



Part 1

Matthew 28:16-20

Transformation primarily happens through relationships

As we get older, we so easily lose our sense of awe and anticipation. That God might have something new and good for us this year. What might God be inviting you into this year? I think that all of us desire more. More peace, more hope, more love, more strength, more faith. We know the words of Jesus that says “that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10) or echoed by Timothy, “the life that is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19). We want to experience more from Jesus and yet maybe we feel that tension of wondering if this year will be any different, tired of trying or feeling stuck, stalled, or sluggish and don’t know how to experience the life that God has for us.

God’s Rescue Plan of Transformation – Matthew 28:16-20

What does it mean to make disciples?

Definition of a disciple

- Follower, learner, apprentice to a teacher/rabbi
- First-century Jewish blessing, “May you be covered in the dust of your rabbi”
- John Mark Comer, “Be with Jesus, become like him, do as he did.”
- Doug Brown, “A disciple lives in union with Jesus to learn to live joyfully in God’s beautiful kingdom.”

His Authority

- Matthew 28:16-20, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me”. This is not a friend making a suggestion to you, this is God, the creator of the Universe giving his commission and command to us. This is his authority and power following through us to be a part of His rescue plan of transformation to the world. This is his invitation to us even with all our hesitations and doubts (v. 17).

His Commission

- God’s rescue plan did not start in Matthew 28.
- “Go” – The Great Commission passage is patterned after OT Commissioning Passages
- Abraham, Genesis 12:1-4, Abrahamic covenant. “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.” Fulfilled through Jesus (Galatians 3).
- Moses, Exodus 3:1-10, Moses at the burning bush. God responding to the needs of the enslaved Israelites in Egypt. “So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”
- Joshua, Joshua 1:1-11, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”
- Isaiah, Isaiah 6:1-13, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?...Go and tell this people.”
- Just as God commissioned Abraham, Moses, Joshua with the Israelites, and Isaiah to be a part of his Way and mission, God now commissions the disciples for his mission to make disciples which is now passed down to us...all of us.
- “Go” is also significant in how it changes the paradigm of God’s rescue plan. Previously Israel was supposed to attract the nations through the ways of God, now their focus was outwards to the nations.

His Way

- V. 19, “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- Baptism in the triune nature of God reflects the circle of shared life.

“God is Father, Son and Spirit, existing in a passionate and joyous fellowship. The Trinity is not three highly committed religious types sitting around some room in heaven. The Trinity is a circle of shared life, and the life shared is full, not empty, abounding and rich and beautiful, not lonely and sad and boring. The river begins right there, in the fellowship of the Trinity. The great dance is all about the abounding life shared by the Father, Son, and the Spirit.”

- C. Baxter Kruger, *The Great Dance*

- Shared Life – Foundational principle of discipleship, Life-on-life. Mark 3:14, “He appointed twelve that they might be with him.”
- “To obey everything I have commanded you” - Jesus says we are to obey all of it because all of it comes from the heart of God’s love to experience the fullness of life.

What does it mean to make disciples? Helping others to follow the way of Jesus.

- It first started with Jesus' disciples – ordinary people like fisherman but also diametrically opposed people like a tax collector, Matthew and Simon the zealot, nationalistic rebel. Centered by Jesus, transformed by Jesus.
- Millions of people throughout history have been a part of God's rescue plan of transformation making disciples who make disciple who make disciples.

Transformation primarily happens through relationships

- Christ-centered small groups and spiritual friendships
- One-on-one Life with Jesus Coaching – stuck, stalled, sluggish

New Initiative: One-on-One Life with Jesus Coaching

- Seven sessions with a One-on-one with a 'Life with Jesus coach'
- The participant will go through the Life with Jesus Guide with the Coach as a discernment tool towards following the Way of Jesus. If the participant has already gone through the guide, they will go through several of Greenwood's Practices (i.e. Gratitude, Solitude, or Praying the Lord's Prayer).
- The participant will be assigned with a trained Life with Jesus Coach depending on availability and interest. The participant and 'Life with Jesus' Coach are encouraged to get together every other week over the seven sessions – meet for coffee, in a home, or at church. After the seven sessions, the participant and coach can discern if they want to continue to meet.
- Zoom Informational meeting on Monday, January 13th, 7 pm

Resources:

- Life with Jesus Guide
- The Practice 'Making Disciples' - <https://greenwoodcc.com/making-disciples/>
- The Master Plan of Evangelism, Robert E. Coleman
- The Forge Movie (Streaming on Netflix)

Small Group Discussion Questions:

- Read Matthew 28:16-20 again and share how this passage has typically spoken to you? Was it more of a missions passage or a discipleship passage?
- Would you agree with the foundational truth, "Transformation primarily happens in relationships"? How have you experienced this in your own life? Is there anyone in particular who has impacted your life?
- What has Jesus' commission "to make disciples" looked like for you? Has anyone discipled you and how did it impact your life? Have you had the privilege of discipling others and how did it go?
- What do you think might be a next step for you? Would you be interested in meeting one-on-one with a Life with Jesus Coach?