

## A JOB TO DO

Matthew 28:16-20 Text vs. 19 *“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”*

The sermon last week closed with Jesus passing through the locked Upper Room door saying to His disciples, *“Peace be with you!”* and then giving them a glorious future by saying, *“as the Father sent Me, so I am sending you.”* From that moment on, the disciples began spreading the Word that Jesus was giving them a future far beyond their wildest dreams! The mission Jesus gave them really mattered. He commanded them to *“Go into all the world teaching and preaching the Good News to every creature.”* And they succeeded! Far beyond anyone’s expectations. And what He did for them, He’ll do for you! Last week, my sermon’s final words were, *“Now, go do it!”*

In 1886, Dr. John Pemberton, a pharmacist in Atlanta, Georgia, concocted in a three-legged brass kettle in his backyard a caramel-colored syrup. He took a jug of it over to Jacob’s Pharmacy on Peachtree Street in Atlanta where the syrup was mixed with soda water. Hmmm! Tasty! They called it Coca-Cola. And it sold for a nickel a glass. It was promoted as a useful tonic. It could *“cure all nervous afflictions—sick headache, neuralgia, hysteria, melancholy.”* During the first year Pemberton’s beverage was on the market, Jacob’s Pharmacy sold about nine glasses a day. Now, after more than *one hundred thirty-seven years* on the market, 97% of the world has *heard* of Coca-Cola. 72% of the world has *seen* a can of Coca-Cola. And 51% of the world has *tasted* a can of Coca-Cola. Its market value is now over 260 billion US Dollars. Why? Because the company made a commitment that everyone on this planet would have a taste of their soft drink. 97% of the world’s population has now *heard* of this sugar and water concoction. But 1.7 billion people have *not heard the Good News of Jesus Christ!* It’s estimated *seventeen million* people die every year *without* ever hearing the name of Jesus!

In the cartoon *Peanuts*, Charlie Brown always had a crush on a little red-haired girl. At a distance, He would follow her home. He wanted to talk to her. But never did! One day Linus asked Charlie if the little red-haired girl liked him. Charlie said he didn’t know. He never asked her. And that’s the way it is with a lot of people who follow Jesus from afar. They never ask Him anything. And they don’t spend any time with Him. You need to spend time with Jesus to get to know Him. And if you do, He will give you courage. Charlie Brown didn’t have the courage to talk to the little red-haired girl.

And in our lesson last week the disciples didn’t have courage. They were full of doubts when Jesus said to them, again, *“Peace be with you!”* They were probably wondering just how Jesus would react after they had abandoned Him hanging on the cross. You may have the same feelings. But as you spend more time with Jesus in Bible study and talk with Him in prayer, you will begin to experience the power that was given to Him in heaven and on earth. *That power* will give you courage! Our theology confirms it. There’s no doubt about it. Jesus was given all power and authority in heaven and on earth. He’s the Son of God! He’s the second person in the Trinity. He sits on the right side of His Father in heaven. And He can command legions of angels at any time. He alone will open the seals of Revelation. He is the Alpha and Omega. The Beginning and the End.

But many here on earth doubt He has that power. The world sees sin. The world sees death. The world sees misery. The world wonders who really is in power. Because evil is winning! In 2019, clinics, hospitals, physicians’ offices, and abortion pills resulted in over 930,000 babies being *legally* aborted. There’s no record of how many babies are *illegally* murdered by abortion. Those babies have no way to appeal their death! Yet, murderers are in prison being educated, filing lawsuits, going through long years of an appeal process. Deviants are looked upon as normal. And the normal? They’re considered deviants! *Anything* is tolerated today. You ask, “Where is Jesus in all of this?” *He’s right in the middle of everything* that’s happening, and He needs your help.

Evangelism is *not* an option. Think of *“Go ye therefore”* as being more of an assumption than a command. It’s what’s expected of you in your life as a Christian. It’s not a command, in the strictest sense. It’s not *“if you would, I wish you would,”* or *“if you get time, would you go into all the world.”* It assumes you are doing what you should be doing. You’re living your life teaching and baptizing. Not just the preacher. Not just the deacons. Not just the ones with the gift of evangelism. It’s everyone together! All of us! We haven’t quit living. We’ve just quit *evangelizing*. We’ve given up *“preaching the Good News to every creature.”* And Hell is now in control. Over Memorial Day weekend, forty-three people were shot in Chicago. Nine fatally. Cities are defunding police departments. According to the Centers for Disease Control 108,000 Americans died of drug overdoses last year. Thousands of children are being killed by fentanyl made in China being brought over the border. Stores in major cities are closing because of shoplifting. The race card is being played more and more. 1966 in San Francisco, The Church of Satan was established, dedicated to the religion of Satanism. It even has a Satanic Bible! And speaking of bibles, in Utah, the Davis County School District has removed the *King James Bible* from its younger grade library shelves because it has forty-nine pages of Scripture they judged, as under the law, *inappropriate* for younger readers.

Listen, that’s why Jesus appointed His disciples to be His *“witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* (1:8) It was to be ongoing. Not just for those first disciples. It’s for us! There are four *“alls”* in our lesson this morning. Jesus has *all* authority given to Him. We are to make disciples of *all* nations. We are to teach *all* that He commanded. And He promises He will *always* be with us. Those four *“alls”* secure the meaning of the Gospel. His Commission is for *all* who are called *the people of God*. The mission of making disciples is the reason for teaching and

baptizing. As the church expands around the world, it should be *living* the teachings of Jesus as it witnesses to the world. And most significant of all, Jesus promised that His presence would be with His people until the *conclusion of the ages*. The end of life upon this Earth. Jesus put it like this; *“Go! Make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem. He was raised from the dead in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the place where the disciples were told to wait. Jerusalem was where the mission began. Then the *Good News* was to spread to the rest of Israel. And then to the ends of the earth, (Acts 1:8) That’s where *you*, your church, *this church*, comes in! Your responsibility doesn’t end with just leading people to decide to follow Christ. You must teach them about Jesus. Teaching is a slow process. It requires patience. It requires personal involvement on the part of the teacher. You must be satisfied with small steps of progress, yet not miss the importance of the word *obey*. Teaching must do more than just give information. You must convince others to *obey* Jesus. You can’t pick and choose what to obey. Jesus’ Commission must have sounded like an impossible dream to those disciples. *The whole world?* How could eleven, very ordinary men take the Gospel Message to the *whole world?* How could they speak the love of Jesus to people whose languages they couldn’t understand? How could they take the Word to places they couldn’t even imagine existed? Yet, by the grace of God, they did it!

And the task is still overwhelming! Even here in Everglades City, Chokoloskee, and Plantation Island life can be complex. Sometimes dangerous and hostile to faith in Jesus. Today, Christians are still being victims of mass murder in numbers that make Rome’s Coliseum tame by comparison. More Christians died of persecution in the 20th century than in any other. And this 21st century is on track to set a record. Yet, the worship of God continues to grow in places where it has been persecuted for the better part of a century. You need to *not* lose faith. Your work is Christ-centered. It is Holy Spirit-powered. And there’s someone *you know* you should be inviting to come to church and sit with you *every week!* Why haven’t you?

Together, we all must trust God to continue the work begun in His Name here on this circle 97 years ago. Jesus promised to be with us *“even to the end of the age.”* He promised to be here with us 97 years ago. He promised to be with us here today. And He promised to be here with us in the future. And when the time comes that time will be meaningless because it has become eternity, we will be with Him! But before that time comes, we still have a big job to do right here! Now, let’s all do it. And to God be the Glory! AMEN