

Matthew 28:16-20

Gospel Reflection

This portion of Matthew is often referred to as the Great Commission. While Jesus was delivering this message to the 11 disciples (Judas had committed suicide and Matthias had not yet been selected to replace Judas), we should consider this as a commission to us in this day and age. This is part of what God wants us to do as followers of Jesus. From the Gospel of John, Love one another. As I have loved you. so you must love one another. The first requirement is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. The second requirement is to love our neighbors as ourselves. Now the third requirement from the great commission is to go out and make disciples.

Jesus elaborates in the great commission, "teach them", referring to all the nations, to obey everything I have commanded you. It would appear that the world today has pretty much ignored Jesus' teaching and God's command. We have become so self centered, that loving our neighbors has become a bridge too far. If we stop and consider how much God loves us, so much so that he sacrificed his only Son for our sins, so that we could be forgiven of our basic sinful nature. Yet we are unable to show any kind of love for our neighbors. If we are to become true disciples, we must show forth in our lives, the love of God and of those around us. We need to listen to others and accept the fact that we will disagree. That doesn't need to lead to violence. Rather we need to look for common ground.

Matthew closes with words of real comfort. Jesus tells the disciples and us that he is surely with us, always, to the very end of the age. We need to accept that consolation, and live our lives according to God's will for us.