

## **Introduction**

In our studies, we have seen Jesus crucified, buried, and now resurrected. In the book of Matthew, the scene immediately shifts to the interaction in Galilee. In Matthew, Galilee was a main point of emphasis and served as a safe location for the ministry to work free from the dangers of Judea (Matthew 4:12-16).

It was in Galilee that the eleven were all selected (Matthew 4:18-22).

It was in Galilee that Jesus began His ministry, and it was in Galilee that Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, was set (Matthew 4:23-5:2).

It was in Galilee that Jesus initially told them He would be crucified and resurrected on the third day (Matthew 17:22-23).

Is it in Galilee that they rendezvous on a mountain that He had designated (Matthew 26:32). This point is repeated by the angel and Jesus after the resurrection (Matthew 28:7, 10). We know that Jesus made a few appearances to the disciples before they went to Galilee. Some find this statement in Matthew a contradiction, but remember the details are not exclusive.

So, now we pick up the text with the eleven now in Galilee at the mountain where Jesus had designated.

## **Matthew 28:16-20**

Matthew 28:16 – This verse is very straightforward and sets the scene.

Matthew 28:17 – This is a strange verse. Here is the literal translation from the Greek: “And having seen Him, they worshiped Him but the(y) doubted.”

*Worshiped* – προσκυνέω proskuneo – means to bow down so as to pay homage to, be subject to, or express in attitude or gesture one’s complete dependence on or submission to a high authority figure. This activity is permitted to be expressed to God alone (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 22:8-9).

οὐ δὲ – This is a plural article with the conjunction “de.” This is a controversial issue.

“The question is whether the phrase indicates a partitive sense (some doubted), continuity (all of the disciples doubted), or a change of subject (others doubted). Each of the three is possible for this construction, but in this context, the partitive sense is probably correct.” ~Porter

I would not mind this explanation, except for the fact that Matthew never uses this construction as a partitive (but some).

*were doubtful* – διστάζω distazo – This literally means to duplicate in thought.

To have doubts concerning something (doubt, waver); to be uncertain about taking a particular course of action (hesitate).

Matthew Chapter 26-28 – The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus – Part 14  
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Three views are considered.

1. The group that was here was made up of both the eleven and other disciples. In this scenario, the eleven worshiped, but other disciples were doubtful.

There is nothing in the context that this was the case. This meeting seemed to be exclusive for the eleven.

2. The eleven wondered if worship was right at that moment.

This does not fit the scenario, especially if one considers the other passages. By the time they saw Jesus in Galilee, they would have had many encounters with the risen Jesus Christ.

3. The eleven were not doubting His resurrection but what they were to do now. If this is correct, the verse break is an error.

The doubt was about them, not their worship; this doubt was dispelled with the commission in verses 18-20.

Matthew 28:18 – This authority is granted to Jesus after the resurrection. This is something that was not true before the resurrection. Before He had the authority to do what the Father had directly expressed to Him; what Jesus did and said had not been of His own initiative. But now, in His resurrection body, in His humanity, He has full authority. Jesus is now the rightful King, but not yet throned. He has not yet taken the throne of David on earth, but He is in the position to come from heaven to earth, to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth, and to rule forever. Until that time, He will be taking on the office and responsibility of High Priest.

Jesus will now grant the apostles direct authority; this is directed in this context only to the eleven. As we will see in Acts, on the Day of Pentecost, He will equip His apostles with the Holy Spirit so they will have the supernatural ability in conjunction with this authority.

Matthew 28:19-20 – In this commission, Jesus gives them one command with many supportive participles.

*Make disciples* – μαθητεύω matheteuo – This is a verb in the Aorist Imperative. This indicates a command with a sense of urgency. This is not the verb “μανθάνω mathano” – to learn. But a verb form of the noun “μαθητής mathetes” – disciple.

*Go* – This is the adverbial participle “πορεύομαι poreuomai” and means to travel, go on a trip. As a participle, it indicates, “While traveling....”

*All the nations* – The word “of” is not in the text. This has been represented as to win all the nations for Jesus Christ – a Christian national world domination.

Matthew 24:9, 14, 25:32 – All the nations will never be won prior to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew Chapter 26-28 – The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus – Part 14  
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*All the nations*, then, is a phrase that would mean that the mission will be to go into all the nations and make disciples there (Mark 13:10; Luke 24:47).

*Baptizing them* – βαπτίζω baptizo – This means to immerse someone. Into what are they to be immersed? Into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Where is the water? There is no reason to presume water is involved here. We will get more into *baptize* as we go through Acts.

*Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you* –

*Observe* – τηρέω tereo – to keep, to hold, or to guard; to cause a state, condition, or activity to continue, to be persistent in obedience.

*Commanded* – ἐντέλλω entello – What is it that Jesus commanded them?

This is the instruction that Jesus told them to teach, not the “commandments of the Law.”

They are to teach disciples to observe the things in Matthew. Since the message of Matthew has not changed, we must conclude that their mission, primarily, is to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to Israel and beyond.

We must be careful and consistent with Matthew and the Synoptics. Matthew's message is about the King, the Kingdom, and Israel's preparation and subsequent rejection. To make this commission about the gospel to the world (i.e. the Gospel of John), then we have continuity problems.

Is it possible to have multiple missions, multiple programs, and multiple messages run by the same people? Let me suggest that Matthew 28 is about the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the aim is primarily for the Jews in Jerusalem and throughout the nations.

When we fast forward to Acts, we see that it is not until Acts 11 that the Word is being proclaimed to Gentiles (Acts 11:19-26). I find it difficult to fathom that the apostles took 15-20 years to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to Gentiles if the message was simply about eternal life.

*And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

The “end of the age” is language concerning the dawn of the Millennial Kingdom (Matthew 24:3-14). The Gospel of the Kingdom is the primary focus of Matthew and the Tribulation.