

Weekly Bible Study for Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

“Jesus commissions His Church” Matthew 28: 16-20 by Diana Middleditch April 2021

Pray, and read a couple of times the study verses adding Colossians 1:18. Underline or make a note of the words or phrases that you personally feel are really important to understanding this reading.

By breaking down the key instructional/commissioning verses (18,19 and 20) we can see four components. Firstly, all authority in heaven and earth was given to Jesus. (from v18).

Secondly, the disciples were to go in this authority and make disciples of all nations and to baptise when required (from v19).

Thirdly, to make disciples required teaching obedience, obedience that was the same commandments Jesus gave to his disciples. (20a&b).

Finally, Jesus would be with them until the end of the age (20c).

The scene begins on a mountain top (verses 16 and 17), a great deal in Matthew takes place on a mountain top. Jesus invites his disciples to meet him so they can be commissioned.

Q1. How do the eleven respond to Jesus when they see him on the mountain?

Verse 18 (and then 20) is much like a father who helps his child learn how to ride a bike. When the child is scared and anxious of falling off the father reminds his child that he will always be there holding the seat stopping it from falling.

The statement is however more than that. It is a reminder that the authority is Jesus' and not theirs. The disciples must go in the power of Christ and not in their own power. They might be tempted to teach their own traditions or opinions; they must teach under the authority of Christ.

The task Jesus leaves his followers is straight forward, though daunting and demanding. Their task is to make disciples,

Q2. How does the authority of Christ give us confidence in our own life and ministry?

Question 1 was - how do the eleven respond to Jesus when they see him on the mountain. The scripture reveals that some doubted (verse 17). **Q3. How does this comfort us in our faith journeys?**

Jesus said He would be with them, even to the end of the age. The end of the age hasn't come yet and it doesn't appear He was talking to only the disciples (meaning He would still be with them when they died and went to heaven). He was with the disciples and now He is with us, all believers, the church. The implication is that Jesus is with His church to the end of the age and therefore we can be confident of His presence as we undertake this task given to us. **Q4. What is your own personal experience of the church undertaking this commission?**

From the height of this final mountain we look out at God's future from Jesus' perspective, and **Q5 what do we see?** When answering this question think about the growth of the Gospel (Acts 6:7, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20) think about what happened to the Temple in Jerusalem that had been the centre of their way of life. But out beyond these events we see a greater future. Amen