

Note to Teams: The word order of the NIV is different from the CSB/KJV in Matthew 20:18. The NIV word order differs from the CSB/KJV in 2 Corinthians 5:16. The KJV word order differs from that of the CSB/NIV in 2 Corinthians 5:21.

Being an Authentic Church

Session 2

April 21, 2024

Sharing Christ

The Point: We are to invite others into a relationship with Christ.

Session Question: What does God want us to do with His message of reconciliation?

Session Passages: Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Matthew 28:18-20

Connection to The Point: Christ commissioned us to make disciples as we go through life.

The Setting for Matthew 28:18-20. The final chapter of Matthew's Gospel begins with the resurrection of Jesus in Jerusalem and concludes with His instructions to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee prior to His ascension into heaven. Our focal verses are frequently called "The Great Commission," referring to the mission Jesus gave to His disciples (see also Acts 1:4-11).

Jesus came near, Jesus came to (v. 18). Unlike the Gospel accounts of Luke and John, Matthew does not record where Jesus had been on the previous forty days since His resurrection except for His appearance to the women who had come to His tomb (v. 9).

Them (v. 18). This pronoun refers to the eleven remaining apostles. They left Jerusalem and arrived at the mountain in Galilee (v. 16) where Jesus had told them to go (26:32).

All authority, All power (v. 18). The Greek term for authority power can refer to delegated influence, jurisdiction, right, and power authority. All authority, All power indicates Jesus's absolute position to instruct and command those who follow Him, as well as His power over all creation (Eph. 1:21-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Col. 2:10).

Has been given to me, Is given unto me (v. 18). The basis for Jesus's instructions to the disciples was His relationship with God the Father who gave Jesus this authority (11:27).

In heaven and on earth In, heaven and in earth (v. 18). This phrase reflects the unlimited authority of Jesus. He has complete authority over everything and everyone in the universe (Col. 1:15-20).

Has been given to me (v. 18). The basis for Jesus's instructions to the disciples was His relationship with God the Father who gave Jesus this authority (11:27).

Go, therefore; Therefore go; Go ye therefore (v. 19). The word go assumes the normal interaction of Jesus's followers with others and provides the basis for Christians sharing the gospel. Therefore refers to the authority cited in verse 18, pointing to the foundation for Jesus's instructions to His followers.

Make disciples, Teach (v. 19). A disciple is “one who learns.” Specifically in the New Testament, a disciple is a person who places saving faith in Jesus and makes Him Lord of his life (conversion, the first aspect of salvation). Discipleship continues throughout the believer’s life (sanctification, which is continual growth in Christlikeness). Believers follow Jesus’s command to make disciples by proclaiming the gospel, as well as by baptizing and teaching those who place their faith in Christ.

All nations (v. 19). This term shows the universality of Jesus’s command. Jesus’s disciples are to proclaim the gospel of salvation to and make disciples of all nations.

Baptizing (v. 19). The Greek verb means “to immerse.” For Christians baptism is the initial outward symbol of the inward transformation which occurs at the moment a person places faith in Christ. It also identifies the new believer as Jesus’s follower.

Name (v. 19). In Scripture, knowing a person’s name was to know that individual’s character and nature, and it indicated that a relationship existed with that person.¹ In this case, name refers to God and is represented by the trinitarian formula of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Ghost. The fact that the word name is singular points to the unity of God. As detailed in the book of Acts, baptism was usually done in Jesus’s name (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5).

The Father . . . the Son . . . the Holy Spirit, The Father . . . the Son . . . the Holy Ghost (v. 19). Although the word Trinity does not appear in the Bible—it was first used by Christians around AD 200—the idea of the Trinity is present throughout the Scriptures.

Teaching them (v. 20). The verb teaching explains what Jesus’s followers are to do following the conversion of a person. The purpose of Jesus’s longest recorded sermon (the Sermon on the Mount; Matt. 5–7) was to teach His disciples. Matthew focused his Gospel account on Jesus’s teaching, repeatedly citing the Old Testament and Jesus’s correct interpretation of its teachings.

Observe Obey (v. 20). In addition to proclaiming the gospel and calling people to repentance, Jesus’s teaching focused on ethical living growing out of a person’s relationship with God. The Greek word translated observe obey means to keep or guard, to hold fast. In this context, it refers to obeying God’s commands, especially as they relate to a person’s conduct and relationships.

Everything I have commanded; Whatsoever I have commanded (v. 20). This phrase highlights Jesus’s teaching ministry and is inclusive of everything Jesus taught. It refers to the second aspect of salvation, sanctification (the life-long process of being made holy, growing to spiritual maturity). Jesus’s teachings emphasize a lifestyle of obedience to God rather than an intellectual pursuit of facts relating to God.

Remember, Surely, Lo (v. 20). The Greek term can also be translated “Note!” “Look!” and “Pay attention!”

I am with you always (v. 20). Matthew’s Gospel begins by identifying Jesus as Immanuel Emmanuel, “God is with us, God with us” (1:23). It concludes with Jesus reminding His followers of His eternal presence with them, as the following phrase indicates. Another way to understand Jesus’s promise of His presence is the word “eternally.”

Always, to the end of the age; Always, to the very end of the age; Always, even unto the end of the world (v. 20). Jews viewed time as having two distinct phases: the present evil age and the age to come. Early Christians modified that view by overlapping the two ages, calling the overlap the last days, referring to the time between Christ’s first and second comings. The end of the age, The very end of the age, The end of the world refers to the time when Messiah Jesus will return, judging humanity and fully establishing His kingdom.

2 Corinthians 5:16-19

Connection to The Point: The church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

The Setting for 2 Corinthians 5. In this chapter, Paul detailed the future hope all believers have of eternal life with God in heaven. We are to live this mortal, temporary life in light of this hope. Furthermore, we are to proclaim the gospel of salvation in Christ to all people in the hope that they too might believe in Jesus and so escape eternal condemnation for their sins and enter into eternal life.

From now on, So from now on, Wherefore henceforth (v. 16). On the basis of what he had already stated (particularly in vv. 14-15 about Christ's love and His sacrificial death), Paul's new standard for relating to people depended on their relationship with (or without) Christ and not their ethnicity.

A worldly perspective; A worldly point of view; After the flesh (v. 16). The Greek is literally "according to the flesh"; it The phrase describes how those without Christ view other people. The worldly perspective worldly point of view fleshly perspective or point of view, perspective, worldly point of view is one's outward appearance and ethnicity. God rejects this favoritism (Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25). God's perspective is determined by how a person relates to Christ as Paul indicated in the next verse.

Even if; Though Ye, though (v. 16). Prior to his conversion, Paul regarded Jesus Christ from "a worldly perspective a worldly point of view." after the flesh. He rejected Christ and persecuted His followers (1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13-14). However, after his conversion Paul began to see people from a spiritual perspective.

Do so (v. 16). The Greek term can also be translated "to know." Factual knowledge about Christ alone does not result in salvation (Jas. 2:19); rather, repentance of sins and faith in Christ result in salvation (Matt. 4:17; Rom. 10:9-10). In other words, salvation comes from knowing and trusting Christ intimately through a total commitment to Him, not merely knowing facts about Christ.

Yet now; Yet now henceforth; No longer (v. 16). After Paul's conversion he began to understand who Christ is, what Christ's mission was, how Christ's death and resurrection accomplished that mission, as well as what making Jesus Christ Lord of one's life means. Prior to his conversion, Paul had known Jesus Christ merely as a man; after his conversion Paul knew Him as his Savior and Lord (Rom.14:8-12).

Know (v. 16). Factual knowledge about Christ alone does not result in salvation (Jas. 2:19); rather, repentance of sins and faith in Christ result in salvation (Matt. 4:17; Rom. 10:9-10). In other words, salvation comes from knowing and trusting Christ intimately through a total commitment to Him, not merely knowing facts about Christ.

In Christ (v. 17). Perhaps Paul's favorite term for describing believers, the apostle used in Christ almost ninety times in his letters. "This phrase, 'in Christ,' can mean several things that are not mutually exclusive: that one belongs to Christ, that one lives in the sphere of Christ's power, that one is united with Christ, or that one is part of the body of Christ, the believing community."² In this context, the words especially refer to the relationship and unity believers have with Christ which results in their unity with each other.

New creation; New creature (v. 17). Through faith and union with Christ the believer is transformed into a new creature (new creation) creation (Gal. 6:15). This new birth (John 3:1-21) results in a changed life that enables the believer to live in obedience to God (1 John 3:9-10). To be a new creation also relates to how one deals with fellow believers in Christ and with non-believers.

The old has passed away; The old has gone; Old things are passed away (v. 17). This clause refers to the former life of the believer before Christ, characterized by sin and its worldly perspective (v. 16). The words has

passed away has gone refer to the change salvation brings at the moment of conversion as well as to the future aspects of transformation of the believer as he grows to spiritual maturity and in holiness through the life-long process of sanctification (Col. 3:1-17; Gal. 5:16-26).

The new has come; The new is here; All things are become new (v. 17). The words has come is here are become describe the new life believers possess on the basis of their death in Christ and having been raised to new life in Him (v. 14; see Rom. 6:1-11; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 2:12-13; 3:1-17). The prophet Isaiah's reference to the "Suffering Servant" (Isa. 42:1-9; 49; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12) and Jeremiah's reference to a new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34) are fulfilled in God making all things new in Christ (Rev. 21:5).

Everything is from God; All this is from God; All things are of God (v. 18). These words refer to God being the source of His redemptive action through Christ as well as His purpose as stated in verses 18-21. They also refer to the "new creation, new creature" and "the new has come the new is here all things are become new" (v. 17). God always takes the initiative in salvation; our part is our response.

Reconciled (v. 18). God is the only one who acts to reconcile people to Himself. Believers receive reconciliation (Rom. 5:10). To be reconciled means to be changed in one's state or position from being an enemy to being a friend. Paul further defined Christ's purpose in reconciliation in Colossians 1:19-20. Prior to salvation all people are enemies of God because of their sin; they are destined for hell. After conversion believers become friends of God through Christ's righteousness and atoning sacrifice; they are part of God's family and destined for heaven. This action is more than merely renewal; it is a new birth in Christ (John 3:1-21; Rom. 6:4-11).

Through Christ; By Jesus Christ (v. 18). Reconciliation with God was accomplished through Christ's atoning death and resurrection. His blood became the atoning sacrifice for our sins (Rom. 5:9-10; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:20).

The ministry of reconciliation (v. 18). God has made reconciliation possible through Christ; however, such reconciliation requires the response from the individual of repentance and faith in Christ. The believers' responsibility is to tell others what Christ has done for them. This ministry (service) is a part of what Paul meant when he wrote that believers are "created in Christ Jesus for good works created in Christ Jesus to do good works created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10). This ministry also is reflected in Jesus's command to make disciples (Matt. 28:18-20).

In Christ, God was; God was . . . in Christ; God was in Christ (v. 19). Because of His love for each of us, God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus Christ) to repair our relationship with Him through Christ's perfect, once-for-all sacrifice for sin on the cross, substituting His life for ours.

Reconciling the world to himself; Reconciling the world unto himself (v. 19). In this context the world refers to humanity rather than to all creation. Such reconciliation requires repentance and faith in Christ on the part of the sinner. Though not mentioned in verse 19, the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin and brings us to the point that we recognize our sinful position before a holy and righteous God as well as our need for reconciliation with God through salvation (John 16:7-9; 1 Thess. 1:5).

Not counting their trespasses; Not counting people's sins; Not imputing their trespasses (v. 19). The Greek word for counting imputing is a mathematical term meaning to keep a record or take an inventory, in this context numbering our sinful actions toward God and people. Trespasses refer to sins, Sins are willful transgressions against God.

Committed the message of reconciliation to us, Committed to us the message of reconciliation, Committed unto us the word of reconciliation (v. 19). These words restate the mission of believers in verse 18. God's action in Jesus's sacrifice on the cross made reconciliation with God possible (Rom. 5:10-11; Eph. 1:7-10; 2:14-

17; Col. 1:19-22). Now, believers in Christ have the duty and privilege of bringing that message to others—“the world.”

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

Connection to The Point: As Christ’s ambassadors, we are to invite others to be reconciled to God.

Therefore, Now then (v. 20). On the basis of Christians being new creations (v. 17), having been reconciled to God (v. 18), given the ministry of reconciliation (v. 18), and called to share the message of reconciliation (v. 19), believers now represent God to the world of sinful humanity.

Ambassadors for Christ; Christ’s ambassadors (v. 20). An ambassador is a person who represents another person, usually a government official who speaks and acts in the name of a superior. While in this context Paul may have been speaking specifically of himself and the other apostles as ambassadors, on the basis of Paul’s discussion in verses 18-19 (as well as Jesus’s command in Matt. 28:18-20), God calls all of Jesus’s followers to be Christ’s ambassadors of the gospel.

Since, As though (v. 20). This term indicates that what follows provides the rationale for the title and function of ambassadors given to Jesus’s disciples.

God is making his appeal, God were making his appeal, God did beseech (v. 20). It is not the ambassador who primarily makes the appeal; it is God Himself who makes His appeal through His ambassador. The Greek word for appeal, beseech could be translated “exhortation” or “imploration.” God’s appeal refers to His call that all people repent of their sins and put their faith in His chosen Savior Jesus Christ. It also indicates His desire for all people to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).

Through us, By us (v. 20). In this context Paul is likely referring to Christian leaders (apostles and others). However, all believers represent Christ as His ambassadors (Matt. 5:13-16; 28:18-20; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Pet. 3:15).

We plead, We implore, We pray you (v. 20). Plead, Implore, Pray refers to Paul’s repeatedly encouraging and perhaps even begging those in the Corinthian church to live in a right relationship with God.

On Christ’s behalf, In Christ’s stead (v. 20). Paul did not plead on his own; he acted as Christ’s representative. Believers represent Christ in all they say and do.

Be reconciled to God, Be ye reconciled to God (v. 20). Paul reminded the Corinthian believers that they must be rightly related to God. This is not merely a wish or statement of fact; it is much stronger. It is a command; it is not optional. While in one sense these believers had been reconciled to God at the moment of their salvation, they still needed to be more effectually reconciled to God in how they lived out their daily lives in Christ.

He made, God made, He hath made (v. 21). In this verse Paul explained how Christ’s death brought reconciliation between God and human beings by the exchange of Christ’s righteousness for our sin (Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9). The pronoun He refers to God the Father. The verb made indicates God’s action in providing salvation for all who believe in Jesus.

The one who did not know sin, Him who had no sin (v. 21). These words refer to Jesus Christ, who alone has lived a completely sinless life (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

To be sin for us, Him to be sin (v. 21). Christ (sinless) took our place (sinful) to provide reconciliation. This is called the substitutionary atonement—Christ suffered on our behalf so that God’s just and holy anger toward sin might be appeased. Because of Jesus’s sinlessness and because He is “God with us,” only Jesus could serve

as our substitute, receiving the penalty for our sin through His atoning death on the cross (Col. 2:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 2:2).

Who knew no sin (v. 21). These words refer to Jesus Christ, who alone has lived a completely sinless life (Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5).

In him (v. 21). This phrase refers to the believers' union with Christ.

The righteousness of God (v. 21). Prior to God's action, all humans were without hope, dead in sin (Eph. 2:1-5). "God the Father made His innocent incarnate Son the object of His wrath and judgment, for our sakes, with the result that in Christ on the cross the sin of the world is judged and taken away."³ Christ took upon Himself the penalty for our sin (substitutionary atonement; Isa. 53:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 2:2) so that "in him we might become the righteousness of God we might be made the righteousness of God." Through repentance and faith in Christ, believers become the righteousness of God as at the moment of salvation (conversion) God permanently exchanges our sins for Christ's perfect righteousness (justification; Rom. 1:17; 4:5).

In him (v. 21). This phrase refers to the believers' union with Christ.

1. Kandy Queen-Sutherland and Chad Brand, "Naming," in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed. Chad Brand, rev. (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2015), 1145.

2. David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, vol. 29, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1999), 286.

3. Phillip E. Hughes, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), 213.