

Matthew 28:16-20
Sent Into the World: Authority, Mission, and Presence

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“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.” — Psalm 19:14

The Gospel today tells us that Jesus instructed the disciples to go to Galilee. Imagine that journey.

The disciples were walking toward Galilee carrying many emotions. They had seen the cross. They had experienced grief, confusion, fear, disappointment, and uncertainty. Now they stand before the risen Christ waiting to hear what comes next.

And what happens on this mountain is not simply a goodbye from Jesus. It is an installation into mission. It is the moment Christ officially entrusts His disciples with continuing His work in the world.

Matthew tells us something very honest: “When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.”

Even standing before the risen Christ, some still struggled with uncertainty. Yet Jesus still commissions them. God does not wait for qualified or perfect people before calling them. God uses willing people who trust Him even in weakness.

This Gospel teaches us three important truths about our call to mission.

1. The One Sending Us Has All Authority

Jesus begins with these words: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

Before Jesus speaks about mission, He speaks about authority. The One sending the disciples is not simply another religious leader. The One sending them is the risen Lord who has authority over heaven and earth.

That means the mission of the church does not rest on human strength, popularity, resources, or perfection. It rests on Christ’s authority.

Whatever ministry you do here — teaching, singing, praying, giving, volunteering, serving quietly behind the scenes — do not take it lightly. This is not merely the pastor’s mission or the council’s mission. It is Christ’s mission.

2. Jesus Gives the Church a Clear Mission

Jesus says: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them... and teaching them...”

Notice the movement: Go. Make disciples. Baptize. Teach.

The mission of the church is not simply to gather crowds. It is to form disciples who live and walk with Christ. Jesus says “all nations.” The Gospel is meant for people who are like us and unlike us. The church is sent into the whole world. Mission begins exactly where God has placed us: in homes, schools, workplaces, hospitals, neighborhoods, and communities.

God has made mission easier for us here in the United States because the nations are already around us. People from different cultures, languages, and backgrounds are part of our daily lives.

Some people may never read the Bible before they encounter your life. Some may first experience Christ through your kindness, compassion, forgiveness, encouragement, generosity, or personal story.

As we prepare for Sunday with Our Neighbors on December 06, begin praying now about who you can invite. Mission often begins with a simple invitation.

3. Jesus Promises His Presence

Jesus ends with this promise: “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The disciples feared losing Jesus physically. But Jesus assures them that His presence would continue with them. They would not walk alone. Serve alone. Preach alone. Or face temptation alone. Christ would go with them.

And this same promise belongs to us today. When mission becomes difficult, Christ is with us. When faith becomes costly, Christ is with us. When we feel inadequate, uncertain, or afraid, Christ is with us.

The mission is not ultimately ours. It is Christ’s mission. The power of mission does not come from perfect disciples. It comes from the presence of a faithful Savior.

So here is the challenge for this week: Do one intentional act of mission. Encourage someone. Pray with someone. Invite someone. Serve someone. Speak hope into someone’s life.

Begin praying for Sunday with Our Neighbors — December 06.

And do not wait until you feel fully ready. The disciples were not fully ready either. Some still doubted. Yet Jesus still installed, commissioned, and sent them.

Because the authority belongs to Christ. The mission belongs to the church. And the presence belongs to all who follow Him. Amen.