

Lesson 109 – THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matthew 28:7-20

(Matt. 28:7-8) – Our Lord appeared to these two faithful women who had come to honor His body. The angel told them, *“GO QUICKLY, AND TELL HIS DISCIPLES THAT HE IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD; AND, BEHOLD, HE GOETH BEFORE YOU INTO GALILEE; THERE SHALL YE SEE HIM: LO, I HAVE TOLD YOU.”* They obeyed in *“FEAR AND GREAT JOY.”* This “fear” was a godly respect and reverence for the resurrected Christ that brought them great “joy” and peace in believing the risen Christ (Rom. 15:13).

(Matt. 28:9-10) – The Lord *“MET THEM, SAYING ALL HAIL,”* and *“THEY CAME ... AND WORSHIPPED HIM.”* When the Lord reveals Himself to His people, worship is the result (Rev. 1:17-18). *“BE NOT AFRAID: GO TELL MY BRETHREN THAT THEY GO INTO GALILEE, AND THERE SHALL THEY SEE ME.”* The Lord spoke a word of peace to these women. This is the way He comforts His people as He reveals Himself as our Lord and Savior Who died for our sins and established righteousness by which we are justified before God. Notice He told them to tell His “brethren.” It is awesome to know that Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren (Heb. 2:11), that He reveals Himself to His brethren (Heb. 2:12-18).

(Matt. 28:11-15) – When the chief priests and elders heard from the Roman soldiers who guarded the Lord’s tomb how that He had in fact risen from the dead on the third day, they never gave the matter a thought. They were not interested in knowing the facts. They gave no consideration to the evidence. All they wanted to do was to protect themselves and their positions. They bribed the Roman guards to tell anyone who asked that “His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept!”

The fact is, the prejudice of blind unbelief is so great that it will grasp, believe, and defend the most ridiculous absurdities rather than bow to and receive the truth of God, no matter how fully and evidently the truth is manifested. When God sends blindness upon those who have deliberately rejected His truth that blindness is inconceivably great (John 12:37-40). Always remember that if we truly believe in Christ, it is by God-given life and faith which none of us have by nature. It truly is a gift from God and by His grace (Eph. 2:8-10). We can claim no contribution of our own in our new birth (John 1:11-13).

(Matt. 28:16-17) – *“ELEVEN DISCIPLES”* gathered in Galilee, and there were probably others as we know that the Lord was seen by more than five hundred brethren after He had risen (1 Cor. 15:6). They went into Galilee to meet the Lord as He had commanded them both before and after His resurrection (Matt. 26:32; 28:10). *“WHEN THEY SAW HIM, THEY WORSHIPPED HIM: BUT SOME DOUBTED.”* We need to understand and be constantly aware that God’s saints in this world are still sinners. We are forgiven but not faultless, pardoned but not perfected, sanctified but not sinless. The only sinlessness

we can rightly claim is our standing before God as justified in Christ, as our sins cannot be charged to us and as we have His righteousness imputed to us (Rom. 4:6-8; 8:33-34). While in this life, faith and doubt do exist in the same person. We should never have any doubts concerning matters plainly revealed in the Word of God. But the sad fact is, we do, but Christ will not let us apostatize (2 Tim. 2:11-13; 1 John 3:9).

(Matt. 28:18) – As God absolutely considered, the Lord always had *“ALL POWER ... IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH”* (John 1:1-4). But as Godman, Savior of His people, this was *“GIVEN UNTO”* Him by the Father based on His accomplishing the work of our redemption (John 3:35; 5:26-27; Acts 2:36; Col. 1:16-20). This can be called Christ’s mediatorial lordship as the Redeemer, Intercessor, and Preserver of His people given to Him by the Father before the world began. His power is both to conquer His enemies but also to save all His people (God’s elect) from their sins and bring them to glory (John 17:1-5).

(Matt. 28:19-20) – His work of redemption and His mediatorial lordship and power are the reasons we are told to *“GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.”* We preach the Gospel all over the world to everyone and anyone who will listen because we know that God has a people in the world for whom Christ died and redeemed. They must and will hear the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit Who gives spiritual life, faith, repentance, and the power to persevere unto glory (John 6:37-45; 16:7-11). This great commission is to preach and teach the Gospel and its doctrines (Rom. 1:16-17; 6:17-18) revealing how God has been reconciled to His people based on the blood (righteousness) of Christ and calling on them to be reconciled unto God on that same ground (2 Cor. 5:19-21). And all who believe are to follow the Lord in believer’s baptism, confessing Christ before men. They are to be baptized *“IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST,”* as sinners are saved by the work of the Father Who elected and justified them in Christ, the work of the Son Who redeemed them by His obedience unto death, and the work of the Spirit Who regenerates and converts them to Christ.

“TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE COMMANDED YOU: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD. AMEN” – All who have been saved and preserved by God’s grace, and who have been born again by the Spirit are to be taught in the Word of God and to be obedient bond-servants of Christ (2 Tim. 3:14-17). They are to be motivated and inspired by God’s grace in Christ, not by legal threats of punishment or loss of “earned rewards.” They are to walk in newness of spirit seeking to glorify God, exalt Christ, and obey Him as motivated by grace, love, and gratitude (Rom. 7:4-6). Christ promises never to abandon His people. He will preserve them all.