

Union Baptist Church
31 Manhattan Avenue
White Plains, New York 10607
Pastor Verlin D. Williams, D.Min.

Lesson 2: The Promise of God's Presence

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Scripture: Matthew 28:16–20 NKJV

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. 17 When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 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, 20 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. Amen."

Jesus Is With Us in Every Season of Life

Introduction

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

This promise speaks deeply to mature believers who have lived long enough to know that life brings many seasons. There are seasons of joy and fulfillment, but also seasons of grief, transition, uncertainty, and change. There are women in this class have raised children, helped raise grandchildren, buried loved ones, retired from meaningful work, served faithfully in the church, cared for others, prayed through family burdens, and carried responsibilities that many people never saw.

This lesson reminds us that Jesus' presence is not only for the beginning of the Christian journey. His presence is also for the later seasons of life. He is with His people when they are strong, and He is with them when they feel fragile. He is with them in worship, in doubt, in service, in loneliness, in widowhood, in retirement, in family concern, in aging, in prayer, and in quiet moments when the heart needs assurance.

The promise of God's presence is not sentimental language. It is a spiritual reality. The risen Christ does not merely send His people; He accompanies them.

Biblical Context

Matthew 28:16–20 forms the conclusion of Matthew’s Gospel. The Lord Jesus has been crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. Now He meets His disciples in Galilee, just as He had instructed them. This moment gathers together several important themes from Matthew’s Gospel: worship, doubt, obedience, authority, discipleship, mission, and the abiding presence of God.

Matthew’s Gospel begins and ends with the theme of divine presence. At the beginning of the Gospel, Jesus is identified as Immanuel, which means “God with us” (Matthew 1:23). At the end of the Gospel, Jesus says, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20). These two statements frame the whole story of Jesus. He is God coming near to His people, and He remains with His people.

This is especially meaningful for believers who have walked with God over many years. The same Lord who was with you in earlier seasons is still with you now. His presence has not expired. His faithfulness has not diminished. His care has not weakened with time.

Explanation of the Verses

Verses 16–17

Worship Amid Doubt

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.”

The eleven disciples obeyed the instruction of Jesus and went to Galilee. Galilee was the place where much of Jesus’ earthly ministry had taken place. It was familiar ground. It was also a region associated with the wider world beyond Jerusalem. This setting prepares us to understand that the mission of Jesus will not remain confined to one place or one people.

When the disciples saw the risen Christ, they worshiped Him. Worship was the right response to His resurrection, His authority, and His divine identity. Yet Matthew adds a very honest phrase: “but some doubted.”

This does not necessarily mean they rejected Jesus. The word can suggest hesitation, uncertainty, or inward struggle. They were standing before the risen Lord, but they were still trying to comprehend the weight of what they were seeing.

This is pastorally important. These disciples worshiped, but some still wrestled. They obeyed, but some still had questions. They came to the appointed place, but some were still inwardly unsettled.

That speaks to mature believers. A woman can have a long history with God and still face moments of hesitation. A grandmother can pray for her family and still wonder how God is working. A widow can love the Lord deeply and still feel the ache of absence. A retired

professional can trust God and still struggle with questions of identity, usefulness, or purpose after the work season has changed.

This passage teaches us that honest struggle does not disqualify sincere worship. Jesus does not turn away from His disciples because some hesitated. He comes near and speaks to them.

That is grace.

Verse 18

Christ's Supreme Authority

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’”

Before Jesus gives the commission, He declares His authority. He does not begin by pointing to the disciples' strength, intelligence, courage, or experience. He begins with His own authority.

This matters because the Christian life is not sustained by human ability alone. We do not live by our own strength. We do not serve by our own wisdom. We do not endure by our own emotional resources. We live under the authority of the risen Christ.

Jesus says that all authority has been given to Him in heaven and on earth. His authority is complete. It is not partial, temporary, or limited. He reigns over visible and invisible realities. He reigns over history, nations, families, churches, sickness, grief, aging, death, and eternity.

For mature Christian women, this is a stabilizing truth. Life may change, but Christ's authority does not change. Roles may shift, but Christ's reign does not shift. Children may make painful choices, bodies may become weaker, friends may pass away, institutions may change, and the world may feel unstable, but Jesus Christ remains Lord.

His authority gives the believer confidence. We are not held by circumstances alone. We are held by the One who has authority over all things.

Verses 19–20a

The Call to Keep Making Disciples

“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...”

His presence is enduring.

Jesus says, “even to the end of the age.”

This promise stretches beyond the first disciples. It reaches the whole life of the church until Christ brings history to its appointed fulfillment.

This means the promise belongs to us now. It belongs to women who have served God for many years. It belongs to those who are still trying to discern what faithfulness looks like in this season of life. It belongs to those who have more memories behind them than plans before them. It belongs to the church today. Christ remains with His people.

Spiritual Significance for Mature Believers

This passage speaks to several spiritual needs that many mature women carry.

1. The Need for Assurance

Mature believers do not need shallow encouragement. They need deep assurance. They need to be reminded that God has not forgotten them, finished with them, or left them alone. The promise of Christ's presence assures us that even when life changes, God's nearness remains.

Some people have had to adjust to retirement. Some have had to adjust to health concerns. Some have had to adjust to children becoming adults and making their own choices. Some have had to adjust to serving in ways that are less visible than before.

But the Lord's promise still stands:
"I am with you always."

2. The Need for Purpose

Retirement from a profession is not retirement from discipleship. Aging is not the end of spiritual usefulness. A change in season does not cancel divine purpose.

The risen Christ gives His people continuing purpose. Mature women carry wisdom that the church needs. You have learned things through prayer, patience, hardship, work, marriage, singleness, grief, motherhood, leadership, service, and survival.

The church needs that wisdom. Younger women need that witness. Children and grandchildren need that example. The body of Christ needs seasoned believers who know how to walk with God when life is not easy.

3. The Need for Comfort in Grief

Some women carry grief quietly. They may smile, serve, attend worship, and encourage others while still carrying the memory of people they loved deeply. The promise of Christ's presence does not erase grief, but it gives companionship in grief. The Lord does not shame His people for sorrow. He meets them in it. The presence of Christ means that grief is not traveled alone. Even in the valley, the Shepherd is present.

4. The Need for Strength in Intercession

Mature women often carry a heavy ministry of prayer. They pray for children, grandchildren, family members, church members, and community concerns. Sometimes they pray for situations

they cannot control and people they cannot change. Jesus' presence strengthens the praying woman. She does not pray into emptiness. She prays in fellowship with the risen Lord, who reigns with all authority.

Prayer becomes an act of trust. It says, "Lord, I cannot be everywhere, but You are present. I cannot fix everything, but You are Lord. I cannot carry this alone, but You are with me."

5. The Need for Peace in Transition

The disciples were standing in a moment of transition. Jesus had risen. His earthly ministry as they had known it was changing. They were being sent into a future they did not fully understand.

It's important to understand transition. Retirement is transition. Widowhood is transition. Aging is transition. Becoming a caregiver is transition. Losing independence is transition. Watching the church change is transition. Seeing the world change is transition. Jesus' promise gives peace in transition. He does not always explain every detail of the future, but He promises His presence in it.

Memory Verse

"And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:20 NKJV

Student Worksheet

The Promise of God's Presence

Matthew 28:16–20 NKJV

Opening Reflection

Before class, read Matthew 28:16–20 slowly. As you read, underline the words or phrases that speak most directly to your present season of life.

Complete this sentence:

In this season of my life, I most need to remember that Christ is with me when:

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Where did the eleven disciples meet Jesus after the resurrection?

- A. In Jerusalem
- B. At the Sea of Galilee
- C. On a mountain in Galilee
- D. In Bethany

Answer: _____

2. How did the disciples respond when they saw Jesus?

- A. They all fled in fear
- B. They worshiped Him, but some doubted
- C. They refused to believe
- D. They asked for another sign

Answer: _____

3. What did Jesus say had been given to Him?

- A. Authority over Israel only
- B. Authority in heaven and on earth
- C. Authority over the temple
- D. Authority over the disciples only

Answer: _____

4. What command did Jesus give His disciples?

- A. To remain in Galilee
- B. To rebuild the temple
- C. To make disciples of all nations
- D. To hide from their enemies

Answer: _____

5. What did Jesus promise His disciples?

- A. That they would never suffer
- B. That everyone would accept their message
- C. That He would be with them always
- D. That their mission would be easy

Answer: _____

True or False

- 6. The eleven disciples went to Galilee as Jesus had appointed them.
True _____ False _____
- 7. The disciples worshiped Jesus, but some still struggled with doubt or hesitation.
True _____ False _____
- 8. Jesus declared His authority before giving the commission.
True _____ False _____
- 9. Making disciples includes teaching people to obey what Jesus commanded.
True _____ False _____
- 10. Jesus' promise to be with His followers ended with the first disciples.
True _____ False _____

Reflection Questions

1. Worship and Honest Struggle

The disciples worshiped Jesus, but some doubted. What does this teach you about bringing your honest questions, griefs, or uncertainties into the presence of God?

2. Christ's Authority

Jesus said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." What situation in your life do you need to place again under the authority of Christ?

3. Continuing Purpose

In what ways can you continue making disciples in this season of life — through prayer, encouragement, teaching, example, counsel, or service?

4. The Promise of Presence

How would your response to a current challenge change if you truly believed Jesus was with you in it — not merely as an idea, but as a present reality?

5. A Prayer of Trust

Write a short prayer asking the Lord to help you live with a deeper awareness of His presence.