

Message #102**Matthew 28:11-20**

Matthew's Gospel ends with a conspiracy to suppress the truth about Jesus Christ by religious leaders and a commission to spread the truth of Jesus Christ directly from Jesus Christ. The resurrection of Jesus Christ produced a lot of action and counteraction. On the one hand, you have a group moving quickly to respond to truth and on the other had you have a group moving quickly to remove the truth.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST CAUSED THE HARD-HEARTED RELIGIOUS JEWS TO LIE AND REJECT THE TRUTH, WHICH MOVED GOD TO SEND THE TRUTH TO ALL NATIONS THROUGH HIS DISCIPLES.

Matthew is such a sad book for Israel. Jesus came and offered Himself as King and He offered Israel her kingdom and she rejected Him. Then He died and rose again and she rejected that. So the book of Matthew ends with Jesus telling His eleven disciples to take the truth to all nations. Matthew is one sad story for Israel, but it is certainly an encouraging story for Gentile nations.

PART #1 – The conspiracy of religious leaders to keep the truth of Christ's resurrection from reaching Jewish people. **28:11-15**

Fact #1 - The report of the soldiers to the chief priests. **28:11**

Verse 11 informs us that while the women were on their way to inform the disciples of Christ's resurrection, the guards were on their way to inform the chief priests of the same reality. Now this Roman guard had been stationed at the tomb by Pilate (27:65-66) and they were not only guarding the tomb, they had sealed the tomb. These guards felt the earthquake and saw the angel which rolled back the stone (28:2-4). They went to the chief priests to inform them of this heavenly appearance. They knew this was from heaven and they knew this was from God.

Fact #2 - The plan of the religious leaders to keep people from truth. **28:12-14**

The adjective "large" means that this was a considerable sum, which was sufficient enough for these soldiers to risk their own lives for this cover-up story (Smith, p. 215). A Roman soldier who lost what he was guarding could be executed (Acts 12:19). In fact, when another divine earthquake occurred in Philippi, the Roman jailer was going to kill himself because he thought his prisoners had escaped (Acts 16:26-28). So this hush money was sufficient for these soldiers to not only keep quiet, but actually lie and say His disciples stole the body while they were sleeping on the job (**28:13**). Think what these religious leaders are doing—they are paying out ministry money to keep people from knowing the truth.

Verse 14 says that the religious leaders said they would square things with Pilate and keep them out of trouble and **verse 15** says the soldiers took the money and spread the lies and the Jews believed it.

PART #2 – The commission of Jesus Christ to His eleven to go out to all the nations. **28:16-20**

I want you to notice that **verse 16** begins with a very sharp contrasting conjunction “but.” What this means is in sharp contrast to what was going on with Israel, Christ’s disciples went to Galilee to meet Jesus and were about to learn of a new assignment. In contrast to what was happening in Israel, something wonderful was about to happen in the Gentile nations. This is so sad because the King should have been meeting in Jerusalem. The reason He is in Galilee is because He has been rejected.

In Matthew’s final communication between the God/King and His disciples were the following realities, and notice that this is given to “the eleven disciples.” There is a great debate among theologians whether this commission to these disciples is our commission in the Church Age. Some say it is and others say it is not. In fact, typically two extreme positions are held—one extreme says this is the only commission given to the Church and the other says this has no application whatsoever to the Church.

Reality #1 - All authority in heaven and on earth is given to Jesus Christ . **28:18**

Reality #2 - You eleven go and make disciples of people of all nations . **28:19a**

This is a specific assignment to these Jewish disciples to go to Gentile nations.

Reality #3 - You eleven are to baptize people in the name of the Trinity. **28:19b**

Notice a tremendous proof of deity occurs in this verse. The noun “name” is singular—in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Reality #4 - You are to teach people to observe everything I have commanded you. **28:20a**

Now these eleven did not know Church Age truth at this time. What they knew is that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel who had been rejected. They also knew He did on the cross for sins and that any who would believe in Him would have life. H. A. Ironside brought out an interesting point. He said it is too bad that many mission agencies and missionaries miss the fact that we are to teach people the Word of God, the things commanded by Jesus Christ. It is not our job to give heathen nations a secular education. There are mission agencies that tragically believe they need to maintain secular schools and colleges. This is not propagating the Gospel.

Reality #5 - You are to know that I am with you to the end of the age. **28:20b**

To what age was Jesus referring? To the end of the age which featured all nations, not Israel. Although Jesus would not remain physically with them, He would be spiritually with them until one day He would be with them again physically.