Family Matters: Raising Disciples Matthew 28:18-20 FBC Canton Sunday am November 8, 2026

Introduction: Every achievement begins with a clear goal.

I want my kids to be healthy…eat real biblical food, not junk.
I want my kids to be safe…find their refuge and safe place in the Lord.
I want my kids to be pure in their relationships….learn their body is the temple of the Lord.
I want my kids to be wise…feed them Proverbs.
I want my kids to have good manners…read proverbs.
I want my kids to be successful...know and fulfill God's purpose for their lives.
I want my kids to have a great marriage…greatest marriages are God's marriage.
I want my kids to have a great kids…the bible is the best for your kids.
I want my kids to have wealth…they might, but they might lose their soul.
They are on commission, not allowance.
You may be wealthy, your kids are poor.
Prioritize generosity. Give first, save second, spend third.
I want my kids to achieve athletically…only if it fulfills God's purpose.
I want my kids to care about others…learn who is their neighbor.
I want my kids to be great conservationists…learn how to listen.
I want my kids to be highly educated…learn the truth and it will set them free.
I want my kids to think for themselves…not to lean on their own understanding.
I want my kids to have great morals…learn the thou shalts…thou shalt nots.

Emmitt Smith's Written Goals

Emmitt Smith's career was shaped by a simple but powerful principle: *"It's a dream until you write it down, and then it's a goal"* — a lesson he credits to his Escambia High School coach, Dwight Thomas Pro Football Hall of Fame+1. Thomas had students write down three goals for the season on a card and keep it in their locker for daily review, turning aspirations into actionable targets Pro Football Hall of Fame.

The Goals Emmitt Wrote Down

According to a Hall of Fame spotlight and a YouTube feature, at age 20 Smith wrote four specific goals YouTube:

1. Play in the Super Bowl – He later achieved this on Jan. 31, 1993, in the Rose Bowl, fulfilling the dream he first conceived while watching the game Pro Football Hall of Fame.

2. Be the NFL's Most Valuable Player – Smith won the MVP award in 1993 Wikipedia.
3. Become the NFL's all-time leading rusher – He set the record with 18,355 career rushing yards Wikipedia.
4. Finish college – He completed his Florida Gators career, earning unanimous All-America honors in 1989 Wikipedia.

How He Used Written Goals

Smith kept these goals visible and used them as a guide for his training, decision-making, and performance. In his 2010 Hall of Fame induction speech, he thanked Coach Thomas for teaching him to "set goals, become a team player, and shine the spotlight upon others" ESPN. He also said he wrote down his goals and the steps to achieve them, which he reviewed regularly The Big Apple.

Impact

By writing his goals down, Smith turned abstract dreams into concrete targets. This discipline helped him:

- Lead Escambia to two state championships and a No. 1 national ranking Pro Football Hall of Fame.
- Break Florida's single-game and single-season rushing records Pro Football Hall of Fame.
- Overcome doubters who said he was "too small" or "not fast enough" Pro Football Hall of Fame.
- Achieve multiple NFL records and honors, including 3× Super Bowl champion, Super Bowl MVP, and NFL MVP Wikipedia.

In short: Emmitt Smith's written goals were a personal roadmap — Super Bowl, MVP, all-time rushing leader, and college completion — each pursued with the same focus he learned from his coach's "write it down" philosophy Pro Football Hall of Fame+3.

Believer's Goal: Making our children disciples of Jesus. Malachi 2:13-15

> 13 And this is the second thing you do:
> You cover the altar of the LORD with tears,
> With weeping and crying;
> So He does not regard the offering anymore,
> Nor receive it with goodwill from your hands.
> 14 Yet you say, "For what reason?"

Because the LORD has been witness
Between you and the wife of your youth,
With whom you have dealt treacherously;
Yet she is your companion
And your wife by covenant.
15 But did He not make them one,
Having a remnant of the Spirit?
And why one?
He seeks godly offspring .
Therefore take heed to your spirit,
And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

Disciple: someone who has *learned* how to follow Jesus in every area of life.
Becoming Christ-Centered…being sanctified.

i. *Disciples are not spontaneously created at conversion; they are the product of a process involving other believers.* This making of disciples is the power of spreading Christianity.



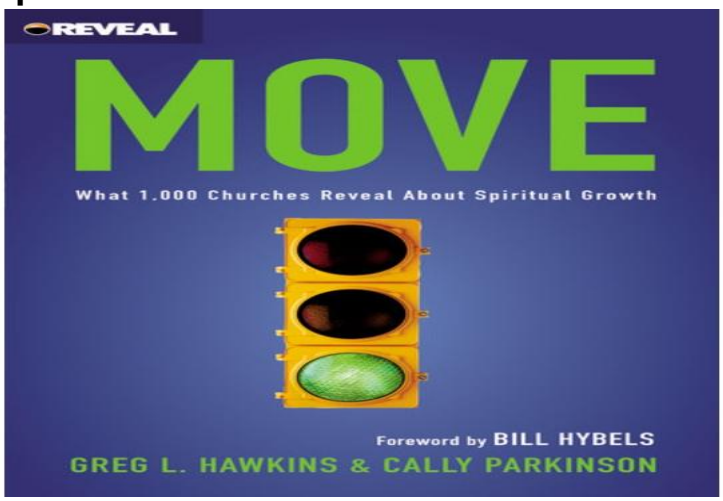
We have all the authority and personal presence of God to empower this process.
There is no “Can’t!”

I. **Achievable steps to reach that goal=Initiate movement.** The going into all the world begins at home with your children!
   a. **You can never lead until you learn=become a disciple. Matthew 10:24**

"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master."

i. More is caught than taught.
ii. We are leading them, even if we don't think we are!

i. 7 spiritual practices:



1. Read the Word daily.
2. Meditate on what you read.
3. Prayer personal guidance and intercession.
4. Prayer for personal holiness.
5. Tithe; obey God no matter what!
    a. Go frequently to where God wants you to serve.
6. Journal; trust a dull pencil, not a sharp memory.
7. Practice solitude for we are never alone.

ii. 4 spiritual activities=Church

1. Accountability.
2. Be a witness.
3. Serve those in need.
4. Mentor others.

b. The facts are your friends; begin with evangelism. Jeremiah 17:9

c. Immersion in the scriptures. Deuteronomy 6

i. It involves training the biblical worldview, not a feelings-based worldview.

EPHESIANS 6:1-4 NKJV

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: 3 "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

ii. **Installing mental filters.**
iii. **Controlling their influencers.**
1. Teach them how you do it, so they will when you are not present.

d. Watch their ears; receiving is everything. Romans 10:14-17

i. Daily time with you in the Word.

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" **17** So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

e. Increase responsibilities to produce maturity. 95% rule. "Never do for a child what they can do themselves." Dr. Jordan Peterson

The "95% Rule" of parenting time

Research also highlights a 95% rule: by the time your child turns 18, you will have spent about 95% of the total time you will ever spend with them while they are at home rubierubie.com.

- If a child lives at home from birth to 18, that's ~6,570 days of close daily proximity.
- After they leave home, contact often drops to 10–30 days/year, so the remaining 5% of shared time is spread over decades rubierubie.com.

This underscores the importance of intentional presence during the years you have it abundantly.

f. No guarantees, just many prayers. Proverbs 22:6

i. If you do everything right, they can still come out wrong. Luke 15.

"Don't take all the credit for the good kids, because you can't handle all the blame for the bad kids." Adrian Rogers

1. Why? The Mystery of God. Revelation 10:7

a. Evil is real.

i. God allows evil to be real, so that love can be freely chosen.

b. Love has to be freely chosen.

Conclusion: Set the goal, take the first steps.

B. The great commission.

1. (Matthew 28:16-17) The disciples meet Jesus at Galilee.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

a. **The eleven disciples went away into Galilee**: Matthew doesn't tell us about the Jerusalem appearances of Jesus to His disciples, as John does. Matthew was more interested in showing that the promise of Jesus in Matthew 26:32 was fulfilled.

i. **To the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them**: "The meeting place would be some familiar haunt…only imperfectly recorded in the Gospels." (Bruce)

b. **When they saw Him, they worshiped Him**: This was not their first meeting with the risen Jesus; but it was an important one. At this meeting, they received their apostolic commission.

c. **They worshiped Him; but some doubted**: The natural reaction to encountering the risen Jesus is worship, even if some had to overcome uncertainty and hesitation — probably from feeling it was too good to be true, and lingering shame from having forsaken Jesus during His suffering.

i. “When they recognized him, it was natural that *they worshipped him*, but the whole experience was so mysterious and overwhelming that *some doubted*…The verb *distazo* does not denote a settled unbelief, but a state of uncertainty and hesitation.” (France)
ii. “Dunn sees Matthew’s mention of this doubt as ‘a genuine historical echo’ — those who were there would never have forgotten the conflicting emotions and beliefs in that unique experience.” (France)

iii. The fact that some of the disciples doubted argues against the theory that their seeing Jesus was simply a hallucination born of a desperate desire to see Him.

2. (Matthew 28:18-20) Jesus instructs His disciples regarding their duty after His departure.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.

a. **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth**: This commission that follows is given in light of the authority of Jesus. This indicates that this is an authoritative command, not a suggestion. It is the same idea as if an officer reminded a private of his rank before he gave the order. Because He has this **authority**, He can send whomever He wills to do whatever He pleases.

i. “‘All’ dominates Matthew 28:18-20 and ties these verses together: *all* authority, *all* nations, *all* things, *all* the days.” (Carson)
ii. “Power in the hands of some people is dangerous, but power in the hands of Christ is blessed. Oh, let him have all power! Let him do what he will with it, for he cannot will anything but that which is right, and just, and true, and good.” (Spurgeon)

iii. “We believe in this power, and we rest in it.” (Spurgeon)

- *We do not seek any other power.*
- *We defy every other power.*
- *We know our powerlessness will not hinder the progress of His kingdom.*
- *We give all our power unto Him.*

iv. “If Jesus Christ were not equal with the Father, could he have claimed this equality of power, without being guilty of impiety and blasphemy? Surely not; and does he not, in the fullest manner, assert his Godhead, and his equality with the Father, by claiming and possessing all the authority in heaven and earth?” (Clarke)

b. **Go therefore**: Because Jesus has this authority, we are **therefore** commanded to **go**. It is His authority that sends us, His authority that guides us, and His authority that empowers us. His work and message would continue to the world through His disciples.

i. "These verses thus magnificently conclude the final section…but they also bring the whole Gospel to a dynamic conclusion, which is in fact more a beginning than an end." (France)

ii. Jesus said, "**Go**" to some very imperfect disciples. "Who is to go out of that first band of disciples? It is Peter, the rash and the headstrong. It is John, who sometimes wishes to call fire from heaven to destroy men. It is Philip, with whom the Savior has been so long, and yet he has not known him. It is Thomas, who must put his finger into the print of the nails, or he will not believe him. Yet the Master says to them, 'Go ye; all power is given unto me, therefore go ye. You are as good for my purpose as anybody else would be. There is no power in you, I know, but then all power is in me, therefore go ye.'" (Spurgeon)

c. **Make disciples of all the nations**: The command is to **make disciples**, not merely converts or supporters of a cause. The idea behind the word **disciples** is of scholars, learners, or students.

i. **Make disciples** reminds us that disciples are *made*. **Disciples** are not spontaneously created at conversion; they are the product of a process involving other believers. This making of **disciples** is the power of spreading Christianity.

d. **Of all the nations**: In His previous ministry, Jesus deliberately restricted His work to the Jewish people (Matthew 15:24) and previously sent His disciples with the same restriction (Matthew 10:6). Only in rare exceptions did Jesus minister among the Gentiles (Matthew 15:21-28). Now all of that is in the past, and the disciples are commissioned to take the gospel to **all the nations**. There is no place on earth where the gospel of Jesus should not be preached and where disciples should not be made.

i. "The aim of Jesus' disciples, therefore, is to make disciples of all men everywhere, without distinction." (Carson)

ii. "*Christ* commands them to go and baptize the nations: but how much time was past before such a journey was taken! And when the time was now come that this work should be begun, *Peter* doth not enter upon it without a previous admonition given him from heaven." (Lightfoot, cited in Clarke)

e. **Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**: Significantly, when Jesus told them to go to **all the nations**, He did not tell them to *circumcise* those who became disciples. Instead, they were to baptize them, suggesting the break with traditional Judaism.

i. "*In the name* is literally '*into* the name', implying entrance into an allegiance." (France)

ii. The words and context certainly indicate that it is **disciples** who are baptized, those of age who can be taught and who can observe the things Jesus commanded.

iii. Those who favor infant baptism answer, albeit unconvincingly: "But it doth not therefore follow, that children of such professors are not to be baptized, for the apostles were commanded to baptize *all nations*; children are a great part of any nation." (Poole)

iv. **In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**: "The experience of God in these three Persons is the essential basis of discipleship. At the same time the singular noun *name* (not 'names') underlines the unity of the three Persons." (France)

f. **Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you**: Disciples are made through **teaching**. This **teaching** is not with words only, but with the power of the always-present Jesus. He will be present with His people until the job of making disciples is done — until the **end of the age**.

i. "Hitherto Jesus alone has been the teacher, and the verb has not been used by Matthew of his disciples' ministry. Now they take over his role of *teaching*." (France)

ii. The content of the teaching must be **all things that I have commanded you**. The followers of Jesus are responsible to present the whole counsel of God to those who are made disciples.

g. **Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age**: Jesus sent His disciples with a mission to fulfill, but He did not send them alone. The promise of His constant presence was more than enough to strengthen and guide the disciples as they obeyed Jesus in making **disciples of all the nations**.

i. The promise of His presence is complete. "The English adverb 'always' renders an expression found in the New Testament only here — strictly, 'the whole of every day'. Not just the horizon is in view, but each day as we live it." (Carson)

ii. His presence means *privilege*, because we work with a Great King. Paul understood this principle well in 1 Corinthians 3:9, where he wrote: *For we are God's fellow workers*. Since Jesus promised, "**I am with you always**," then we work together with Him in all our service. We certainly work *for* Jesus, but more than that, we work *with* Jesus.

iii. His presence means *protection*, because we are never out of His sight or supervision.

iv. His presence means *power*, because as we fulfill this great command, we work in His name.

v. His presence means *peace*, because it always reminds us that the church belongs to Jesus. It is His church, and His work. How, then, can we worry?

vi. "When Christ saith, 'I will be with you,' you may add what you will; to protect you, to direct you, to comfort you, to carry on the work of grace in you, and in the end to crown you with immortality and glory. All this and more is included in this precious promise." (Trapp)

©2018 David Guzik — No distribution beyond personal use without permission

References:

1. Bruce, Alexander Balmain "The Synoptic Gospels: The Expositor's Greek Testament" Volume 1, Section 1 (Matthew-Luke) (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897)
2. Carson, D.A. "Matthew: The Expositor's Bible Commentary" Volume 8 (Matthew-Luke) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1984)
3. Clarke, Adam "Clarke's Commentary: The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments with a Commentary and Critical Notes" Volume 5 (Matthew-Acts) (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1832)
4. France, R.T. "The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary" (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries) (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985)
5. Poole, Matthew "A Commentary on the Holy Bible" Volume 3 (Matthew-Revelation) (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1969)
6. Spurgeon, Charles Haddon "Commentary on Matthew: The Gospel of the Kingdom" (London: Passmore and Alabaster, Paternoster Buildings, 1893)
7. Spurgeon, Charles Haddon "The New Park Street Pulpit" Volumes 1-6 and "The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit" Volumes 7-63 (Pasadena, Texas: Pilgrim Publications, 1990)
8. Trapp, John "A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments" Volume 5 (Matthew to Revelation) (Eureka, California: Tanski Publications, 1997)

Updated: August 2022

Return to Top

The Bible Says
Matthew 28:16-17 Meaning

The parallel Gospel account of Matthew 28:16-17 is John 20:26-29. Another possible parallel of Matthew 28:16-17 is 1 Corinthians 15:5b.

Matthew 28:1-15 details Matthew's account of what took place on the day Jesus rose from the dead. Matthew 28:16-20 details his account of things that took place after that day.

Matthew's account of these events thematically pertains to his Gospel's intended purpose. The purpose of his Gospel was to demonstrate to his primary audience (Jews) that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God. Matthew does not describe things chronologically like Luke does, and he does not give extended dialogues like John. Instead of mentioning and/or condensing these events, Matthew focuses on the risen Messiah's instruction for His disciples and the current stage of His kingdom's establishment. Matthew writes:

But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated (v 16).

Notice how Matthew now refers to the core group of *Jesus*'s *disciples* as *the eleven disciples*. The reason he no longer calls them "the twelve" is because Judas, who was one of the original twelve, had hanged himself for betraying *Jesus* (Matthew 27:3-5). The twelve *disciples* are named in Matthew 10:2-4 and Luke 6:13-16.

The historical setting for Matthew 28:16-20 is *Galilee*.

Galilee was the district where Jesus's Messianic ministry had been headquartered (Matthew 4:12-17). *Galilee* was the district where several if not all of *the eleven disciples* were from (Matthew 4:18-21). *The mountain* where *Jesus had designated* for *the disciples* to gather was located somewhere in *Galilee*. Matthew does not specify exactly where *the mountain* was in *Galilee*, but his narrative implies that *the disciples* knew where it was and/or were familiar with this location.

When Matthew writes *The eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had designated*, he is informing his readers that the disciples obeyed *Jesus*'s directive to follow Him to *Galilee* after His resurrection.

Jesus issued this directive to *the eleven disciples* shortly before His arrest, condemnation, and crucifixion as they walked to Gethsemane from their Passover Seder, shortly before His arrest, condemnation, and crucifixion (Matthew 26:32, Mark 14:28). At that time, *the disciples* seem to have largely overlooked this instruction.

Instead of paying attention to *Jesus*'s directive, *the eleven disciples* obsessively took issue with the fact that *Jesus* claimed they would abandon Him that very night (Matthew 26:31-35, Mark 14;27-31).

From their response, it is apparent that none of *the disciples* expected *Jesus* to allow Himself to be arrested, condemned, and killed despite being told by Him many times that He would be killed:

- John 2:19-22
- Matthew 12:38-40, Mark 8:11-12, Luke 11:29-30
- Matthew 16:4
- Matthew 16:21, Mark 8:31, Luke 9:22
- Matthew 10:38, 16:24, Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23
- Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:31, Luke 9:44-55
- Matthew 19:17-19, Mark 10:32-34, Luke 18:31-33
- Matthew 26:31-32, Mark 14:27-31
- John 12:23-24

The disciples were deeply shocked and traumatically horrified when *Jesus* was crucified (John 16:20a). In their bewildered fear, grief, and doubt, they did not anticipate *Jesus* to rise from the dead even though He told them He would rise from His grave. (See many of the scriptures listed directly above). The Gospels also report that most or all of *the disciples* (with the exception of the Apostle John in John 20:8), constantly doubted every report that *Jesus* had risen until they could physically see and touch Him for themselves (Mark 16:11, 16:13, Luke 24:11, 24:41, John 20:24-28).

When the women encountered the angel in the empty tomb, he gave them an important message to deliver to *the disciples*. The message was a reminder for *the eleven disciples* to follow Jesus's directive to proceed *to Galilee* where they would see *Jesus*:

"and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you." (Matthew 28:7b—see also Mark 16:7)

The disciples did not immediately obey *Jesus*'s directive because they did not believe the women's claims and they were afraid.

When the women returned to the empty tomb and personally encountered *Jesus* (Matthew 28:9-10), He asked them again, to "take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me" (Matthew 28:10b). This was the third time *the eleven disciples* were instructed to proceed to *Galilee*.

Even then it seems that *the eleven disciples* did not immediately obey. Instead, they hid in fear of the religious leaders and remained inside a closed room within the city of Jerusalem (Luke 24:33, John 20:19a). It was not until *Jesus* appeared to ten of *the eleven disciples* (Thomas was not present) inside that room that they finally believed that He had risen (Luke 24:36-44, John 20:19-24).

After this encounter, *the eleven disciples* eventually *proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated* as the place for them to gather. While *the eleven disciples* were in *Galilee*, *they saw Jesus*.

When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful (v 17).

This verse likely describes Jesus's sixth recorded appearance and second with His *disciples.*

See our article: "How Many Times Did Jesus Appear after His Resurrection?"

John 20:26-29 gives a more detailed description of this sixth recorded encounter. Some of the previous encounters follow:

- Jesus encountered the women who returned to the empty tomb (Matthew 28:9-10) (encounter #2),

- Jesus appeared to Peter (Luke 24:33-35, 1 Corinthians 15:5) (encounter # 3),
- He appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16:12, Luke 24:13-32) (encounter #4),
- and to all the disciples (minus Thomas and Peter) (Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-25) (encounter # 5).

All of those encounters took place in or near Jerusalem and they occurred on the same day which Jesus rose from the dead.

It seems Thomas was the only disciple who did not see *Jesus* that first day in Jerusalem. And he refused to believe his fellow disciples' testimony that *Jesus* had risen, "unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side" (John 20:25b).

John recounts that it was eight days after *Jesus* had first appeared to His *disciples* in Jerusalem when *they saw Him* again (John 20:26). This next time *they saw Him*, Thomas, who *was doubtful*, was with them (John 20:26). And harmonizing John's account with Matthew 28:16-17 this encounter took place in *Galilee* at *the mountain Jesus had designated*.

This *Galilee* encounter took place inside (John 20:26), which indicates that there was a building structure near that *mountain*. This may have been the first time *Jesus* appeared to all of His core *disciples* together at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:5b).

When the eleven disciples saw Jesus, Matthew writes, *they worshipped Him*. This means the disciples recognized Him as God and began to gain a deeper understanding of why He had to be crucified and rise again. Jesus explained these things to them during (what was likely) another encounter (Luke 24:44-47).

Matthew also writes: *but some were doubtful*, which most likely referred to Thomas (John 20:24-25), while politely not naming him.

The expression *but some were doubtful* provides the clue which informs us that Jesus's appearance and interaction with *doubtful* Thomas (John 20:26-29) took place in *Galilee*. If *Jesus* appeared to Thomas in Jerusalem and removed his doubts, it does not make sense that *the eleven disciples* would still be *doubtful* *when they saw Him* again in *Galilee*. Therefore Matthew 28:16-17 and John 20:26-29 appear to be describing the same appearance, unless Matthew is simply speaking in generic terms when he wrote *but some were doubtful*.

If Matthew was writing in generic terms when he wrote *but some were doubtful*, and Jesus encountered Thomas while the disciples were still in Jerusalem and not *Galilee* eight days after His resurrection, then Matthew would likely either have been referring to *the disciples*' previous skepticism and doubt or to a broader group of disciples. *Jesus* appeared to five hundred brethren at one point, indicating that *Jesus* witnessed to a broader group than just *the eleven* (1 Corinthians 15:6).

The disciples' persistent doubtfulness portrays them in an honest but unflattering light which further underscores the authenticity of their accounts. Historical writers often try to make themselves look good wherever they may be involved in the narrative. However, the Gospels consistently minimize the disciples and the writer's positive features and often point out their own failures. Instead of giving an edited version that romanticizes themselves, the Gospels honestly portray events as they happened even when it makes the writers look foolish.

The disciples' doubtfulness also shows how the Gospel bearers themselves had to overcome doubt and be convinced of its truth before they went into the world as disciple-makers of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). While *Jesus* says there is a special blessing for those who are quick to believe in Him without seeing, the Bible does not demand that people believe in *Jesus* and His resurrection without any merit or evidence (John 24:29, Romans 10:16-17).

To learn more about the evidence for *Jesus*'s resurrection, see The Bible Says article: "Did Jesus of Nazareth Rise from the Dead?"

Before moving on, there is one final question concerning Matthew 28:16-17 and how it relates to John 20:26-29.

Recall how John said "eight days" had passed between *Jesus*'s encounter with the *disciples* in Jerusalem and His appearance to the *disciples* with Thomas in Galilee (John 20:26).

Why was there an eight-day hiatus between His fifth and sixth recorded appearances?

There are several things to consider about this question.

First, it is always possible that *Jesus* appeared one or more times between these events (but not to Thomas) which are not recorded in the Bible. But this seems unlikely given the things the Gospels include.

Second, the most apparent reason for why *Jesus* did not appear to His *disciples* for eight days after He first visited them in Jerusalem (Mark 16:14, Luke 24:36-43, John 20:19-25) was because He was waiting for them to obey His directive to go *to Galilee*.

Jesus issued this directive three times.

- He personally told the *disciples* to go *to Galilee* (Matthew 26:32, Mark 14:28).
- The angel commissioned the women to remind His *disciples* about it (Matthew 28:7b, Mark 16:7).
- *Jesus* commissioned the women who returned to His empty tomb to remind His *disciples* about it (Matthew 28:10).

The city of Capernaum in Galilee was located approximately seventy miles north of Jerusalem. This was the city Jesus chose as the headquarters for His ministry. If *the disciples* took the most direct route, through Samaria, then it would have most likely taken them two to four days to make the journey.

If *the disciples* took the longer route, avoiding Samaria as Jews often did, then it would have taken them three to seven days to travel the hundred plus miles to Galilee.

If the disciples took seven days to travel or delayed the start of their journey from Jerusalem for a few days, they would have likely paused their journey for a day in observance of the Sabbath.

In any event, soon after *the eleven disciples* had fulfilled *Jesus*'s command to proceed to Galilee, *they saw Him*.

Used with permission from *TheBibleSays.com*.
You can access the original article here: Matthew 28:16-17 Meaning