

The Might, The Message, and The Means “ Matt. 28:16–20 Trinity Sunday A 6-11-17

Rev. Dr David Kim, a Lutheran mission pastor in Houston, has a motto about this verse: Be one, make one. He means that each Christian is to be a disciple and to make a disciple. A disciple learns to observe everything God has commanded, by being accountable to one or more other Christians for spiritual growth. A disciple is also one who is helping someone else grow in faith as a disciple of Christ.

Jesus said we do this by baptizing people in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In this holy name of the Triune God we have the Might, the Message, and the Means for discipleship.

The might and majesty of God the Father, expressed in today’s Psalm and Genesis readings, reassures us that we are secure when we follow him as disciples. He who by His Word made everything that exists is able to supply all our need. A disciple is confident that nothing in this world can destroy a child adopted by God in baptism. We trust His Words, for they reflect the wisdom of the ages, not a new and untried philosophy.

He who is mighty to save is also mighty to judge and is to be held in reverent awe by His disciples. God is not a get out of jail card we play when we beg for mercy just because we don’t like the consequences of our own actions.

So as disciples we are to always hold this holy awe and reverence for the Almighty. To disciple others in the same proper respect for God, we teach them and hold them accountable for living a life worthy of Him who created and cares for them, as well as the One who will judge them in the end.

Most people are fully aware of a God that rules and judges the world, even if they don’t know his name. Many religions and idols attest to a universal awareness that He exists.

As disciples we know this, but we also know God’s name and how we are able to stand before the Almighty. That’s because our discipleship has a specific message. That message is Jesus Christ. He is the way the truth and the life, the only name by which we are reconciled to the Almighty Father.

As we hold others and ourselves accountable, this message saves the disciple from despairing under the demands of a holy nameless judge.

Earlier you heard part of Peter’s Pentecost sermon: *“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”*

Here it is clear that those who would be disciples bear guilt for the death of Christ. How so? Did these pious Jews nail him to the cross? Did you or I crucify him? Not in person, but because of our sin he was sacrificed to set us free from punishment. He who is both Lord and Christ, God and man, Jesus, came to earth to bear the sins and guilt we could never bear.

Our Holy God, who has Might to protect, but also to destroy the world for its wickedness, chose to send a message to the world--a message of hope, forgiveness, reconciliation. That message is not a list of things to do to please God and be worthy of heaven. It is not a command to obey a set of rules and traditions. The message of the Almighty is a person, the Word made flesh, who gives salvation to all who call upon the name of the Lord.

And that is not something God leaves entirely up to us. He helps us to call upon the Lord. Were we to finish Peter’s Pentecost sermon we would have heard about the third person of the Trinity involved in making disciples. When told they had crucified the very Son of God, the crowd was convicted and asked Peter what they must do. He said, *repent and baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit enables one to believe the message from the almighty. In God’s Word, the Spirit works faith to believe all that Christ has done for us.

The church is a fellowship of disciple-making disciples. Being confident in the direction and protection from the Might of God the Father, we proclaim the life changing message of God the Son, crucified and risen for us. We put our faith in God the Holy Spirit to be the means by which others will receive that message.

Do you desire to be a more faithful disciple or to make a disciple of another? Christ and His word are with you always to help you, even to the end of the time. To be a disciple and to make a disciple, Trust the Might of God, the Message of God, and the means of God. Amen.