

# CHAPTER STUDIES

## Resurrection and Great Commission

Matthew 28:1-20

**Summary:** This passage describes the resurrection of Jesus and some of the responses to it. We also hear Jesus give state what has come to be known as ‘The Great Commission’.

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**28** Now after the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look at the tomb. <sup>2</sup> And behold, a severe earthquake had occurred, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it. <sup>3</sup> And his appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. <sup>4</sup> The guards shook from fear of him and became like dead men. <sup>5</sup> And the angel said to the women, “<sup>Ⓜ</sup>Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. <sup>7</sup> And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see Him; behold, I have told you.” <sup>8</sup> And they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to report to His disciples. <sup>9</sup> And behold, Jesus met them <sup>Ⓜ</sup>and said, “<sup>Ⓜ</sup>Rejoice!” And they came up and took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus \*said to them, “<sup>Ⓜ</sup>Do not be afraid; go, bring word to My brothers to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me.”

<sup>11</sup> Now while they were on their way, some of the *men from the guard* came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. <sup>12</sup> And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, <sup>13</sup> and said, “You are to say, ‘His disciples came at night and

stole Him while we were asleep.’ <sup>14</sup> And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and <sup>Ⓜ</sup>keep you out of trouble.” <sup>15</sup> And they took the money and did as they had been instructed; and this story was widely spread among the Jews *and is* to this day.

## The Great Commission

<sup>16</sup> But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated to them. <sup>17</sup> And when they saw Him, they worshiped *Him*; but some <sup>Ⓜ</sup>were doubtful. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. <sup>19</sup> <sup>Ⓜ</sup>Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to <sup>Ⓜ</sup>follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you <sup>Ⓜ</sup>always, to the end of the age.”

### Footnotes

- a. Matthew 28:5 Or *Stop being afraid*
- b. Matthew 28:9 Lit *saying*
- c. Matthew 28:9 Or *Greetings*
- d. Matthew 28:10 Or *Stop being afraid*
- e. Matthew 28:14 Lit *make you free from care*
- f. Matthew 28:17 Or *hesitated*
- g. Matthew 28:19 Or *Having gone* (Gr aorist part.)
- h. Matthew 28:20 Or *keep*
- i. Matthew 28:20 Lit *all the days*

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## Q & A

1) First day of the week – The Jewish Sabbath was from Friday night to Saturday night. The next day is Sunday. This becomes the new Sabbath day for Christians.

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What does your church/denomination believe about the Sabbath day? Is it Sunday? Saturday? Or is every day a Sabbath? (Rom 14:5)

2) In v 1, the two Mary's went to look at the tomb. This is a normal response to grief that many people feel. Some people refer to it as "the call of the grave". Although we know that our loved one is gone from this world, nevertheless, we sense the need to visit their grave. And so we go. We talk. We cry. We laugh. We leave. We feel better.

Have you experienced 'the call of the grave'? Would you share it with us?

3) The resurrection of Jesus coincided with a 'severe earthquake' and a visit from an angel who rolled away the stone. Somehow or another the earthquake, the rolling away of the grave stone and the visit of the angel are all connected. Perhaps the point to it all is the influence of the supernatural. This was no ordinary matter. Big things happened.

V3 informs us that the angel was bright in appearance and v4 tells us that the tough Roman guards were afraid and became like dead men at seeing the angel.

If just the appearance of the angel was that powerful then just think how much was going on when the angel began to speak to the women! The soldiers were probably freaking out totally about now if they had not passed out!

Then, Jesus Himself appears and begins speaking to the women. The soldiers must have been really overwhelmed as they had just participated in Jesus' scourging, crucifixion and death. Perhaps the Roman soldiers had many reasons to be like 'dead men'.

Chat about the influence of the spiritual and supernatural world all around us. We cannot generally see it and yet sometimes, occasionally, we do catch a glimpse of it, don't we?

Have you experienced something like this? Have you seen an angel? Have you seen Jesus? Have you any stories to tell about the unexplainable working of God in your life? Would you share it with us?

4) V6 says that Jesus is 'risen'. V7 says that Jesus is 'risen from the dead'. V9-10 describes Jesus in His resurrected state appearing and speaking to the women.

Take a few moments to consider together the meaning and benefits of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

5) Consider together the words of the angel in v6 and v7 to 'come and see' and 'go and tell'. How might this apply to unbelievers? To believers?

6) V8 tells us that the women who saw the angel and heard about Jesus were filled with mixed emotions (fearful and joyful).

Chat about both emotions in this context.

Why were they fearful?

Why were they joyful?

Do you think that you would have been the same way? Why or why not?

7) Why would Jesus tell a group of grieving women to 'rejoice'? v9 How might this apply to us today?

8) The first response of the women to seeing Jesus in His resurrected state was to hug His feet and to worship Him.

What do you think will be your response when you see Jesus for the first time?

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9) Jesus' message to the women was to tell the apostles to meet Him in Galilee. Many believe that to be the place where Jesus appeared to over 500 people at one time. (1 Cor 15:6)

What does it mean to you to know that Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to more than 500 people in a single instance?

10) V11-15 tell us about a conspiracy between the Roman guards and the chief priests to squelch the truth of Jesus' resurrection. They developed a story about the guards sleeping and propagated it. In response to their cooperation the guards were financially compensated.

Chat about what you have experienced or heard about where something was done to squelch the gospel or hurt the church or...

11) Notice that in v16 there are only eleven disciples. What happened to number 12 and who was it?

12) V17 tells us that some of the apostles doubted that they were really seeing Jesus alive again.

The Bible includes the hard truths sometimes. It does not sugar coat the truth or try to cover it up. It is what it is.

Being so open and forthright about some who doubted lends validity and authenticity to the scriptures. They are trustworthy.

Many people have doubted and yet come to full faith. Like the man in Mark 9:24 who said, 'I do believe; help my unbelief'.

Have you ever felt that way? Would you share it with us?

13) The foundational premise for the Great Commission in v19-20 is found in v18 where Jesus says that 'all authority in heaven and on earth are given to Him'.

Jesus is given all authority by virtue of His divine nature as a member of the holy trinity and also because of His valiant work at Calvary and the resurrection.

Jesus is God. Jesus is human. He is the great God Man.

What does it mean to you to know that Jesus has all authority and can do whatever He wants to do?

14) What does it mean to 'make disciples'?

Chat together and make a list of qualities for a disciple of Christ.

15) Ponder together the various nuances of the Great Commission such as: go; baptizing; teaching; Father/Son/Holy Spirit; I am with you.

What do we learn about God from this passage?

What do we learn about ourselves from this passage?

What one main truth am I taking away from this study?