

Vision Sunday: making disciples

discussion guide

based on **Matthew 28.16-20** (Linked to sermon of 5/2/23)
which can be accessed at www.stjamesbythepark.org/talks

Intro: Who have been the biggest influences in shaping your Christian life?
Do you see these as examples of disciple-making?

Read Matthew 28.16-20

The 'great commandment' ("love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength") and the 'great commission' ("go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them ... and teaching them ...") are complementary. What would it look like to live the great commandment but not the great commission? What would it look like to live the great commission but not the great commandment?

V18 is an extraordinary claim. 'Authority' has been a key theme for Matthew – cf 7.29; 9.6-8; 10.1; 21.23-27 – so Jesus having 'all authority in heaven and earth' makes sense of the earlier episodes.

Do you think the claim has the ring of authenticity? Why / why not?

V19-20a is an extraordinary commission.

How do you think the disciples would have felt, hearing this commission?

What is the 'therefore' there for – ie what the link between v18 and v19?

What's the difference between 'being' disciples and 'making' disciples?

Matthew's gospel begins with a very Jewish genealogy, but ends with going to 'the nations'. What opportunities are there for us to go to 'the nations' today?

Some people want to keep faith private, not public. Why is baptism so significant then?

Why is baptism in itself not sufficient – but to be followed up by teaching and obedience?

What do you find hardest about this great commission?

In the light of the extraordinary commission, V20b is an extraordinary comfort.

In what ways have you known this promise to be true?

Dan then talked about how 'making disciples' is at the heart of our new 3-D vision (direction of travel) as a church:

That God is calling us to be a community that embraces Different expressions of church, in order to make Disciple-making disciples who reflect the increasing Diversity of our local area.

Which part of this excites you?

What part of this concerns you?

Over the last term, we've been thinking about being courageous, whole-hearted and expectant. How might these help us fulfil this vision?

Spend some time praying into this whole area of disciple-making and our church vision.