



First Lutheran Church

Gospel of Matthew

Summer 2026 Reading Challenge



Devotion Time: Week 14: Matthew chapters 27 and 28
Prayer Time

Teach us, O God, how to teach others about you. Fill us with the humility to exemplify your love in action and deed and words as we advocate for those who are excluded or oppressed. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

The four Gospels all end with Jesus just kind of alive and hanging out but don't really elaborate. Matthew is a prime example. Jesus is on the mountaintop, speaks these words and well Matthew, what happens next? Where do they go? What does Jesus do next? When does Jesus leave? What do you mean Jesus tells us to go now and do these tasks of teaching and baptizing?

We sometimes read the gospel seeking answers to questions we have but which the author did not have. For Matthew, Jesus was already gone. For Matthew, and his community, Jerusalem is already destroyed. Messiah coming to reclaim the glory of ancient Israel and kicking out the Romans was not going to happen. Being Jesus' disciples was not going to lead the church to reclaim Israel or defeat the Romans either. So, now that Rome killed Jesus on the cross, and now that Rome has thoroughly sacked Jerusalem, the Church (the people following Jesus) need to see their purpose in a new light. And that new light is taking a message to the nations -- a message of who Jesus was.

And who was Jesus? Jesus is with us to the end of the age - remember, Jesus was named Immanuel, God with us. Jesus taught us with words like the Sermon on the Mount, what are we to teach? Go back and read those words now. Jesus calls us to obey? How do we obey but by freely giving out forgiveness - go back and read his words on forgiveness. This Great Commission, as it is called, is a passage that sends us forward by sending us backward - to the beginning of the story, to remember all that Jesus did and taught.

And now we don't see these teachings and miracles in light of a King who is coming to restore one nation's glory, no - we now see this in the light of the Son of God who reigns as the Resurrected One. And Jesus' resurrection life isn't something that goes away. Jesus' resurrection life isn't lifted up into some faraway place that transcends this reality. Jesus is really resurrected and really present here and now. Jesus can hardly be with us til the end of the age if Jesus goes away to some other heaven. So Jesus is here. Jesus is with us. Jesus is still teaching us. Jesus is still found in miracles. Jesus is still found where the church is properly forgiving and including and welcoming and feeding and bringing new life where once there was only wailing and lamenting the life that is no more.

So, Go, Jesus says, and disciple others - teach them what Jesus has taught you.

Let's make you sing today

Children, go where I send thee
How shall I send thee?
I'm gonna send thee one by one
One for the little bitty, baby
wrapped in swaddling clothing,
lying in a manger
he was born, born, born in
Bethlehem

(There are a lot of verses, so I will skip a few ahead ... go watch a video of Kenny Rogers singing this)

Children, go where I send thee
How shall I send thee?
Im' gonna send the ten by ten
ten for the ten commandments
nine for the nine who saw the
sign
eight for the eight that stood at
the gate
seven for the seven that went up
to heaven
Six for the six that never got fixed
Five for the gospel preachers
four for the four that stood at the
door
three for the Hebrew children
two for Paul and Silas
One for the little bitty baby,
Yes, he was born, born, born in
Bethlehem

Gathered by God, we live our faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy

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