

## WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY: "The Great Commission" Luke 24

Scripture of Lesson: Luke's Gospel 24: 36-53 [Also, Matt 28: 16-19; Mark 16: 14-20]

### 1. The Risen Christ appears multiple times with His disciples/ believers

- a. The Risen Christ appeared to Peter prior to the Emmaus road appearance [Luke 24:34].
- b. Luke records the occasion where the ten disciples (less Thomas) and other believers were with the two believers who had met with the Lord during their journey to Emmaus, listening to their account of travel with the Lord. Then, the Risen Christ appeared in their midst and revealed Himself, even showing His hands and feet with nail scars. He even ate some food provided by them, thus showing that He was a real person and not a spiritual entity.
- c. The Risen Lord appears to the eleven disciples in a mountain in Galilee, which had been appointed by the Lord. They worshipped Him but some doubted [Matt 28: 16, Mark 16: 14]. This may have been the occasion when He met with 500+ believers and instructed them, according to apostle Paul:

*After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.* [1 Corinthians 15: 6]

Christ prepared this meeting in advance and instructed the disciples to go to this specific mountain in Galilee, of which location is not known. The fishing activity of the disciples recorded in John 21 may have been necessary to prepare food for this assembly meeting.

### 2. The Risen Christ helps the disciples' understanding of God's salvation plan

- a. Through these multiple occasions the Risen Lord taught the disciples the Scriptures [Pentateuch, books of the prophets, and psalms] that foretold His birth, death, and resurrection [24: 44]. He opened their understanding so that they might come to full understanding of the Scriptures concerning Him.
- b. The evidence of this instruction became evident when Peter, a fisherman-turned-disciple, became an eloquent speaker of the message in Acts 2. We see Peter freely quoting the OT Scriptures before the crowd on the Pentecost day, resulting in conversion of some 3,000 people on this day [Acts 2: 41].
- c. Some of the OT verses Pete quoted during his Pentecost oracle were:

Joel 2: 28-32

Psalm 132:11

Psalm 110: 1

Psalm 16:8-11

As this evidence shows, the Lord's final instruction to the disciples was sufficiently effective in preparing them for the task of the Great Commission.

### 3. Christ gives them the Great Commission of evangelism

- a. Having given full evidence of His resurrection and transformed them from a lost group without a vision and purpose into a strongly motivated group with fervent desire to share the gospel story with the world, Lord Jesus gave them the Great Commission, which is recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke.
- b. Different gospels record the Great Commission in different ways but with the same essence:
  - i) *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* [Matt 28: 18-20]
  - ii) *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."* [Mark 16: 15-18]

iii) *Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. [Luke 24: 46-48]*

- c. Lord's commission was on all believers. In Acts we see not only the apostles but some elders making converts and even baptizing the converts. Examples include Stephan's martyrdom, Philip's conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, and Ananias' conversion and baptism of Saul [Acts 9], whose name was changed to Paul. Thus, this commission is given to Christians of all ages.

#### 4. **Christ is raised to heaven**

- a. Christ's ascension is recorded in Mark and Luke. Luke's account is more in detail. Lord led the disciples to Bethany and blessed them. While He was blessing them, He was raised up to heaven, whereupon they worshipped Him and came back to Jerusalem with great joy.
- b. Seeing their Lord being raised to heaven must have given them full assurance of Christ's deity and the validity of all of His ministry and teachings including His death and resurrection. As Elijah's ascension gave great conviction and courage to Elisha in 2 Kings 2, whereupon Elisha received the double portion of Elijah's spirit, God gave Holy Spirit to the disciples 50 days later on the Pentecost day and the disciples went on preaching the message of Christ's gospel to all parts of the known world. And this work has been continuing even unto today.

#### 5. **Application to us**

- a. Those of us who became children of God through Jesus Christ have the privilege of evangelical life – of speaking the gospel story of Jesus to anyone, anytime and in any circumstances as the Spirit guides.
- b. Telling the gospel story is not difficult – We love Jesus and His truth so much so that we tell others about Him, the salvation from death to life that is possible because He died for us. We do this to those we come in contact—in our homes, neighborhoods, work places and schools. Our labors can save souls from the darkness of sin and hopeless despair to the true light and living hope of eternity with God and Christ.

Amen.