

MAKING MORE DISCIPLES: STUDY MATERIAL (1)

HOLY HABITS: MAKING MORE DISCIPLES! [assuming all are Christians in the group]

Matthew 28:16-20 Commissioning and Call

Welcome everyone and invite them to introduce themselves by saying their names and finishing with this phrase: 'The most exciting journey I ever went on was.....'

Open in prayer

Thanks to God for the call of Jesus to follow Him and being entrusted with the commission to make more disciples

Also pray for each group member that there will be an openness to each other, God's word in the Bible and the Holy Spirit.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

Read from one translation and then again from another translation. Ask for comments. Then go through the passage:

What did it say?

The disciples went to a mountain in Galilee. They saw Jesus and they worshipped Him, but some doubted.

Jesus then spoke to them. Firstly He affirmed that all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him, that is, He had the right to commission them.

The commission was to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything He had commanded them. The promise He gave them was that He would be with them always to the very end of the age.

So What does this mean?

Notice the main commission was to make disciples, meaning that the main task of Christians is to make disciples! In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says to Peter, '*I will build my church.*' The church is Jesus' responsibility! Making disciples is ours! As Christians we can often immerse ourselves in church and church buildings, forgetting our main task.

The word 'go' is important. We are sent out to where the people are. The original Greek phrase for 'to make disciples' has a sense of urgency about it. The call is to go to all nations, no-one is excluded from the Christian faith.

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The passage shows that baptism is important, as is adult confirmation for those baptised as infants, and so is teaching what Jesus has taught us. Passing on the Gospel message is part of our task.

Remember that some doubted [Matthew 28:17]. These disciples were not super saints!

Jesus finishes with a wonderful promise that He will be with us always. [Matthew 28:20]

Now what does this mean for us today?

Invite comments on this passage. What does it mean today?

Questions to consider:

Does this teaching apply to us today?

Do you sense a call to go and make disciples?

If so to whom? Local, abroad, particular ethnic groups?

Do you feel confident about this call? Any particular problems?

Any practical ideas? Do you have a plan?

Is there anyone you could work with?

Would this prospective journey be more exciting and rewarding than the journey they spoke about at the beginning of the session?

Invite others to pray. If they are apprehensive, encourage them to ask for God's help. If they can't see a way forward, encourage them to ask for God's guidance. Encourage them to claim the promise of God's presence. Encourage them to get together and encourage each other.

Conclude with a sending out prayer: eg

*Go from here to live as God has called you
with the compassion of Jesus
and the power of the Holy Spirit
so that those you meet will catch a glimpse of the glory of God
And see the difference that following Jesus can make.*

Finish by sharing the grace

[All Bible quotes from the NIV]

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