

Matthew 28

The angel's explanation of the empty tomb – He is risen.

“¹ 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 grave. ² 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. ³ And his appearance was like lightning, and his garment as white as snow; ⁴ and the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. ⁵ And the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going before you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." ⁸ And they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to report it to His disciples. ⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus *said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they shall see Me."

The chief priest's explanation of the empty tomb – His body was stolen.

¹¹ Now while they were on their way, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all that had happened. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and counseled together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³ and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ 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 church's explanation of the empty tomb – God is with us.

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

Matthew 1:23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel.” Which translated means “God with us.”

The empty tomb

The angels
“He is risen”
The women
The disciples
The world

The guards
The chief priests
“His body was stolen”
The Romans
The Jews

1. The “great commission”

Matt.28:19-20 “19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

NOTE: This text makes the following critical points:

- a. The principle imperative is “make disciples” which involves converting people to the faith and bringing them to maturity in the faith.
- b. The radically new aspect to this command is its focus on the Gentile (nations).

Lk.24:46-49 “46 - - - Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 you are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

NOTE: This text makes the following critical points:

- a. Repentance for forgiveness of sins based upon the death and resurrection of Christ is at the heart of the gospel message that is to be proclaimed.
- b. The eye witnesses (apostles) are the objects of the great commission.
- c. It can be assumed that those who would receive the Spirit after them would also proclaim this message.

Jn.20:21-23 “21 - - - Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’ 23 ‘If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.’”

NOTE: This text makes the following critical points:

- a. The apostles were sent just as Jesus was sent. He was the model. Apostles (missionaries) in the church should adopt the calling of Jesus as a model.
- b. The apostolic power to bind and loose from sins condemnation was given to the apostles who would become the foundation of the church and would by their teaching declare the nature and limits of forgiveness and freedom in Christ.

Mk.16:15-18 “15 - - - Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 He who has believed and has been baptized will be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

NOTE: This text makes the following critical points:

- a. Believing the message is critical to participating in its promises.

- b. Water baptism is to mark new converts as is the presence of power signs. These signs were present among the apostles but not among all the converts.

2. **The great commission in the epistles. Eph.4:10-16** “10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. 11 And He gave some {as} apostles, and some {as} prophets, and some {as} evangelists, and some {as} pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all {aspects} into Him, who is the head, {even} Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

- a. The goal of the great commission is the building of the body of Christ to maturity.
- b. The building process starts with evangelism and ends with maturity and unity of all believers in community.
- c. Individual roles and responsibilities vary depending on the spiritual gifts of the individuals.
- d. Gifted leaders are to equip all believers for service in the areas of their giftedness.

3. The great commission in Acts. Acts 2

Events of Acts 2	Styles of ministry	Longings of people	Purpose of the church
vs.43 “a sense of awe”	Reaching UP	Transcendence	Exalt Christ as Creator, Redeemer, Lord
vs.42 “the teaching of the Apostles”	Reaching DOWN	Insight	Educate Christ’s people
vs.42 “fellowship”	Reaching IN	Intimacy	Edify Christ’s church
vs.47 “adding to their number daily”	Reaching OUT	Direction	Evangelize Christ’s world

vs.42 "breaking of bread"	Reaching BACK	Stability	Embrace Christ's heritage
vs.47 "having favor with all people"	Reaching FORWARD	Utopia	Enrich the culture