



Study Guide: Matthew – Chapter 28

Study Guide: Matthew – Chapter 28

This study guide provides an educational overview of Matthew Chapter 28 using a verse-by-verse structure, theological context, and application-oriented insights grounded in Scripture.

Introduction

Matthew Chapter 28 serves as the climactic conclusion to the Gospel of Matthew, presenting the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His final instructions to His disciples. This chapter transitions the narrative from the passion and death of Jesus to the victorious proclamation of His resurrection, which is foundational for Christian faith and mission. Readers should watch for the fulfillment of Jesus' promises, the authority He claims, and the commissioning of His followers, all of which set the stage for the spread of the Gospel.

Context

The immediate literary context of Matthew 28 follows the crucifixion and burial of Jesus in Chapter 27. The chapter opens with the discovery of the empty tomb by the women who had remained faithful to Jesus. Historically, this chapter is situated at the dawn of the new covenant inaugurated by Christ's resurrection, affirming His identity as the Messiah and Son of God. Key speakers include the angelic messenger at the tomb, the risen Jesus Himself, and the disciples who receive His final charge. The setting moves from the tomb in Jerusalem to a mountain in Galilee, emphasizing both the miraculous event and the authoritative commissioning that follows.

Outline

The chapter begins with the discovery of the empty tomb by the women, highlighting the angel's announcement and the resurrection of Jesus. This is followed by the women's encounter with the risen Christ and their report to the disciples. The narrative then shifts to the response of the guards and the religious leaders' attempt to suppress the resurrection story. Finally, the chapter culminates with Jesus' appearance to His disciples on a mountain in Galilee, where He declares His universal authority and commissions them to make disciples of all nations. Each movement builds upon the previous, emphasizing the reality of the resurrection and the mission it entails.



Verse-by-Verse Study

Verses 1-3: The chapter opens with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary visiting the tomb at dawn. The narrative highlights the earthquake and the angel's descent, signaling divine intervention and the breaking of death's power.

Verses 4-7: The angel rolls back the stone and announces that Jesus has risen, instructing the women to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they will see Him. This fulfills Jesus' prior predictions about His resurrection.

Verses 8-10: The women leave the tomb with fear and joy, running to share the news. Jesus meets them personally, reaffirming His resurrection and commissioning them to inform the disciples, demonstrating His personal care and authority.

Verses 11-15: The guards report the events to the chief priests, who bribe them to spread a false story that Jesus' body was stolen. This attempt to suppress the truth contrasts with the genuine witness of the women and underscores the opposition to the resurrection message.

Verses 16-20: The final section records Jesus' appearance to the disciples on a mountain in Galilee. He declares that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him and commissions them to make disciples, baptizing and teaching in His name. The chapter closes with the promise of His presence "to the very end of the age," affirming the ongoing mission and divine support.

Key Themes

The resurrection as the foundation of Christian faith is central, demonstrating Jesus' victory over death and confirming His divine identity. Authority is another key theme, with Jesus claiming universal power that legitimizes the Great Commission. The theme of witness and testimony emerges through the women's role and the contrasting responses of the religious leaders. Finally, the theme of mission highlights the responsibility of disciples to spread the Gospel globally, accompanied by the assurance of Jesus' continual presence.

Cross-References

The resurrection account in Matthew 28 is illuminated by parallels in Mark 16 and Luke 24, which also describe the empty tomb and Jesus' appearances. John 20 provides additional



personal encounters with the risen Christ. The Great Commission echoes Jesus' earlier promises in Matthew 16:18-19 and 18:18, where He speaks of authority and the church's role. The promise of Jesus' presence "to the very end of the age" connects with Hebrews 13:5 and Revelation 21:3, affirming God's abiding presence with His people.

Application

Modern disciples are called to embrace the reality of the resurrection as the source of hope and power in their lives. The chapter challenges believers to respond with faith and obedience to Jesus' authority, engaging actively in the mission of making disciples. It encourages courage in the face of opposition, as seen in the contrasting responses to the resurrection. The assurance of Christ's presence offers comfort and strength for ongoing ministry, reminding believers that they are not alone as they fulfill their calling.

Summary

Matthew 28 concludes the Gospel with the triumphant resurrection of Jesus, affirming His divine authority and commissioning His followers to continue His work. The chapter moves from the empty tomb and angelic announcement to Jesus' personal appearances and the Great Commission, emphasizing the foundational truth of the resurrection and the global mission it initiates. This closing passage encapsulates the Gospel's message of victory, authority, witness, and mission, calling believers to faithful discipleship empowered by Christ's enduring presence.