

# NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

## SERMON – Are You a Disciple - Part 1

Topic: We are to Go

Scripture: Matt 28:16-20

10/26/2003

**Matt 28:16-20** 16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (NIV)

Story: **Needing a Haircut**

I do not want to be like the pastor who was known for his lengthy sermons. One Sunday he noticed a man get up and leave during the middle of his message. The man returned just before the conclusion of the service. Afterward the pastor asked the man where he had gone. "I went to get a haircut," was the reply. "But," said the pastor, "why didn't you do that before the service?" "Because," the gentleman said, "I didn't need one then."

I do not plan to be that long.

If a Christian is not careful, he or she will seek to enjoy the fellowship of each other in a non-threatening and comfortable environment. I have heard this described as a "Holy Huddle." We may sing praises, worship and tell God and Christ how much we love them. We may give to the needy and even open our doors to visitors, but let me suggest to you, that although all of these activities are good, they are not enough for us.

Obedience to God may require us to step outside our comfort zone.

Being born again is not the climax of the purpose of salvation. If that were so, why are we not taken straight to heaven to be with God as soon as we are born again? Why are we still here exposed to the sin that pervades this world and having the potential of sinning?

Let us go to the word of God to find our answer for the true purpose of our remaining here.

I believe we are here to become disciples of Jesus and to continue the work He started and that is to make disciples. A more concise mission is given in our Scripture text *Matt 28: 19-20*. Jesus wants His disciples to "GO" and make other disciples.

### ANDREW

Received Christ. At first, he was a disciple of John the Baptist, Andrew was led to receive Jesus when John pointed Him out as "the Lamb of God" (*John 1:36-40*). He then brought his brother Simon to the Master, telling him that he had "found the Messiah" (*John 1:41*). They both

returned to their occupation as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee and remained there until, after John the Baptist's imprisonment, they were called by Jesus to follow Him (*Matt 4:18-20; Mark 1:14-18*).

We try to be very sensitive when we ask people to visit our church and they were a member of another church. I was always hesitant to invite them because I did not want to seem like we were in the pew swapping business. Then the HS made it clear to me that I should ask because like Andrew, God may have been preparing someone for a time like this.

**TITLE:** Today I want you to ask yourself, **Are You A Disciple?**

Definition: What is a disciple?

The meaning applies to **one who professes to have learned certain principles from another and maintains them on that other's authority.** (from New Unger's Bible Dictionary)

I like the one from *American Heritage Dictionary* defined as **one who accepts the teachings of a master and often assists in spreading them**

There is not an exclusive spiritual meaning to the title disciple. There was a gang called the devils disciples, there are people who call themselves Satan's disciples and every religion has its own disciples. It is whose disciple we are that matters.

**Verse 16** - The scene in our text opens with Jesus at the end of His earthly ministry. He has spent the last 3 1/2 years investing his life teaching to a small group of common men. He has done the work of the Father and now He is entrusting these men to continue the work.

I find it interesting that the disciples were told to meet Jesus in Galilee.

Before he was crucified, he told them to meet him at Galilee <*Matt 26:32*>. After his resurrection an angel told them to go to Galilee like he said <*Matt 28:7*>. Why Galilee? Is there any significance to this request? Galilee was over 90 miles from Jerusalem. Why go that far and then say goodbye?

It is like asking someone to meet you in Beaumont, Tx to say goodbye.

There are some interesting fact about Jesus and Galilee.

### **GALILEE**

Galilee was the boyhood home of Jesus Christ. Here He attempted to begin His public ministry, but was rejected by His own people <*Luke 4:16-30*>. All the disciples of Jesus, with the exception of Judas, came from Galilee. In Cana of Galilee He performed His first miracle <*John 2:11*>; in fact, 25 of His 33 great miracles were performed in Galilee.

Capernaum, in Galilee, became the headquarters of His ministry <*Matt. 4:13; 9:1*>. Of His 32 parables, 19 were spoken in Galilee. Most of the events of our Lord's life and ministry are set against the backdrop of the Galilean hills.

Jesus began his ministry at home first. Now He is entrusting the continuance of his work through his disciples and he brought them back home to start. The lesson for us is that we should first minister in our homes then our neighborhoods, our hometown and then follow wherever God

leads us.

Those of us whom God has blessed to move into fine neighborhoods must consider it a blessing from God. When I moved here over twenty years ago, in 1982 the interest rates were 13 –14%. At that time God blessed me to be able to afford to move anyhow. But, look at the interest rates now. They are less than half of that. Maybe God has a plan for you right here in your new neighborhood, I know he does for me. That's why we started this church.

### **Doubt**

**Verse 17** - After seeing Jesus they worshipped him. But some doubted. It is not unusual for us to doubt that which we do not understand. That is why one of our first memory verses comes from *Proverbs 3:5-6*.

*Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV)<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

We all have doubted at some time or the other. Doubt is the most frequent tool of Satan. If he can cause you to doubt, your doubt will cause you to do nothing. To him that is a victory. If he can take a Christian out of the battle that is one less Christian fighting for the Lord. That is the first result of doubt. The second result of doubt will be sin. Look at what happen to Adam and Eve. The ultimate goal of Satan for us is death.

In our bible study we read about how the children of Israel doubted that Moses would return and they turned to build another god.

That is the reason for faith. Faith often is required to overcome our doubts. I believe some of the disciples doubted all the way to Galilee. We have to obey the commands of God and Christ in spite of our doubts. Jesus met them there in their doubt and took their doubts away.

Jesus is now giving them what we may call their final instructions. Often the last things we say have the greatest impact on the hearers and are often the most important things we want to say.

It is like everything is summed up in a few last words. Often we may say such things as "I love you" "I will miss you", be careful" when saying goodbye. These are words from deep within our hearts. Here Jesus is giving a very important command to his disciples. This is often referred to as "The Great Commission".

I have said it and I have heard other people say it, I am not sure what Christ wants me to do. I want to serve him but I don't know what to do. Then we start saying I guess I should go preach, or become a Sunday school teacher, or a deacon or something in the church. That is good; and if you are sure that the Holy Spirit has given you that gift then by all means exercise it. But rethink your calling if you have not obeyed first the command.

What He did not say to them was, OK you men, we have lived together for 3.5 years. You have seen my miracles. Peter, James and John, you have heard my fathers' voice on the mountain of transfiguration and even seen Elijah and Moses. You all are my closest disciples so now come on and go to heaven with me and let us have a good time praising God.

**Verse 19** - Jesus instead said "**GO**

## **GO.**

**Point 1:** Christ still has that authority and he still gives the command to his disciples to "GO." Our Christianity has reached a point to where we expect the pastor or the preachers to do the work of disciple making, after all that's what we pay them for isn't it?

We are not responding to the command to "GO." Christians today have trouble going to invite someone to come to church in hopes that they will learn about Christ and become saved. We all can go, we can go into our families' go into our neighborhood, go on our jobs, go in our other social circles and yes someone may be called to go to other nations. But, like Jesus, start at home first.

And let us not forget to Go to Church. Why go to church? Not just for worship, for we must worship God every day, not just to hear a good sermon, we should listen to good teaching and preaching between Sundays. We don't go just to hear the choir sing wonderful songs, we should be listening and singing praises to God all the time.

Paul the great church planter gives a few other reasons.

*Heb 10:24-25* 24 And let us consider one another in order **to stir up love and good works,** 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but ***exhorting one another,*** and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (NKJ)

## **Are You A Disciple?**

Now I know I have placed a great deal of emphasis on working for and worshiping God in our own community, but I do not want to leave you with the impression that to stop there. That is not what Jesus said to His disciples.

*Acts 1:7-8* 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." NIV

This church takes missions seriously. Although we are small and cannot always go, we make it a point to send funds to help someone that can go.

Jesus wants His disciples to branch out. But I ask you, what kind of witness would a person be if they spent time witnessing for God in a foreign land and not being a witness in their own community.

Notice in our responsive reading (*John 1:40-41*) how one disciple brought another one who became a disciple.

## **Verse 18**

Now some of you who have been following closely may think I skipped over verse 18 of our text. I wanted to save the best for last. Now the beginning of Verse 19 in most translations begins with "Go therefore." The NIV text reads, "Therefore go." The meaning is the same.

Whenever you see the word "therefore" ask yourself, "what is "therefore" there for?" It directs you back to the preceding thought, which is in verse 18.

Jesus backs up what he said by telling them that all authority had been given to him. Authority that was in heaven and on the earth.

This is no small statement. God the Father, the Almighty God, the ruler of heaven and earth. The God that spoke the world into existence, the God that made mankind, the God that sent the flood to destroy the earth and every breathing thing on it, save the family of Noah, the God that can destroy the body and the soul has given all that power to His Son, Jesus the Christ.

That's why the Christian can say, I can do all things through Christ Jesus that strengthens me."

He is also the God that so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have ever lasting life. He is also the God that sent His Son into the world that through Him the world might be saved. (*John 3:16-17*)

Jesus has all power, let me say it again, **ALL POWER**. including the power to save and to give everlasting life.

*John 3:35-36 35 "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.*

*36 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (NKJ)*

Let me hit this one more time.

*John 17:1-3 1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as **You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.** 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (NKJ)*

Because He has all power, Jesus will be your savior or your judge, the choice is yours. I have made my choice and I have chosen Jesus.

People, there is no middle ground. You are either for Jesus or against Him.

*Rev 3:16 16 So, because you are lukewarm-*neither hot nor cold-I am about to spit you out of my mouth. NIV**

If you haven't made the choice, now is the time to do so for this evening is not promised to you.

Sermon Scripture References: ***Matt 28:16-20***, Matt 28: 19-20, John 1:36-40, John 1:4, Matt 4:18-20; Mark 1:14-18, Matt 26:32, Matt 28:7, Luke 4:16-30, John 2:11, Matt. 4:13; 9:1, Proverbs 3:5-6.

End