
Follow Me: The Gospel of Matthew

Victory Life Church

Sunday, April 19, 2020 — Part 8, “Disciples Making Disciples”

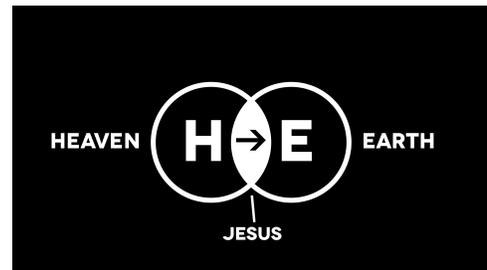
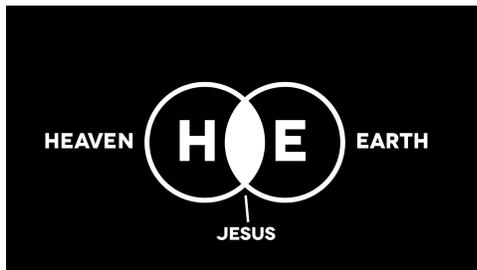
Matthew 28:16-20 (ESV)

The resurrection transforms the way we think about the world and our purpose in it.

“The Gospel” is the story of how Jesus became the King of the world.

Rewind the Gospel of Matthew to the beginning: Jesus came announcing that 'heaven's kingdom is at hand'.

Matthew 4:17 (ESV) "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."



Jesus was not talking about going to heaven after we die, but actually about how **heaven was coming to us**; how the God of heaven and earth, was coming to earth to establish his sovereign, saving rule.

Now, risen from the dead, Jesus declares that it's happened.

Verse 18: 'ALL authority...'

All that God now does, in heaven and on earth, he will do in and through Jesus.

Jesus is King and Lord, not just 'in heaven' but on earth as well.

But what does that actually mean?

If Jesus is really King and Lord, why is the world still in such a mess?

How does he exercise this 'lordship'?

How does this sovereignty work out on the ground?

The whole gospel is written in order to give the answer to that.

How did Jesus live His life that led to this point of being king?

“He didn't do it in the way the disciples expected, in the way the crowds wanted, in the way which the chief priests and Pilate assumed he would behave. He didn't follow the normal human path to power, pushing and shoving his way forward, fighting and killing until his position was established.”

He came as THE SERVANT, the one who took people's infirmities and diseases on to himself, the one who suffered insults and mocking and torture and death. He was **obedient**, throughout his life, **to a different vision of power, a different sort of kingdom-dream**.

Matthew 20:25-28 (ESV)

And his resurrection not only ***showed*** that he was right. It ***established*** his kingdom, his type of kingdom, ***once and for all***.

Verse 19

But if that's the sort of kingdom it is, **it must be put into OPERATION...**

“[T]he greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heart-breaking needs, is whether those who...are identified as “Christians” will become disciples—students, apprentices, practitioners—of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the Kingdom of the Heavens into every corner of human existence.”¹ ~ Dallas Willard

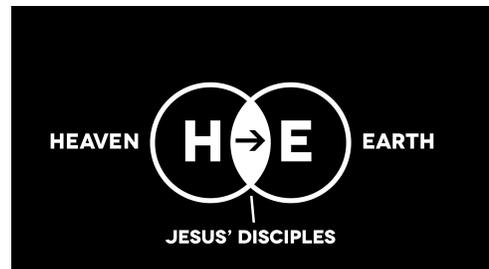
Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)

Jesus' followers are to implement his kingdom by going and making disciples, learners, students, followers who will be shaped by Jesus' example and teaching.

They are to 'baptize' them, plunging them into the very name and life and character of the true God, who is Father, Son and Spirit.

They are to **teach them everything Jesus commanded**, about **a different way to be human**.

That is the character of Jesus' rule, and that is the means by which that rule will be established.



¹ Willard, Dallas - *The Great Omission*, pg xv

We live at a time of great transition and turbulence in our society.

Jesus is still Lord — but he rules in the same way that he lived, taught and died. When his followers learn again to do the same, we shall see a fresh start.

Matthew 16:24-25 (ESV) Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Verse 20

And the encouragement we need is found in the final words of Matthew's gospel, picking up neatly the promise made to Joseph at the very beginning. His name will be 'Emmanuel', said the angel, which means 'God with us'. That God-with-us promise, that heaven-on-earth assurance, has come true in Jesus.

'I am with you always, to the end of the age.' That **is a promise you can stake your life on.**

It is also a **challenge**: If Jesus himself is 'with you', what should you be doing? How then should you live?