

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Holy Trinity Sunday) is Matthew 28:16-20. The word “Trinity” is not found in the Scriptures but there are places where the trinity is present. All three are mentioned here in Matthew as a part of the command to baptize people. This text is known as the Great Commission.

We do not know for sure how much time passed between Jesus’ appearance to the women on Easter Sunday and His appearance to the eleven in Galilee. We do know that Jesus appeared to various people in various places over a period of 40 days before He ascended into heaven. It may well be that this incident took place near the end of those 40 days.

Jesus fulfills his second promise by returning to Galilee, where his authority and his presence will continue to expand, not only to Israel’s lost sheep but now also to all the Gentiles and nations of the earth.

That a mountain setting was selected doubtless marked outwardly the fact that a noteworthy event was to transpire; for it was on a mountain that Jesus had preached His great sermon (chapters 5-7), on a mountain after spending a night in prayer He had chosen the twelve apostles from among His many disciples, on a mountain He had discoursed with the multitudes and then fed the five thousand and four thousand respectively. Now on a mountain He would issue the Great Commission.

There on the mountain in Galilee, the Eleven worship Jesus, but in the face of what the future holds, some doubted (28:17). Jesus’ words now address and assuage their doubt. God’s amazing, saving grace; He could have stood atop the mountain; challenged them to climb the rest of the way; condemned those who doubted. Not so! He treated those doubters as He treated Thomas in John 20:24-28. So he does with us.

Authority is illusory unless backed by real power. It means no hindrances, to be able, unlimited opportunity. The Savior’s assurance must have mightily heartened the disciples who had dedicated their lives to His service. It is likewise a strengthening encouragement to us who are the Lord’s own in this concluding period time of history to realize and believe with all our hearts that, despite the spreading of anti-Christian power and the advance of evil in our generation, the glorified Christ continues to govern the affairs of men, of nations, of history and the machinations of Satan.

Unlike the people of Jesus’ day, they did not choose him but he chose them (John 15:16). Disciple (Mathetes) always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole life of the disciple and which in its particularity leaves no doubt as to who is deploying the formative power. This is possible only when through the miracle of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, a person is enabled to accept Jesus as his Savior and Lord, and this for this reason seeks to learn of Christ and doing His bidding. Jesus gives us the tools to make disciples: Baptism and His teaching.

Prayer: Send us, Lord, to make disciples in your name in accordance with our callings in life. Amen.
(TLSB)