

Come and Go!

Matthew 28

So what?

Some facts make no difference in your life

Some facts make a big difference in life

Easter: we celebrate the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ

What difference should that make in our lives?

The Setting

Friday: Jesus was...

tried, then unjustly tortured and crucified

abandoned by the Father because of our sin

buried in a new stone tomb, closed over by a large rock

Mary Magdalene & the other Mary watched the burial

Saturday (Sabbath):

Jewish religious leaders feared that the disciples might steal the body and claim that Jesus was resurrected

So they got permission to post a guard and to seal the tomb ("as secure as you know how")

Matthew 28

1-4: The angel opened the tomb and terrified the guards

An angel from heaven very easily opened the tomb and neutralized the guards

Resulted in a great earthquake

Jesus was already alive and gone

Irony: the ones guarding the tomb of a dead man became like dead men while the dead man lives

5-7: The angel sent the women to tell the disciples

Effectual word: "Do not be afraid"

Women were fine while guards were like dead men!

Come and see the evidence of the resurrection

"Just as Jesus said": discipleship

A call to remember and trust God's Word

Go and tell the disciples

Women are honored as the first messengers of this humanity-altering news!

A call to tell others to trust God's Word

"So be it!"

8-10: Jesus also sent the women to tell the disciples

As the women were obeying...

Fear mixed with great joy!

Jesus surprised the women

Personal encounters rather than global revelation

The women received the highest honor: the first people to experience Jesus' presence

We might expect Jesus to surprise others as well

The right response: **worship**!

Yet an amazing thing to worship a man who is God

"Don't be afraid. **Go and tell**"

"My brothers" are the ones who hadn't yet demonstrated any change or faith

11-15: The guards testified & the counsel devised a lie

"Went and told": unlikely witnesses of resurrection!

Irony: they were supposed to prevent the body from disappearing, yet they ended up testifying that it had

Intentional action against the truth

Compelling evidence of resurrection had no effect

Change of heart is very hard!

We should seek God's help! = discipleship

16-20: Jesus gave the disciples a global mission

They went where Jesus said = discipleship

Even for the first disciples, belief was not automatic

Seek God's help! = discipleship

Jesus' universal authority leads to global mission

Peoples of every tribe and nation

Jesus' main command: disciple all people

Includes starting the journey: baptism

Includes the lifelong journey: obey every teaching of Jesus

With Jesus' presence the whole of every day

Keep doing it until He comes bodily again

The Big Idea

Because of Jesus' resurrection

God calls every person

to come and worship

AND

to go and disciple

The functioning body of Christ involves coming and going

Coming: gathering in Christ's presence

Be washed in confession

Be nourished by the Word & worship & fellowship in the Spirit

Going: into our lives & all the world

Empowered by the Spirit

Giving the grace and love of Christ

If the rhythm stops, the body dies

If the rhythm slows, the body suffers

Application

Come and Worship → the angel said "Come and see"

Seek God who changed the world through death and resurrection

Because Jesus actually rose from the dead to bring us life, we can truly live forever

No trouble in this life, or in me can separate us from the love of God in Christ

We have hope in every circumstance, in every loss

Because death and evil and suffering no longer have the final word

"Because He lives, all fear is gone!"

Now all are called to come to see and worship! Even those who...

abandoned Jesus

doubted Him (or still have doubts)

are afraid

are weak

A "good Christian" is someone who knows they aren't good enough,

and who seeks Christ's love and forgiveness as a gift

Jesus' death pays the way for us to be welcomed by the Father

Then, having been saved, we are called to follow Christ

We seek God's help!

Keep coming and coming...

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

Failing to come to Christ leaves us lost and with little to offer

The call to action is empty unless we are first transformed and empowered by the presence of God in worship

Go and Disciple → “Go and tell/make disciples” together

Make disciples = make people more like Jesus

Joining the work of the Holy Spirit → seek God’s help!

Starting the journey (baptism): Finding new life in Christ

Continuing the journey: Becoming more like Christ

Especially...learning to love sacrificially across differences

Among all peoples of all nations, both near and far

Together as we each bring different gifts to do different parts

The point is not to reform the world

Rather it is: to add to and to form the people of God
who seek His ways in the world

Conclusion

Will you come and worship Jesus?

Will you go and disciple, asking God for help?

Reflection Questions

1. How have you personally encountered Jesus?
2. What helps you to come and worship?
3. It takes all of the gifts and abilities of the body to join in the mission of Christ to make disciples of the peoples of every tribe and nation. What does it look like for you to join in this work?
4. What is an action you can take today or this week to encourage the people of God who are joining in this work?
5. What is an action you can take today or this week to do your part in this mission of Christ?
6. What is the relationship between the call to do good works in the world and to make disciples of all nations?