

Group Study Questions – Matthew 28:1–10, 16–20 (NKJV)

This passage connects the reality of the resurrection with the responsibility of mission and the promise of Christ's presence. It moves from what God has done to how we respond.

Parallel Passages:

- **Mark 16:1–8, 14–20** – Resurrection account and commission
- **Luke 24:1–12, 36–49** – Resurrection appearances and commissioning
- **John 20:1–18, 19–23** – Mary Magdalene, appearances to disciples, and sending
- Additional support: **Acts 1:8** (mission and empowerment)

Study Questions and Responses

1. What does the combination of fear and great joy in the women reveal about how people respond to unexpected acts of God? (*Matthew 28:8*)

The women left the tomb with “fear and great joy” (Matthew 28:8). The fear here is best understood as shock and emotional overwhelm, not calm reverence. They had just experienced an earthquake (Matthew 28:2), seen an angel whose appearance was like lightning (Matthew 28:3), and discovered the tomb was empty.

This reaction is consistent with other accounts:

- Mark 16:8 – they “trembled and were amazed”
- Luke 24:5 – they were afraid and bowed down

At the same time, joy began to emerge as they grasped the meaning—Jesus was alive, just as He said (Matthew 28:6). Their response shows a transition from confusion and alarm to growing understanding and hope.

Everyday Application: When God moves in unexpected ways, our first reaction may not be peace—it may be confusion, disruption, or even fear. This passage reminds us that initial uncertainty does not mean something is wrong. As we continue to trust God, clarity often follows, and what begins as unsettling can lead to deep joy and confidence in His work.

2. Why does Jesus emphasize that He will meet the disciples in Galilee? (*Matthew 28:7, 10, 16*)

Galilee is where much of Jesus' ministry began (Matthew 4:12–17). Returning there connects the resurrection to the beginning of their calling. It also fulfills Jesus' earlier promise (Matthew 26:32).

It shows continuity—what began in calling now continues in mission.

Everyday Application: God often brings us back to foundational truths or moments in our walk with Him. Remembering where God has worked in the past can strengthen our confidence in what He is doing now.

3. What is the significance of the women physically holding Jesus' feet and worshiping Him? (Matthew 28:9)

They “held Him by the feet and worshiped Him,” confirming that Jesus' resurrection was physical, not symbolic (Luke 24:39).

Their response—worship—recognizes His authority and identity (John 20:28). Encountering the risen Christ leads naturally to worship.

Everyday Application: Faith is not just intellectual—it is relational and responsive. When we recognize who Jesus is, worship becomes a natural response, whether through prayer, obedience, or daily gratitude.

4. What does the angel rolling away the stone (v. 2) teach us about God's power versus human limitations?

The stone was sealed and guarded (Matthew 27:65–66), representing human effort to control a situation. Yet the angel rolls it away effortlessly (Matthew 28:2), showing that human barriers cannot prevent God's purposes (Jeremiah 32:17).

Importantly, the stone was not rolled away to let Jesus out, but to let others see that He had risen.

Everyday Application: Situations that seem “sealed” or impossible are not barriers to God. This encourages believers to trust Him even when circumstances appear final or beyond change.

5. Why does Matthew include that “some doubted” even at this moment? (Matthew 28:17)

Even after the resurrection, some disciples struggled with doubt. This honesty highlights that faith is often a process (Luke 24:38–41).

Yet Jesus still entrusts them with the mission, showing that God works through imperfect people.

Everyday Application: Moments of doubt do not mean failure. What matters is continuing to follow Jesus. He meets us in our uncertainty and leads us forward.

6. How does Jesus' statement about “all authority” connect to the command that follows? (Matthew 28:18–19)

Jesus' authority is the foundation for the Great Commission. Because He has authority over heaven and earth (Daniel 7:13–14), His command carries ultimate weight.

The mission is not based on human ability but on Christ's authority.

Everyday Application: When sharing faith or living for Christ feels difficult, believers can remember that they are acting under His authority—not their own strength or confidence.

7. What is the deeper meaning of “teaching them to observe all things”? (Matthew 28:20)

Jesus does not just command teaching information, but teaching obedience. This reflects a key biblical pattern—hearing God's Word should lead to action (James 1:22).

Discipleship involves transformation, not just knowledge (Romans 12:2).

Everyday Application: Spiritual growth is not measured only by what we know, but by how we live. Applying Scripture in daily decisions—relationships, integrity, priorities—is central to following Christ.

8. How does Jesus' promise of His presence relate to the mission He gives? (*Matthew 28:20*)

Jesus promises, "I am with you always." This echoes God's presence throughout Scripture (Exodus 3:12; Joshua 1:9).

The promise is directly tied to the mission—He does not send His followers out alone but accompanies them.

Everyday Application: Whether sharing faith, facing challenges, or making decisions, believers can rely on Christ's presence. This provides both courage and comfort in everyday life.