



Life Group Questions
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Date: May 2, 2021

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20

In the following, you will dig deeper into Matthew 28:16-20 and learn more about being a disciple, God's mission (to Galilee), the nature of our call (Command and Means), Faith (Provision), Jesus (His Authority), and Prayer ("in the name of..."). Each insight should help you to treasure or enjoy God more, embrace His word more firmly, and engage the world more effectively.

Enjoy, Pastor Jeremy

Disciples

What is a disciple?¹

What does it look like today to be a disciple of Jesus?

Should we call him "Rabbi"? Why or why not?

How many disciples did Jesus have at this time?

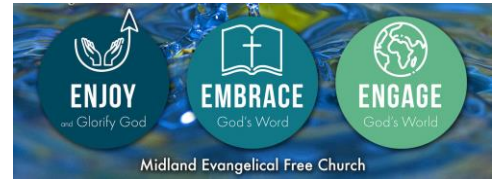
Weren't there twelve?

What happened?

What can we take away from the fact that even Jesus himself experienced betrayal?



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Galilee

Because we live in a different era on a different continent, we may miss the significance of geographical markers. Everything God put in the Bible matters – even geography. Why is it repeatedly emphasized that Jesus' mission will continue into Galilee?

To answer: Please look up and read Isaiah 9:1-2.

Commands vs. Descriptive Participles

This may feel like a grammar lesson, but the intent is not grammar, but understanding what Jesus commands and how he commands us to do it.

Check this out.

How many commands do you think occur in Matthew 16-20?

Now read endnote (ii) toward the end of this document and see how many commands actually occur...ⁱⁱ

Provisions

What are some examples of provisions that you would take with you on a trip?

What are your top 3 – "must haves"?

What did Jesus give the disciples for provision?

How does this play out in their Christian growth?



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"Authority"

Here is a list of some examples of when Christ exercised His authority.

What are some additional examples that the chart does not include?

(ἐξουσία [*exousia*] Power)

There is no force outside the Power of His Control:

- **Rulers & Authorities** (John 19:10-11 [Pilate]; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Col. 2:10; Eph 1:21; Philippians 2:10)
- **Supernatural** (1 Peter 3:20-22)
- **Satan** (Mark 1:12-13; 3:20-30)
- **Demons** (Mark 1:25)
- **His Disciples** (Mark 1:16-20, Mark 1:1-8; 1:14-15)
- **Religious Establishment** (Luke 20:39-40; John 5:19-29)

- **Truth** (Matthew 7:29; John 14:6; Mark 7:1-22; Mark 2:18-3:6)
- **Judge** (John 5:27; Luke 12:5;)
- **Sin** (Matthew 9:6; John 1:29, Mark 2:1-12)
- **To Bestow Eternal Life** (John 17:2)

- **Life** (John 10:18; John 11 [Lazarus] Romans 14:9)
- **Sickness** (Mark 1:40-45; 5:24-34; 7:31-37)
- **DEATH** (Rev. 20:6; Romans 14:9; Mark 5:21-43)

- **Nature** (John 21:6 [Miraculous Catch]; John 6:16-24 [Walks on Water]; Mark 4:39 - "No force was more powerful and omnipresent than nature." David Turner and Darrell L. Bock, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 440.)
- **Time** (Jude 25; John 1; 2 Peter 3:8)
- **Space** (John 1; 4:46-54)
- **Distance** (John 4:46-54)
- **His Creation** (Daniel 7:13-14; Eph 1:10; Romans 9:21; John 17:2; Hebrews 1:2; John 6:16-24; Mark 6:30-44)



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What are some examples of times when he did NOT exercise his full authority?

Why would he exercise it in one instance but not another? What's the difference?

"In the name of"ⁱⁱⁱ

If we are to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, why didn't Jesus say, "in the names of" (plural)?

What does it mean to do something "in the name of" someone?

How does this impact our understanding of praying "In Jesus' name"?

Does it mean merely tacking Jesus' name on at the end of each prayer?

What does it actually imply? Praying....



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ⁱ A "Disciple" = ? (μαθητεύω)

Mathēteúō means not only to learn, but to become attached to one's teacher and to become his follower in doctrine and conduct of life. (Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). The complete word study dictionary : New Testament (electronic ed.) (G3100). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.)

A "*disciple*" was not only a pupil, but an adherent; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher; cf. John 8:31; 15:8. (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W. (1996). Vine's complete expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words (2:171-172). Nashville: T. Nelson.)

In the sense of "pupil," *mathētēs* **implies relationship** to a teacher. It may thus be used in various ways, e.g., for the apprentice to a weaver, a student physician, or the disciple of a philosophical school. (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1995, c1985). Theological dictionary of the New Testament. Translation of: Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. (556). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.)

Relationally Based

A unique aspect of NT discipleship is that it is commitment to the person of Jesus. His teaching has force only when there is first this **commitment to his person**. Peter probably knows Jesus, and has heard him speak, prior to the incident in Lk. 5:1ff., but it is the impact of the person of Jesus that makes him a *mathētēs* (cf. Nathanael in Jn. 1:45ff.). This personal commitment explains the deep depression of the disciples after the crucifixion (Lk. 24:19ff.). It is not enough that they have the legacy of his word. They have lost Jesus himself. The crucial importance of the resurrection reinforces this. Jesus himself reinstates the group (in spite of initial resistance, Lk. 24:36ff.; Jn. 20:24ff.), restores personal fellowship, and sends the disciples out. (Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1995, c1985). Theological dictionary of the New Testament. Translation of: Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. (560). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.)

In this Gospel a disciple is both a learner and a follower; a disciple takes Jesus as his teacher and learns from him, and a disciple also follows Jesus. The life of a disciple is different because of his attachment to Jesus. The Master is not giving a command that will merely secure nominal adherence to a group, but one that will secure wholehearted commitment to a person. (Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; InterVarsity Press, 1992), 746.)



ii **“Make Disciples”** = **The Main Command**

Jesus’ commission, applicable to all His followers, involved one command,

“Make disciples,” which is accompanied by three **participles** in the Greek:

- “going,”
- *baptizing*, and
- *teaching*.

Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures (2:94). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Go ... baptizing ... teaching (verse 20) are each participles dependent upon the main verb *make disciples of*.

But in such a construction it is not uncommon for the participles themselves to assume the force of an imperative. However, the command to make disciples is the primary command, while the commands to baptize and teach are ways of fulfilling the primary command.

Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992). A handbook on the Gospel of Matthew. Originally published: A translator's handbook on the Gospel of Matthew, c1988. UBS helps for translators; UBS handbook series (886). New York: United Bible Societies.

Often this verse is viewed as having three commands: namely,

1. to go,
2. to baptize, and
3. to make disciples or teach.

In reality the Great Commission revolves around one main imperative:

make disciples by

1. going,
2. baptizing, and
3. teaching,

especially the last two.

Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1999). Nelson's new illustrated Bible commentary (Mt 28:19-20). Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers.



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iii Name = Character

God had told Moses to reveal his name (Ex 3:13, 15); when God revealed his name, he revealed his character and attributes (Ex 33:19; 34:5, 14; for the future, see Is 52:6). Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament (Jn 17:6). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

Name = Character

In the Scriptures **the name and person of God are inseparably related** (Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Baker encyclopedia of the Bible. Map on lining papers. (880). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House.)

God's "name," i.e., his nature, his character. (Beasley-Murray, G. R. (2002). Vol. 36: Word Biblical Commentary : John. Word Biblical Commentary (298). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.)

"Name" in biblical usage correctly describes the person, place, or object and indicates the **essential character** of that to which the name is given. (Elwell, W. A., & Beitzel, B. J. (1988). Baker encyclopedia of the Bible. Map on lining papers. (880). Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House.)

The Significance of the Name

The name is not the mere designation, a sense which would give to the baptismal formula merely the force of a charm. **The name**, as in the Lord's Prayer ("Hallowed be thy name"), **is the expression of the sum total of the divine Being**: not his designation as God or Lord, but the formula in which all his attributes and characteristics are summed up. It is equivalent to his person.

The finite mind can deal with him only through his name; but his name is of no avail detached from his nature. When one is baptized into the name of the Trinity, he professes to acknowledge and appropriate God in all that he is and in all that he does for man. He recognizes and depends upon God the Father as his Creator and Preserver; receives Jesus Christ as his only Mediator and Redeemer, and his pattern of life; and confesses the Holy Spirit as his Sanctifier and Comforter.

(Vincent, M. R. (2002). Word studies in the New Testament (1:149-150). Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.)