

The Way of Jesus: Completeness  
Matthew 28:16-20  
Week of October 23, 2022

Opening Questions:

- Share something you began and finished well - a project, a task, a calling.
- Share something you started and failed to complete.

Read aloud this introduction:

Six weeks ago we began a journey into the most important elements of what it means to be a Christian, a follower of Christ, a person who is *on the way of Jesus increasingly in the ways of Jesus*.

First we discovered that we are not in control. God is. This God-life is about lifelong life change from the inside out. It is an apprenticeship as we learn from all that Jesus says and all that Jesus does. As we live increasingly in his ways we are to be fruitful in what we do, what we say, what we think and the attitudes we carry and display. This life of the Jesus-way is all about relationships. We move through it well when we live attentively every moment.

As we come to Week 7 of our study, we look at the end of the gospel of Matthew. Prompted by the Spirit of God, Matthew draws us to a place not of ending, but a beginning of profound significance. In the passage, Jesus holds a commissioning service for his apprentices.

A few weeks prior to the setting of our text, Jesus was betrayed by one of his students. The religious power elite seized him and, after a harrowing night, he was nailed to a cross where he died. His body was entombed. On the morning of the third day after he breathed his last, he was raised to life, a most unexpected thing. He was seen on many occasions by many people. The last such occasion recorded by Matthew is the text we will explore.

Invite someone in the group to read Matthew 28:16-20 aloud.

Pray this prayer (one person or the whole group together):

Lord, as we come together to study your Word, we bring all of who we are with our needs, our hopes, and our expectations. Meet us here in the power and presence of your Holy Spirit. Give us insight and understanding as we listen carefully for your voice. And then give us courage and conviction to align our lives with the way of Jesus. We pray in his name. Amen.

Questions for Exploration:

- What is the setting for this passage? Who is with Jesus? What is the significance of that?
- What is Jesus' message?
- Note the repeated use of the word "all" in this text. What do you observe about that?

- What does Jesus want his disciples to know?
- What does he want them to do?
- What is the importance of Jesus emphasizing his authority?



Jesus gives the eleven their marching orders. In military terms, this is the instruction to “get moving!” Jesus’ words, however, have a different force. In this text, “get moving” or “go” isn’t really a command. It is a framework for a way of life for his followers. Jesus’ command is to make disciples as we go, wherever we go.

In our going, in our daily moment-to-moment life, we, like the disciples, are to live intentionally. We are to be the presence of Christ with every person and in every circumstance as full participants in Jesus’ mission.

We get to help bring God’s loving mission full circle. What an incredible calling! What an incredible honor! What an incredible adventure! Matthew's ending is magnificent and compelling. These final words of Jesus propel us to be “all-in” with him every moment of every day throughout the whole world with every person and in every circumstance. We’ve been called to this "all-in" life so the mission of God is fully accomplished.

#### Questions for Pressing it Out:

- What do Jesus’ words reveal about who God is?
- What do they reveal about God’s priorities?
- What does this passage tell us about who we are?
- How do Jesus’ words inform us about our own priorities in living out the way of Jesus?

- Where are the places you go? Who are the people whose lives you touch?
- How might God want you to invest anew in fulfilling his mission?

Closing Prayer:

Depending on the needs/desires of your group here are some options:

- Ask one or two group members to close the group in prayer
- Pray the Lord's prayer together aloud:

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen."