

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

This session is suitable for use by the church on Easter

The Command We Dare Not Ignore

Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

The "Youth: Take Ten" Bible study application time asks the youth to memorize the Scripture given. Copies can be made from the verses given at the end of the Worship Time. Have paper and pens for the youth to practice writing the verse.

Be careful to leave time for a discussion of the different cultural and religious groups among their school or friends. Emphasize that it is as important to share with them as it is to go on a far away missions trip.

Worship Time Leader:

Music Sources:

He is Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* #277; CCLI # 5178348

So Send I You, *The Worship Hymnal* #362; CCLI # 13962

We've a Story to Tell, *The Worship Hymnal* #356: CCLI # 29420, Public Domain

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***The Command We Dare Not Ignore*****Focal Text**

Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20

Background Text

Matthew 28

Main Idea

We are to respond to Jesus' resurrection with joy, worship, and obedience to his command to make disciples of all people.

Question to Explore

How well are we demonstrating belief in Jesus' resurrection?

Teaching Aim

To help the class decide on ways they will respond to the good news of Jesus' resurrection.

Gathering together:

Sing **He is Lord**

First thoughts:

There are few occasions for the Christians as thrilling as Easter Sunday morning. After the soul searching of Passion Week culminating with the sad remembrance of Good Friday, it is wonderful to say "**He is risen!**" and to hear a fellow Christian respond with "**He is risen indeed**".

However, these are not words just for Easter Sunday morning. This is the living testimony of Christians every day of the year. This is the story we are to be sharing with the world on a daily basis. Christ was born; he lived a sinless life; he left teachings which guide our daily living; he was crucified for our sins and **HE IS RISEN!** He is triumphant over death; he has paid the price for our sins. **HE IS RISEN INDEED!**

Today our study and worship emphasis is “The Command We Dare Not Ignore”. This refers to Christ’s great commandment to go into the world telling people about him. We are to say in word and deed, “He is Risen”.

On this occasion, whether it is Easter Sunday or some other day of the year, let us affirm our belief by saying to one another, “**He is Risen!**” and by responding with the triumphant words, “**He is Risen Indeed!**” (Allow a few minutes for this activity and break the ice by announcing to another person “**He is Risen!**”. You may need to tell that person ahead of time to respond vibrantly with the words, “**He is Risen Indeed!**”)

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won’t need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

The Command We Dare Not Ignore

Focal Text

Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20

Background Text

Matthew 28

Main Idea

We are to respond to Jesus’ resurrection with joy, worship, and obedience to his command to make disciples of all people.

Question to Explore

How well are we demonstrating belief in Jesus’ resurrection?

Teaching Aim

To help the class decide on ways they will respond to the good news of Jesus’ resurrection.

Introduction to your personal study:

These passages are the Christian’ marching orders! But many Christians behave like our Lord is dead, instead of living victoriously because our Saviour lives. Many Christians live life, like a man in a story I heard a while back. This man was looking at a fascinating picture of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus. While he was observing the picture a young boy approached the picture and said something that only the man could hear, “They killed Jesus and He was innocent. They killed Him.” The man spoke with out even thinking, “Where?” “Over there,” the boy pointed at the far-left corner of the picture, “in the tomb. They put him in the tomb. See his mother weeping there at the foot of the cross.”

The man's face became streaked with tears and he turned from the picture and started to walk away. The man soon felt the boy pulling at his sleeve. As he looked down the boy spoke up, "I didn't tell you the best part. Jesus rose from the dead. He's alive!"

How do you live and act? Is your Jesus truly alive? Our relationship with the risen Lord should be a source of great joy in our lives.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the "**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**", found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

The passage begins with the women coming to prepare Jesus' body for the proper burial. This is followed by an encounter with the angel and the empty grave. The women encounter the Lord Jesus and are given very clear directions to be the first to share the Good News that Jesus lives. The passage ends with marching orders and the clear direction that as Christians, we are not to go about our daily activities without purpose. We must take every opportunity to share the love of Jesus with everyone we encounter as God gives openings.

Focusing on the Meaning:

Matthew 28:1-10

Matthew 28:1 The day after the Sabbath the two women named Mary, along with other women (as mentioned in other gospels) go to prepare Jesus' body for a proper burial. It is amazing that these women who were so faithful to Jesus, who sat at his feet, did not have confidence in His resurrection that He had taught them so repeatedly.

But are we any different? Have we forgotten the meaning of the resurrection? The resurrection proves Jesus is God's Son, it is our hope of our own future resurrection and it is our power source to live a Christian life. Our Jesus lives and this knowledge allows us not to be defeated and discouraged as his followers were on this first Lord's day.

Matthew 28:2-4

This passage paints a picture to which many may relate. Picture yourself as one of the guards having a quiet time guarding this tomb. Then there is a "violent earthquake", followed by an angel appearing, whose appearance was like "lightning, and his clothes were white as snow". Wouldn't you have become like dead men, faint from fear?

I think it is interesting that while the guards did not move, they witnessed what happened.

The angel did nothing but roll the stone back. Did he roll the stone back so Jesus could get out? No! He rolled it back so the humans could get in to witness that Jesus had already left the tomb and it was empty.

Matthew 28:5-7

The women must have been amazed at the earthquake; the stone being rolled back; the guards being like dead men and the appearance of the Angel. As in other appearances of the supernatural, (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:13) to the human, these must have been calming words “Do not fear. Do not be afraid”.

The angel shares what some call the first Christian witness, “Jesus is not in the grave, He has risen, just like He said.”

The angel follows his testimony with what is a foretelling of the Christian responsibility. “COME, SEE and GO. Tell others what you know and how they may encounter the risen Lord.” As messengers, we must personally have experienced the knowledge that Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead. The GOOD News is that by faith we experience forgiveness, salvation and the hope of the resurrection. From this time forward in history, the responsibility for sharing the resurrection story has been man’s, and not angel’s.

Matthew 28:8-10

Jesus’ first appearance was to two women who were the last to leave the cross and the first to come to the tomb. They were committed to the Lord. The commitment of these women was rewarded by their encounter with the risen Lord. Just as Christ had elevated the status of women throughout his ministry, it is significant that women were the first to hear the good news.

As the women ran to share the information they came face to face with the risen Lord. They were able touch and hold Jesus. Joy filled their hearts. As Christians, we have a great deal for which to be joyful.

Jesus once again gives the women instruction to tell the disciples but there is one important change. Jesus addresses the followers as “brethren”. Jesus’ forgiveness was given to His followers who previously were onlookers but now were to be His messengers to the world.

Matthew 28:16-20

In verses **7** and **10** Jesus indicated that He would meet the disciples in Galilee. We know from Luke’s account in Acts, that Jesus spent forty days after his resurrection with his disciples teaching them and preparing them for new assignments. Now the eleven disciples met with Jesus on the mountainside previously arranged. When they saw him they worshipped him – but even then some had their doubts.

Matthew 28: 18, 19 and 20: Authority, Activity and Ability.

18 Our Authority to be on mission comes from Jesus. No matter where we go or what we do, we have the faith that Jesus is in control and leading us through the circumstances. The resurrection underscored Jesus' absolute authority over the universe.

19 The Activity is clear. As we live out our lives in this world, we are to be making disciples, baptising them and teaching them. Our goal in life should be winning persons to Christ. Disciples are apprentices who will copy their teacher. Baptism is an outward sign of one's inward commitment to Jesus. Teaching and learning go together. Jesus wants his followers to know and understand His teachings. The scope of Christ's command is 'all nations'- it is not limited to our own families and comfort zones.

20 Our Ability to stay on course through the trials and storms that will come our way when we follow Jesus is the knowledge that He is always with us. He promises to give us power and encouragement with no time limit. His name Emmanuel, mentioned in Matthew 1:23, literally means "God with us".

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

This passage calls for each of us to examine our life and our behaviour. Do we live as if Jesus rose from the dead and gave us some marching orders? If we are sold out to Jesus 100%, does our life show it? Is the joy of the Lord evident in our lives?

Before I could write this passage I had to examine my own life. I had some sin that was not confessed. I had to seek forgiveness. Each Christian must examine his own life and ask the question: Based on the way I live out my faith, why would someone want to know my Jesus?

We are on mission to make disciples for Jesus. He has given us authority. He has given us the ability. He has given us the knowledge. Now we must get about sharing Jesus, as we rub shoulders with people in our every day life.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

The Command We Dare Not Ignore

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20

Background Text

Matthew 28

Main Idea

We are to respond to Jesus' resurrection with joy, worship, and obedience to his command to make disciples of all people.

Question to Explore

How well are we demonstrating belief in Jesus' resurrection?

Teaching Aim

To help the class decide on ways they will respond to the good news of Jesus' resurrection.

Connect with Life:

As members arrive, invite them to recall an incident when they received some incredibly good news.

Ask the group: What was your reaction to that news?

Guide the Study:

Have someone read verses 1-10.

Stimulate the group to try to imagine how these women might have felt that morning, as they made their way to the grave.

Contrast that to how they must have felt when they arrived at the tomb, and then upon actually seeing Jesus.

Discuss the role angels play in the resurrection story.

Request an answer: Who has the primary responsibility for sharing the good news of the gospel?

Ask the question: "How did Christ elevate the status of women"?

The women were the first to see Jesus after his resurrection

They were assigned to carry the news to the others

Jesus had women friends – Mary and Martha among others

The tearing of the veil in the Temple at the crucifixion of Christ was a symbol of the doing away of the old order of limited access for women in worship.

Have someone read Matthew 28: 16-20.

Assign others to look up and read aloud Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8.

Dialog with the group to discover what these passages have in common.

Now have the church consider and briefly discuss the command to Go – Tell – Make disciples.

Ask the group to share honestly to whom they think each of those three commands applied when they were spoken by Jesus and to whom they apply today.

Encourage the group to discuss this question: How can we implement those commands practically in our lives today?

Talk about the aspect of 'all nations'.

Inquire: How does that impact our responsibility in mission-endavours?

Now solicit responses from the group to this: What meaning does this command have for those of us who live in multi-cultural communities?

Then ask: How do we establish meaningful relationships with our neighbors who have a different culture and/or a different religion?

Invite class members to seriously look at themselves and think about whether their lives truly reflect the joy of knowing Christ.

Encourage a discussion on this topic: Are there valid reasons for some Christians having no apparent joy?

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Challenge class members to accept the great commission as their own personal marching orders. Ask them to purposefully plan how they will share their joy in Christ this week.

Ask a member to pray asking God to provide someone this week for each person in the church to share their joy in Christ.

Finally, after the prayer, suggest to the church that next week they may want to share with the group how God answered that prayer for themselves.

Dismiss for a short break before the Worship Time.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

The Command We Dare Not Ignore **Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Jesus Commissioned Us—That Is: He Sends Us Out **Meaning: All of Us**

The verse of Scripture Matthew 28: 19-20 is one which all Christians should commit to memory. Spend a few minutes doing that together.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Begin by reading the verses together.

Have each young person read the verses aloud individually.

Have each person read the verse to him/herself.

Write the verse on cards which have been prepared ahead of time.

Pair off and try to say the verse to one another.

Say it together without notes.

Ask who wants to try to say the verse alone.

Discuss the fact that in the past this verse led people to leave the culture and comfort of their home to go to cultures and lands very different from what they had known. Many times they were able to return infrequently to see the friends and family they had left behind. They often were lonely and sometimes became ill due to unaccustomed climate and food.

How has the missionary enterprise changed? How has technology impacted the issue of loneliness for those who are called to go to a different country from that of their birth.

Think about the meaning of this verse in contemporary life? How far do you have to go to encounter someone whose religion or culture is very different from your own? In the light of this verse, what is your responsibility?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***The Command We Dare Not Ignore*****Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20****Beginning the Service:**Sing **So Send I You****Offering:****Praying for the World:**

Pray for the Tibetan refugees of India. Pray for God to strengthen and encourage the new Tibetan Christians by allowing them to see Him work through their witness as they share with those around them. Ask Him to draw out those individuals who are interested in learning more about Jesus. May Tibetan Christians always be available and willing to meet, study with and invest in those who are seeking God. Ask the Father to raise up a God-focused, self-led Tibetan church in India. Pray for Christian workers to come and invest their lives in sharing Christ among the Tibetan refugees.

Even across Tibet there exists high speed Internet. Pray for creative ways to reach Tibetans and for Tibetan Christians in India and Tibet to reach other Tibetans for Jesus.

Lead the church in prayer for Tibetans.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Command We Dare Not Ignore

The 28th chapter of Matthew is a fast moving story. It follows the account of the events of the crucifixion and begins at dawn on the first day of the week.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

They encountered an angel who had rolled back the large stone closing the entrance to the tomb. He was sitting on the stone. His clothes were white as newly fallen snow.

His message to the women is one that rings down through the ages to hearts today. ***“Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.”***

As the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, they encountered Jesus Himself. ***“Greetings”***, he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, ***“Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.”***

If we continue reading in the book of Matthew, there is a brief discussion of how the guards reported to the high priests the happenings at the tomb. The chief priests devised a plan and paid the soldiers to tell others that the disciples had stolen the body in the night. Verse 15 ends with these chilling words, ***“And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.”*** The lie of the priests and the soldiers lives on and prevents people from believing in Christ’s resurrection.

Following this brief aside, the story moves quickly to its climax. The disciples met with Jesus and he commanded them to ***“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit., and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.”***

It is well that we focus on the intensity and brevity of this climatic ending to the story of Jesus’ ministry on earth. The women learned of Jesus’ resurrection; they were blessed by an encounter with Jesus himself. They were instructed to begin the telling of the resurrection by letting the disciples whom Jesus calls brothers know what has happened.

Soon the telling has moved to the larger world – to all nations in fact. From this time forward the disciples of Christ have an overwhelming commandment – one that we dare not ignore. We are to tell about Christ’s death and resurrection and invite people to follow Him as disciples.

A beautiful young family had a significant ministry in a large North American city. For nine years, they had worked with beginning and struggling churches of various ethnic groups. They had also been a significant help in the beginning of a vibrant English-speaking congregation. They had a beautiful home and meaningful work. But in the midst of this, God placed a larger vision in their hearts. The husband resigned his

ministry position and the wife took a leave of absence from her teaching position. They sold their home and left, with their three daughters, for a ten month ministry among refugees in a European country.

God has continued to teach and lead them in this step of faith. They have discovered refugees living in such deplorable circumstances that their own restricted finances have little importance.

The refugees have left their homes for a variety of reasons, but all have hope of locating in a new place and making a new beginning. For a few that hope will become reality; but others must return to their homeland or move on to another refugee center.

What joy it has brought this young family and the others with whom they serve to have been able to share the good news of Christ's love for these people whose life circumstances make them unlovely to many.

This family is representative of the many Christians who today feel the call to "go and make disciples" more fervently than has perhaps been felt for many years.

Going and telling others has been at the heart of Christian churches since Christ first gave that commandment. Yet for many, the going seemed impossible and their contribution to "telling the nations" seemed restricted to fervent praying for those who did go and consistent monetary support of the missionary enterprise.

A later emphasis was seen in the interpretation of the scripture "as you are going, make disciples and baptize." This emphasis focused on each individual Christian's opportunity to witness to those people with whom they had daily contact – people at work and school, neighbours, servicepersons. While a healthy emphasis, it was easy to put off "telling and making disciples" and for many Christians, the early commitment died a slow and almost unnoticed death.

Today, we see an urgency to become involved in many Christians of every economic and educational background. Many are no longer content to hear the stories which other people tell; they want to experience for themselves the challenge and richness of cross-cultural sharing of the gospel.

Everything about today's world makes that possible.

Travel is accessible to many; mission groups have plans for using volunteers which makes the time spent abroad fruitful.

The internet makes information about even remote areas accessible and communication with those with whom one ministers is possible before and after a "mission trip".

Perhaps one reality of today's missions' enterprise that is most rewarding is that the "them and us" attitude of former years is often non-existent. Many former recipients of mission leadership are now mission leaders themselves. More South Korean missionaries minister in Canada – once a great mission-sending country – than do missionaries from the U.S.

Finally, our going and telling may involved going next door to tell our neighbour of another culture and religion about Jesus. This will only be done as we carefully build a friendship based on a genuine appreciation for the people and their needs. It may take years for any opportunity to share the gospel to present itself.

Call to Commitment:

It is an amazing opportunity to have so many cultures represented in so many places. Even small villages often have immigrants from other countries living among them. Never has the command "go and tell" been more pressing.

How important to know that the command is as current as when Jesus first gave it and his promise to be with us to the end of the age is as sweet as it was to the early disciples in the days following the resurrection.

Concluding the Service:

If the youth memorized the verses of Matthew 28: 19-20 during their time together, ask them to say the verses for the group.

If not, ask the group to repeat together the verses. (See the verses printed at the end of the session).

Close the service by singing **We've a Story to Tell to the Nations**.

Make a copy of these verses for each participant. You may want to make bookmarks from these slips of paper which will be a daily reminder of the command which Jesus gave.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28: 19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Matthew 28: 19-20

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