 : 30] If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed.

And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day. Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

When they saw him, they worshipped him. But some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. Amen. Amen. Well, it's been a real joy and delight to be with you over the eight visits through June and July.

[3 : 50] This is the eighth. I wonder if you, those of you who have been at all eight, you deserve a medal. But if you have, I wonder if you detected the theme that I was trying to follow.

We started off with the identity of the Lord Jesus from John chapter 13. Then we went on to the nature of the Lord Jesus from Philippians chapter 2.

And the purpose was to present something of the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus. So it was the unique identity of the Lord Jesus, the unique nature of the Lord Jesus from Philippians 2, the unique relationship of the Lord Jesus as the eternal Son of God with the Father from John 5.

Then the temptations of the Lord Jesus, the unique temptations of the Lord Jesus as we based it on Luke chapter 4. Then we had the glory, the unique glory of the Lord Jesus there on the Mount of Transfiguration as recorded in Matthew chapter 17.

And then last week in the morning, we thought about the achievement, the unique achievement of the Lord Jesus in that grand cry, it is finished.

[5 : 18] So, how can we go on to 8th? Well, you have a clue in the reading and in the hymns.

The unique authority of the Lord Jesus, that one who stood on that mount before his ascension and said, go, make disciples.

Go, make disciples. people. So, our subject this morning then is the unique authority of the Lord Jesus Christ there in that great commission.

Often you will hear people speak about the great commission and they begin at Matthew chapter 28 and verse 19. Go, therefore, and make disciples. And sometimes, sadly, they miss drawing attention to the word therefore.

That's a crucial word. Therefore. Because he's, he's just indicated in verse 18 what he means by the therefore.

[6 : 33] All authority, he says in verse 18, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples.

In other words, because I have all authority and it's been given to me all authority in heaven and on earth, go and make disciples.

From these amazing words we can conclude the certainty of evangelism. There's no uncertainty in the outcome of evangelism.

that should thrill and comfort every believer among us. There's no uncertainty concerning the outcome of evangelism.

We've got the promises of God. The very wonderful promises of God. Messiah, says Isaiah, Messiah shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

[7 : 50] He's going to see the travail. He's going to see the results of his suffering in saved, in delivered, in forgiven, healed and restored human beings.

He's going to see the fruit. He's going to see the people who have come to new life through Calvary's suffering.

The travail of his soul. And he's going to be satisfied. Now the only way that the Messiah, the Savior, the Son of God can be satisfied is if everyone there is there that he's died for.

Everyone that was on his heart, everyone that was given to him by the Father. for he says, all that come to me, I will in no wise cast out.

But right before that he says, all that the Father give to me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will in no wise cast out.

[8 : 55] I had a lady years ago who came running out of a meeting. That passage had been read from John chapter 6. She was broken hearted. She wept.

Oh, how can I know that I've been given by the Father to the Son? And the only thing I could say to her was, you can't.

You can't know you've been given. You can't. There's no disclosure of it, but there is something you can do. Look what it says in the continuing words. And the one who comes to me I will in no wise cast out.

So come to the Lord Jesus. Actually, once you come to the Lord Jesus, you'll know you've been given by the Father to the Son. Isn't it amazing?

The one who says, come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, knows who's going to come to him.

[9 : 57] He's sovereign Lord. He knows who's going to come. He knows who's going to come from this town of Whitby and from the visitors who will come over the years. He knows those who are going to come from different countries, different nations, different races, different people.

He knows. And when he sees the fruit of the travail of his soul, the product that's come in new lives, transformed lives, healed lives, he's going to be satisfied because everyone's going to be there.

He said to the father, not one of those have I lost that you gave to me. Not one. It's the one who came to seek and to save that which was lost.

He said that, didn't he, when he was here on earth. He had come to seek and to save that which was lost. And then he told a parable about the shepherd who had 99 sheep and wasn't satisfied because one was missing.

So what did he do? He secured the 99 and he went out and there's that lovely expression, he sought out that sheep and he searched for it until he found it.

[11 : 24] He doesn't give up until he's found it. I remember in my early days of my conversion I was given a book, I think it was by a man called Dempster, called Until He Find It.

And it was about his ministerial work in London, going, looking for people who were homeless and speaking to them about the Lord Jesus and helping them in their distress.

and he wrote a book giving testimonies of those who had been lost, who were homeless, whose lives had lost all sense of direction and purpose and how introducing them to the Lord Jesus, or what actually really happened, Jesus introducing himself to them, through him, their lives were transformed beautifully to life of purpose and meaning and goal.

There's no uncertainty about the outcome of evangelism. There's no uncertainty at all concerning the outcome of evangelism.

For as the rain comes down and the snow from heaven and do not return there but water the earth and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth.

[13:08] It shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Now does that mean the word, the gospel? Could be. If we looked at Peter, he speaks about the word of the gospel, it's like a seed.

But is it not more pertinent to see that word who's come from the Father as the living word, the embodied word, the word of God himself, the Savior?

he has come forth from heaven. He is that word that's been sent by the Father, that living word, that embodied word, and he won't return back empty handed, because there will come a day when he will come with all those who have been saved and delivered and forgiven and pardoned, he will come forth with all his people and present them to the Father.

And the Son will be satisfied and the Father will be satisfied because everything will prosper in our Lord's hands and he'll do everything that is required and he won't return to heaven empty handed.

[14:38] Isn't that a lovely thought? I used to when I was first converted, I used to worry about others who weren't converted and it used to bother me that I'd have spoken to the right people, I'd have spoken to enough people, was I praying enough for other people?

As a young Christian, I was really anxious because I was right from the outside of church life and I had no background in church. At 19 when I was converted, it was all so new and I really, I found it difficult to sleep on a night to think, is there somebody I should be speaking to?

Until I began to read more of the Bible and realize, and I thank God for it, that nobody's salvation depends on me and it was a great relief.

And nobody will be lost and go to hell because of me. What a relief. That doesn't make us inactive, it gives us a liberty and a freedom, an excitement.

Whose life is God going to touch through you this week? there's no uncertainty about the outcome of evangelism.

[16:07] And why? Number two, because there's no limit to the authority of Jesus Christ. No limit to the authority of Jesus Christ.

He says there in that great commission, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Given to him, but didn't he have all authority anyway?

He was co-creator with the father, wasn't he? He made everything that exists. Surely he has all authority. Yes, of course he has all authority over all he made, but what is being spoken of there by our Lord Jesus is how the father regards the lovely obedient, self-sacrificing life of his son, he had the authority by right as creator, but he earned the right by his life, suffering, and death.

And God the father honored him. That's how it is explained, isn't it, in Philippians chapter 2? Being in the form of God, in the very nature of God, existing already in the nature of God.

It's authority not grasping, to be made equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a human being, the nature of a human being, and coming in the likeness of sinful flesh.

[17:44] Yes, himself. He humbled himself, became obedient to death, even death on the cross.

Therefore, on account of that, because of that, the father has highly exalted him and given him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, not the name of Christ, not the name of the Son of God, but to emphasize his humanity and what he's achieved as a human being, at the name of Jesus.

Every knee should bow, and if you link that with Isaiah 45, you will see that God is declaring through his servant Paul the deity, the full, true, perfect deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving him that name and saying that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that he is

Lord, is saying in linking with Isaiah 45, he is God.

Because five times in that one chapter the Lord says I am God and there is no other, I am God and there is no other, and to me every knee shall bow. Now either Jesus is a usurper, or he is God. He is God like the Father. God has come. He has not just got the name Emmanuel, he is Emmanuel, God with us and he has got all, all authority has been given on account of Calvary and that beautiful life.

[19 : 39] All authority is being given to you. You are in charge of everything in heaven. Everything that lives in heaven. Every person, every being, angel, archangel, the saints who have gone before us, everything in heaven and all the powers of heaven are at the disposal of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God.

God. But not only all authority in heaven, but all authority on earth. Every person on the earth is under his authority.

Every person, every being, principalities and powers, governments and dominions, everything is under his authority. Believer and unbeliever, all under his authority.

You know, you sometimes hear some Christians say of an unconverted person, oh, I wish he was converted or I wish she was converted. They're so gifted, they'd be so useful in the church of Jesus Christ.

Don't get caught up in that kind of thinking. For God chooses often the foolish things of this world and the weak things of this world.

[20 : 59] God's world and he is able to make persons out of sow's ears and he can change the leopards spots too.

With man, things are impossible. There's lots of things that are impossible to us. with God, nothing is impossible. there's no uncertainty concerning the outcome of evangelism because there's no limit to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, step three, there should be no hesitation in the people of God to go and make disciples. We've got a royal commission. It's not just given to apostles. And those who are gifted as, particularly gifted as evangelists, though we have a number, thank God.

It's a commission that's given to everyone. Lo, I am with you, he says, to the end of the age. That commission was given to all the people of God until the Lord Jesus returns in glory.

[22 : 19] And he says, go, go, make disciples. Isn't it a thrilling thing? You're going out in the name of the King of Kings.

You're going out on a royal commission. And the people you meet, as you meet them, think, is there a word I can speak to this person?

Is there something I can say or something I can do that will show how much I love God and how much I love them and want them to come to know the Lord Jesus?

We're in tough times. It's difficult, difficult to engage people. Sometimes they're rude and vulgar, other times they're just dismissive, uninterested.

Or, say they are. And yet we hear more and more interest in spiritual things, don't we? It seems that the less people think about holy spirit things, they more think about evil spirit things.

[23 : 31] And it seems to go like that, inversely proportional, doesn't it? A greater interest, as this town well knows, in the dark things, of the spiritual world.

And we are serving the Lord God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, empowered, empowered by God the Holy Spirit, to wage a warfare against darkness and evil.

We feel our inadequacy, we sense our incompetence, we do suspect, or some of us at least suspect, that there are lots of other people who could do our job better than we can.

One of the humbling things that happened to me when I first broached to the church that I was worshipping with in Methodism, a little chapel there, I told the folk that I was thinking of going into the ministry.

And the general reaction I got was, you? What, you? We could understand if it was Peter, or Douglas, or David, three of my friends, but you?

[24 : 56] So when I say God chooses the foolish things, and the weak things, I'm not speaking about other people. first time I got up to preach in my own chapel, I started leading in prayer, and I got the first words out, as far as I know, addressing God, and the next thing I knew, I was sat in the chair in the pulpit, and the society steward was opening my collar so that I could breathe.

I passed out like a light. And I thought that was one good indication that I wasn't really called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, yet here I am, 50 odd years later.

And the only reason is not because of what I know, or think, or understand, it's because I'm serving somebody who's got greater wisdom, greater knowledge, greater power, I'm serving someone who is wonderful to serve.

And it's a privilege to serve. And that's where every one of us as believers are. You've got an opportunity in your place of work. You've got an opportunity in your family.

You've got an opportunity in your neighborhood. You've got an opportunity in those groups that you are involved in that no one else has got, unless it's a church group.

[26 : 28] You have opportunities that are unique to you. A lady rang me once, lovely Christian lady, rang me once and said, I've got a conversation with my next door neighbor. It literally is over the garden fence.

We're just talking about the things of God and I've been sharing with her. And I need you to come because she really needs a professional. And I said, sister, she doesn't need a professional. In fact, it will spoil it if I come. She wants to hear from you about your love for the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray, harden, go to it, sister.

We all have this privilege and we just need to be bold and brave. You don't need a theological degree to talk about Jesus. If you know him and love him, the words will come.

They may be stuttering, they may be faltering, they may not be eloquent, but that isn't what people need. And that isn't often what God uses.

[27 : 34] He uses our fumbling, our inadequacy, our weakness, and does a great job with them. God can work wonders through you.

What a blessing. years ago, I worked as a youth worker in a youth club.

After theological training, I went and studied working with delinquents at the university and did a 12 month course on working with delinquents on the streets.

And in the course of moving from Methodism and going to a small group of people who couldn't support, there were just only 14 of them, I took a job with the local authority and worked with a youth club.

And in this youth club, we had, well, it started with 30 young fellows from a West Indian background and we had ended up with 150 regularly in attendance four times a week.

[28 : 47] And boy, they were a challenge. I didn't tell Joan what I was up to, my wife that is I didn't, I really learnt how to pray. It was tough.

We didn't ask anybody for their birth certificates but there were an awful lot of them. I think most of them, if not every one of them, could have eaten me for breakfast. Do you understand that expression? They were tough and I wouldn't have stood a chance with any one of them.

And we had a bit of difficulty once, there were a couple of them fighting and a circle had gathered around in the big gymnasium that we had in the club. And I thought, well, what do I do? I've got over a hundred lads, tough lads, strong lads, all round round here and there's two fighting there.

Well, I pushed through and I tried to remember all the psychology that I knew. I got down on my knees by these two lads and I put my hand on the shoulder of them and said, come on lads, you know the rules, no fighting in the club.

If you want to fight, go fight outside. You're going to get me sacked and the club, you know, the sort of thing. They stopped fighting but didn't move.

[29 : 58] And then a big hand, and it was a big hand, came from the back of me and squeezed my shoulder.

I was terrified. And in a very strong accent said, let them fight, man. what do you do?

Nehemiah style, I prayed. And I didn't know what to do or say. And it seemed like ages. And then a guy came right up, almost diametrically opposite me.

Big, heavy fellow like a barn door, you know. And I thought, this is it, this is it, Lord. I ought to be remembering the words that John told us about, you know, into your hands.

But I was just seeing this great barn door coming towards me and I thought, and his hand came up and his hand came across. But it didn't catch my face, it went and gripped the wrist of the guy who was holding my shoulder.

[31 : 17] And you know what he said. The man says we go, we go. They went.

The man says we go, we go. Brothers and sisters, the man says we go, we go.

Let's take a buy in books. May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant, brought back from the dead, our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will.
and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.
Amen. Amen.