

Matthew Chapter 28

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[0 : 0 0] Good morning everybody. We've got visitors from all over the place today, including America and places like that, Canada maybe, and even Leeds. So that was for Linda's benefit, but anyway. I'm going to begin the morning service by just reading a few verses from Psalm 145.

It's a great psalm. I'd love to read all of it, but I'm going to read the first verse, and then from verse 13 to the end. It says this, seems appropriate for this time of year.

I will exalt you, my God the King. I will praise your name forever and ever. And then from verse 13 onwards, your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all his promises and faithful in all he does.

The Lord upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him. He hears their cry and saves them. The Lord watches over all who love him, but the wicked he will destroy. My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord. Let every creature praise his holy name forever and ever. So let's do that. Let's sing now of God's praise in hymn number 35 in the hymn book.

This is soul work. It's not our brains. It's not just our mouths. Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord. We just read about it, and now we're going to sing about it. Number 35.

[2 : 1 3] Amen. Amen.

The women's honor, the women's honor, and they are the number of our things that would vecync of the Blue Pilgrim. And we're going to sing about it either way or that we wish to■ bureauc ■■■■■■, let them say that God isov't Gin on regular things, and the Buddha for the 45 to DANIELS for all who've been him. It'szilla's part of the great parties to run your life but the last day they're not so interesting. Then I need to rest a while. When, now we gather to7sss for a while and we have to live before the third night and then they're welcome inside, why we've grown up to this world's family but THAT WASNOO!

CHICKS ELEEP now let's pray together Lord we just sang in that hymn that we just participated in that Lord your name is the greatest name it says tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord and his great name and we come in that name this morning Lord to worship you to praise you just as we did in that hymn because you are the God who sent your own son to be the one who would make a sacrifice for our sins and give us that hope of one day being in glory with you Lord we thank you and praise you that we can come to worship you this morning to just raise up your name to speak to those who perhaps haven't even heard it before and Lord to confess that that name is the name by which we all come and so we thank you Lord for your goodness to us we thank you that as we meet together we can be at one with one another in our worship of you that Lord we can remember all those things you've done for us in the past as often the sounds tell us and remind us of the wonderful things that you've done and Lord that we can look forward to a glorious future just to know you and to be able to worship you and love you and we pray this morning as we meet together that you'll be with us you promise that your Holy Spirit will be there whenever two or three gather together and Lord we ask that that might be the case today that this service will be imbued with your power and authority and Lord as we come to worship you we'll find that our worship is acceptable in your sight so Lord forgive us for the things that we've done this week that we are confessing before you and we pray that as we come we'll be cleansed by the blood of your son the Lord Jesus Christ that we can come boldly knowing that you have a message for us and we pray that as we meet together our hearts might be lifted up as it were into the heavenly places to worship you in truth so Lord be with us this morning be with those who can't be with us perhaps because they're ill or away and Lord we pray that you'll be with them also wherever they are that you'll

encourage them that you'll lift them up and Lord we bring all these things before you now and ask you to just carry on with us throughout this day for we ask all these things that your name will be glorified in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour

Amen We're going to read now from Matthew chapter 28 I'm going to read from verse 1 down to verse 10 then I'm going to skip on to verse 16 to the end of the chapter and after this if there are any children who are going down to the Sunday school they should go at that point so Matthew 28 is on page 1000 in the church bible 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's not here 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 now down to verse 16 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 and may the Lord bless his word right you look really worried about this here is the first one I have offended God and mankind because my work did not reach the quality it should have you could argue that could be anybody anybody got any ideas well that was Leonardo da Vinci just imagine what he did in terms of his life and the work he did in all sorts of different areas here is another one this has got more of a clue in it at least for somebody in this group of people I don't know what I may seem to the world but as to myself

[9 : 36] I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself now and then in finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than the ordinary whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me Alan well done Alan Sir Isaac Newton the clue of course is that in various ways these two people like myself were mathematicians but I don't compare myself to Isaac Newton but when people come to the end of their lives often if they're famous people their last words are recorded now if you think about why that might be well I'm just going to tell you another couple of things then it might help with what follows but perhaps the most famous last words other than the ones I'm going to tell you are these and this one

I expect Alan you've got to be quiet somebody else can give me this one right I'm just going outside and I may be sometime I'm just going outside and I may be sometime yeah we'll have we'll have a visitor from Loftus Scott not quite it was on his his journey but it wasn't Scott yeah right an extra bonus point if you know his first name and it's not what you think Captain Captain Captain Lawrence bracket Titus Oates yeah when he went out from the tent hoping that if he went then it might help the other to speed up because he was really struggling at that time with frostbite and he just left the tent and he made that sacrifice so that the others might be saved in the end of course they weren't saved but he's remembered for that act what is it that makes people's last words so important well I think we can assume two things normally people's last words are heard by somebody who really cares for them and loves them because sometimes that might not happen but most times it does and second when people are about to die people expect them to say something important and certainly something that's true why would they lie when they're about to die and in that passage we read we have

Jesus speaking to these people now Jesus had already said his last words before death because he said if you remember it is finished and he was talking about the work of salvation that God had planned for him to do and when he died on the cross he said it's finished the work's done salvation has been purchased but of course unlike any single person in the world other than one or two who you probably remember from the Bible he actually came back and he had some more last words and this time he'd been in heaven previously and he came back and therefore he was about to

return to heaven and these words have got a significance and we've been thinking a lot obviously over Christmas about when Jesus came into the world as a baby but I wanted to skip on right to the end of his life to think about these last words because these are really really important and I'm going to deal with it in this way because here he gives us these last words that he's saying to his disciples and it's important to say before we start that not all his disciples and you'll notice in the passage that we read that there were only 11 of them because of course one of them Judas had committed suicide and left them but there were 11 disciples so these were Jesus' closest companions these were the ones who had seen the miracles that he'd done they'd been there when he'd spoken to thousands of people when he'd broken the bread and the fish and shared it with them and yet with these 11 disciples in verse 17 it says when they saw him this is the disciples just the 11 they worshipped him but some doubted now that's a great warning to every single person isn't it these were people who'd been with Jesus they'd seen the miracles they'd had teaching from Jesus one to one as it were and they were the ones who were with him albeit some of them ran away when the soldiers came but then they were with him again they returned to him with great joy when they heard he was in Galilee they went and yet despite all these things perhaps now even when they saw him back from the dead he says some doubted you know if you're a Christian this morning listening to this message let's all take this warning to heart it doesn't matter how many times you go to church it doesn't matter how many times you've read the Bible it doesn't matter all the good things you may or may not have done in your life because you might still doubt the disciples did and I'm sure when Jesus spoke to them he was speaking to them to wipe out any doubt that there might be and these were his last words on earth or some of the last words that he spoke we've had other passages where Jesus said other things before he went into heaven but here we have the last words in this particular gospel and I want to speak about them under a particular heading because when people speak those last words people take note they remember they might have forgotten everything else that somebody said to in their lifetime but when you hear somebody's last words you tend to remember forever just while

[16:33] I'm speaking about it John Nicholson is one of the founding members of the Gideons when he was with his mother who was about to die she spoke some last words to him she said John said when I'm gone make absolutely sure that you read your Bible every single day and he agreed to do it do you think he did it he did because he knew his mother was no longer going to be there and for her this was the most important thing that she could tell him he knew it was the most important thing he knew how much his mother loved him and so he did it and eventually the Gideons who give out Bibles all across the world were founded so here we have a similar situation the Lord's about to leave those people who loved him his disciples they knew that this was going to be the last time that they would hear the one that they loved speak they knew we know that when Jesus speaks he's speaking the very words of God and they're true and I've put as my title for this particular bit of the talk four alls because there are four alls in this passage that we read now some of you may have noticed that if you've been driving along a road somewhere particularly maybe in a little village you'll suddenly see a pub and it's got the title four alls have you seen any like that do you know why it's called four alls well if you look it up on your ipad or your phone I'll read you what it says it actually originally was five alls we only tend to use four of them but I'll read you what it says the five alls is a country sign representing five human figures each having something under him the first is a king in all his regalia and underneath him it says I govern all the second is a bishop also regalia and it says under him I pray for all the third is a lawyer in his gown and he says I plead for all and the fourth is a soldier in his regimental colours and it says I fight for all and the fifth is us a poor countryman who says I pay for all but usually you only get the first four and my four alls have taken that sort of theme because each of them represents a different thing and I'm going to go through them in the order that they appear in our passage so let's look at what it says when Jesus starts to speak in verse 18 this is what he said and you'll recognise some of the alls there's one that I need to point out to you right all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me

Jesus was saying that God had given him all his authority God who was the creator God who wanted a people to love he was the one who had given this authority the significance is if you remember if you go back into the gospels and earlier when Jesus first began his ministry he went out into the desert and at one point the devil tempts him and says look if you worship me I'll give

you all of this pointing to the world and Jesus rejected that offer because the devil didn't have the right didn't have the authority to pass it on to Jesus and if Jesus had accepted that then he too wouldn't have had the authority because it would have been usurped from God but when Jesus died on the cross and went to heaven to obey the command that God had given him to save his people then God gave him the authority so when Jesus says all authority in heaven on earth has been given to me he's been given that authority by God the father he's been you know if you look around the world and you consider other religions you consider people in the streets everybody in some way wants they wouldn't say they want an authoritarian figure but they want someone who they can look to someone who has the right to govern to lead to make people go forward and sometimes sadly our politicians don't match up to that do they?

[22 : 13] But when God gives his authority to Jesus he's effectively saying here is the one that you should follow.

This is the only authentic one. The only authentic God. The only authentic Christ. The only authentic sacrifice. The only one who can save people from their sins.

All authority. Every single ounce of it has been given to Christ.

Never look to anyone else for any other authority. The second thing he says is therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

All nations. That's the second all. So Jesus was given all the authority and now he goes to his disciples and he's giving them the authority to go out into all the nations and make disciples baptizing them.

[23 : 24] It says in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So here's the second all. We have to go into all the world and make the gospel known.

That's what Ben was talking about before, wasn't it? Exactly what he was talking about. Yes, some people reject it and say that's rubbish. I'm not going to believe that.

There are others who might believe for a while and then go away. There are others who just get so worried by the cares of the world that they, you know, just get choked up by it.

But there will always be some who hear and believe because that's the way God had planned it.

So we're to go make disciples of all nations. Now the next all is a little bit hidden because it doesn't actually mention the word all.

[24 : 34] But in the second bit of that verse I read it says baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. All of the Godhead is involved in this.

All of the Godhead. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They've all got different roles. The Father is the one who created us of course.

He's the one who loved us. And that's why he planned for his Son to come. Jesus if you like is the physician or the doctor because he has to help us to counter sin.

He's got to treat not our physical beings although in his life he did that but he came to treat our souls. That within us which is potentially a God and should be returned to him.

And Jesus came to this world to preach to preach the good news didn't he? That that was possible that men and women who were sinful in themselves would one day be released from that sin because of their faith in Christ.

[25 : 51] And the Holy Spirit I like him because he was the teacher. If you read through I've got a few verses where I'm not going to read them but you can look for them yourselves in this gospel and others that he often speaks of the Holy Spirit teaching us about things.

The Holy Spirit leading us to Christ. The Holy Spirit speaking to our hearts. The Holy Spirit is a teacher. When people say to a Christian how can you be so sure that there is a God?

How can you be so sure that Christ died for you? Then the Christian can truly say because the Holy Spirit has spoken to my soul about these things.

And just as the Father and the Son the Holy Spirit never lies. And he teaches me the things of God. Things which I never used to understand.

There can't be a person here as a Christian who at one time would read the Bible and it wouldn't make any sense. Perhaps there's some now who still don't understand it. But the only way you can describe it as a Christian is that when the Holy Spirit was suddenly at work it was as if the pages and the words came alive and really spoke to your heart and soul not just going in there and coming out the other side.

[27 : 16] So that's the third all. All of the Godhead. And then on to the last one there. And teach him to obey everything I've commanded you and surely I'm with you always.

I cheated this time. I was with you always to the very end of the age. The final all is always. If you're a Christian this morning the one sure truth is this.

Christ will never ever leave you. Again Ben was talking about those who believed for a while did they ever really believe?

Because if they did the Bible says that Jesus will never ever leave us. He will always be with us. Whatever circumstance we're in the Lord Jesus Christ will be there.

You know there are lots of people who say they don't believe when they get to their last breath sometimes in difficult circumstances maybe in the middle of a battle or a war or some situation that's desperate even though they don't believe they'll cry out to God won't they?

[28 : 32] Lord save me. And they have no earthly reason for believing that God would if they've never believed.

But the Christian knows that whatever happens that the Lord Jesus Christ will always be with us. He's never left us because he through his Holy Spirit is always speaking to us. He's speaking through his word. He's speaking through other Christians who speak to us.

He's speaking through us when we pray and he responds to what we're praying and he answers our prayers in all sorts of different ways. Jesus is with us.

And notice that always says to the very end of the age. There's no exemptions. He's always with us.

[29 : 32] You know I truly think that if we think of the new year when everybody makes resolutions about what they're going to do and what they're not going to do and after about two or three days to break them.

how great is it to have those four alls with us because we know that Jesus has all authority.

We know that every person in the Godhead is working to this end. We know that Jesus is always with us and we have something to do because we got to go to all nations and speak to them of Christ.

It's a tremendous thing for a Christian to have. Why? Because we don't rely on our own strength. All of us in that case would fail.

We'd fail in life. We'd fail in everything that we might try to do because of the fact that our plan from God is to reach out to people and to have these things in our head and to have this salvation which ensures that Christ is always with us.

[30 : 52] So going forward what a tremendous thing to know that next year as we're a year older that nevertheless the authority is still with Christ.

The fact that the Godhead is working on our behalf to draw us into that eternal kingdom that all of the world though they don't know it is waiting for one of us to say something to them and all we have to do is open our mouths and tell them what we believe and finally we all as Christians must look forward to that time when in heaven we're going to meet Christ face to face meet that one who for years maybe we loved and always wondered because we see pictures about what people imagine he was like and yet one day the Bible says we'll see him face to face what a tremendous prospect that is but to know that he's with us even now is absolutely fantastic I'm going to close now I'm just going to read those statements that Jesus made once more because for all of us they will say to us that our faith which is based in

Christ and his word is given the authority that the father himself granted to Jesus and the fact it's right the way to the very end of the age is such a powerful statement that when that baby came that we've just been celebrating at Christmas time who would have known that that child would become the one who had all authority over heaven and earth and everything else in all creation and he if we trust in him is our saviour if you've never trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ I'd seriously ask you to read those verses and say where else where else will you find a saviour for all the things that we've done that have been wrong for all the times when we failed and in any other religion but this man Jesus Christ has been given the authority to say to us that one's one of mine he's trusted in me and I've paid the penalty for his or her sin what a fantastic new year's message the good news just follow it with me as I read it again to finish Jesus came to them these were people who already believed 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 teach them to say to obey everything I've commanded you and surely I will be with you always to the very

end of the age amen

Lord we thank you that you were the one who saved us but more important you're the one who will hold us fast because as that hymn says you loved us so to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy to the only God our saviour be glory majesty power and authority through Jesus Christ our Lord before all ages now and forever more amen amen Amen.