

FOR REAL DISCIPLES ONLY!

There's Nothing Greater Bible Study

Lesson 1

St. Matthew 28:16-20 (KJV)

Scripture Lesson

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:16–20, KJV 1900)

I. Introduction - Several years ago.....

A. Narrative |

1. A college football team chartered buses for an intense preseason training retreat in the mountains. The coaching staff made it clear before the trip began: this was not going to be easy.

2. There would be early mornings, exhausting workouts, strict discipline, and moments that would push every player beyond comfort. Yet when the buses first pulled away from campus, everybody was excited. Music was blasting. Players were laughing. Social media was filled with pictures and captions talking about championships, commitment, and brotherhood.

3. But everything changed once the real work began. The days became long. The practices became brutal. Muscles cramped. Tempers flared. Some players discovered they loved the idea of football more than the demands of football. By the third day, complaints filled the air. A few players wanted special treatment. Others stopped giving full effort. And before the retreat ended, several players packed their bags, called home, and quit the team entirely.

4. When the buses returned to campus a week later, the atmosphere was completely different. The laughing crowd that had left together was no longer there. Some seats were empty. Some uniforms had already been turned in. But the coach looked at the players who remained and said something they would never forget:

5. "Now we know who's real." He explained that championships are never built on people who only show up for excitement. Real players are

revealed when pressure comes, when sacrifice is required, and when quitting becomes easier than continuing.

B. Inclusion | The same is true for us in here for Bible Study. On a Sunday morning it's hard to tell who's real. But, in Bible Study it's much easier.

C. Analysis of the TeThat truth is exactly where Matthew 28 begins.

1. By the time Jesus meets His disciples on the mountain in Galilee, everybody did not make it back. The crowds that once followed Him are gone. The people who shouted during miracles have disappeared. Those who loved the loaves and fish are nowhere to be found. Judas is gone. Casual followers are absent.

2. And standing before Jesus are only eleven men. Not perfect men. Not flawless men. But real disciples. They stayed through betrayal. They stayed through confusion. They stayed through suffering. They stayed long enough to see resurrection power. And now, because they remained, Jesus entrusts them with the greatest assignment in human history.

3. That is the tension of this lesson. Everybody wants the benefits of discipleship. Everybody wants the blessings of following Jesus. Everybody wants resurrection power. But everybody does not want the cost of being real.

4. And the question before us tonight is simple: When the crowd disappears... When the excitement fades... When the journey becomes difficult...

5. Will you still be standing in His presence?

D. Parallel - All Real Disciples are.....

E. Proposition: So then what is it that a real disciple real?

II. REAL DISCIPLES SHOW UP WHEN OTHERS WALK AWAY

A. Practical Idea-Anybody can follow Jesus when miracles are flowing, crowds are cheering, and blessings are abundant. But real disciples continue showing up even when stuff gets difficult.

B. Principle From the Passage-Matthew says, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." These men obeyed the instructions of Jesus and met Him where He said to meet Him. Others disappeared, but they showed up. Their presence revealed their commitment.

C. Practical Application-Real disciples are dependable. They do not disappear when life becomes inconvenient or uncomfortable. They continue praying, serving, worshipping, and obeying even in difficult seasons.

D. Doctrinal Truth - True discipleship is proven by perseverance. *Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."*

A real disciple is not defined by how loudly they worship on Sunday, but by whether they remain faithful during adversity.

E. Biblical Illustration-When many followers abandoned Jesus in John 6 after His difficult teaching, Jesus asked the disciples if they would leave also. Peter responded:

John 6:68 "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
Others walked away, but real disciples stayed.

Matthew 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

F. Practical Story - A young man named Marcus joined a church while his business was thriving. He sang loudly, attended every event, and posted Bible verses online daily. But when the economy shifted and his company collapsed, he disappeared from church completely. Months later, an elderly deacon named Brother Williams noticed him working late nights at a gas station. Brother Williams continued checking on him weekly, praying with him, and encouraging him. One night Marcus asked him, "Why do you keep coming to see me?" The old man replied, "Because real disciples don't disappear when life gets hard." That conversation changed Marcus forever. He eventually returned to church, not because life improved immediately, but because he learned that following Jesus means staying connected even through storms.

G. Moment of Meditation: What adversity have you seen that challenged your faith in Jesus Christ? How did it make you stronger?

III. REAL DISCIPLES WORSHIP EVEN WHILE THEY ARE STILL GROWING

A. Practical Idea-A real disciple does not wait until everything is perfect before worshipping God.

B. Principle From the Passage-Verse 17 says:

1. *“And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.”*

2. That verse is astonishing. Worship and doubt existed in the same room. Yet Jesus still entrusted them with the Commission. Their faith was still developing, but their worship was still genuine.

C. Practical Application-You do not have to understand everything to worship faithfully. Real disciples continue pursuing God while growing through uncertainty.

D. Doctrinal Truth-Sanctification is progressive. God develops believers over time. God is not looking for finished people; He is looking for faithful people.

E. Biblical Illustration

A father brought his demon-possessed son to Jesus and cried:

Mark 9:24 “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

His faith was imperfect, but it was real.

Paul put it like this,

Philippians 1:6

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

F. Practical Story-A young college student named Alicia lost her mother unexpectedly during her sophomore year. Her grief shook her faith deeply. She still attended Bible study, but privately she struggled with questions she was afraid to ask aloud. One Thursday night after worship, tears filled her eyes as she told me, “I’m trying to believe, but some days I’m confused.” Here’s what I said, “Confusion does not cancel discipleship. Keep showing up. Keep worshipping. Keep growing.” During her senior

year Alicia became a counselor helping grieving students because she discovered that real disciples grow through the very struggles they survive.

G. Moment of Meditation: In what ways are you still growing as a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

IV. REAL DISCIPLES LIVE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

A. Practical Idea - You cannot call Jesus Lord while refusing His authority.

B. Principle From the Passage-Jesus begins the Commission by saying:

1. *“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”*

2. Before He gives instructions, He establishes authority. Real disciples recognize that Jesus is not merely Savior; He is Lord!

C. Practical Application-A real disciple bends but never breaks....they may be battered but not shattered.....

1. A real disciple does not negotiate obedience—when Jesus speaks, they respond.
2. When the Lord says “go,” a real disciple does not ask for a committee meeting.
3. A real disciple understands delayed obedience is still disobedience.
4. When life gets tough, a real disciple responds with prayer.
5. When pressure rises, real disciples don’t panic—they pray.
6. A real disciple knows that prayer is not a last resort; it is a first response.
7. When things go bad, a real disciple still remembers God has been good.
8. A real disciple responds to trouble with mercy because they know mercy carried them.
9. When others give up, real disciples keep showing up.
10. A real disciple does not need perfect conditions to remain faithful.
11. Crowds follow miracles, but disciples follow Christ.
12. A real disciple keeps worshipping while they are still growing.
13. Real disciples may struggle, but they do not surrender.

14. A real disciple knows that faith is not the absence of storms but trust in the middle of storms.
15. When Jesus says forgive, real disciples put down bitterness.
16. When Jesus says serve, real disciples stop looking for titles.
17. A real disciple understands that crosses come before crowns.
18. Real disciples don't just quote Scripture—they live it.
19. When doors close, real disciples still trust God's plan.
20. A real disciple remembers that God can use ordinary people for extraordinary assignments.
21. When fear shows up, real disciples answer with faith.
22. A real disciple knows that worship is not based on feelings but on faithfulness.
23. When criticism comes, real disciples keep working anyway.
24. A real disciple does not follow Jesus for convenience but out of conviction.
25. When life knocks them down, real disciples get back up praying.
26. A real disciple understands that obedience opens doors disobedience cannot.
27. When others curse, complain, and quit, real disciples keep casting nets.
28. A real disciple knows that the mission matters more than personal comfort.
29. When Jesus says "Follow me," real disciples drop excuses before they drop nets.
30. And at the end of the day, a real disciple can declare: "I may not be perfect, but I'm still standing, still serving, still praying, still trusting, and still following Jesus!"

D. Doctrinal Truth-The Lordship Jesus Christ demands submission. In short, the proof of discipleship is obedience.

Luke 6:46

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

E. Biblical Illustration-Abraham demonstrated real discipleship when God instructed him to offer Isaac. Though he did not fully understand, he obeyed because he trusted the authority of God. (Gen. 22)

F. Practical Story-A successful attorney named Danielle felt God calling her to mentor teenage girls in her community. At first she resisted because her schedule was packed and the work seemed inconvenient. But she sensed the Lord repeatedly pressing the assignment on her heart. Finally, she surrendered and began meeting with a small group of girls every Saturday morning. Over time, several of those girls avoided gangs, graduated school, and gave their lives to Christ. Years later one of them told Danielle, "You obeyed God when you didn't have to, and it changed my life." Real disciples understand that obedience to Jesus often impacts lives they may never fully see.

G. Moment of Meditation: In what ways are you still growing as a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

V. Conclusion and Celebration

A. The Great Commission was never given to spectators!

1. It was given to eleven men who stayed.
2. Eleven men who worshipped.
3. Eleven men who submitted to the authority of Jesus.

B. Real disciples are not perfect people

1. They are committed people.
2. Growing people.
3. Obedient people.

C. And tonight the question is simple:

1. Are you part of the crowd...
2. Or are you a real disciple?