

Time for God – Take 2

Purpose: To assist the congregation with further reflection on the theme of the Sunday service and in particular with the Congregational Bible passage.

Week beginning Sunday 11 June 2017 **God Together Mission**

Pray Pray that we would appreciate more of God's togetherness in action, specifically in mission both within the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and outwardly with believers. Pray that we would be more open to allowing God to work in our midst in every aspect and for us to be willing to share together with others in his mission.

Read Read the passage (preferably in an easy to understand version). Matthew 28:16-20.

Background This short passage at the end of Matthew's gospel is often referred to as the Great Commission. In many ways it is the bridge between the earthly ministry of Jesus and the ministry which his followers would take up (in his strength) when he went to be with his heavenly Father. It is a God given and God equipped ministry of mission – it marks a very decisive impetus for believers to take the good news of Jesus out into the world – it was to be wide ranging – both in geographical and theological extent. God in all his nature was to be involved in it – Father, Son and Holy Spirit were to be present and in power as the disciples (and those to follow) sought to make disciples, to teach, to baptise and generally to extend the values of the kingdom of God.

Possible questions/points to consider

1. The Trinity isn't the easiest topic to get to grips with. Many in the Church would rather just pass on it or leave it to those who are particularly interested. However, mention of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in this key passage which for some marks the beginning of the Church's public ministry reminds us that GOD in mission is vital. What does this passage say about God's involvement in mission? What does it say about believers' part in mission? How do we hold it all together?
2. On Sunday, we gave some thought to the benefits of short periods of intense mission activity. Can you share examples of how this has been beneficial to you and/or to congregations you have belonged to? In particular, how have you seen them used to "bring people on"?
3. It is fair to say that Matthew 28 envisages mission as something that is regular and continuous. Given the fact that we couldn't possibly maintain the level of energy and enthusiasm displayed for a week in the summer what does such a passage say to us about mission the year round? (No one right answer!).
4. We have a tendency to home in on what we can (or can't do) and that is especially true when it comes to mission. How far is our involvement determined by such attitudes? If we think more about mission being God's in which he gives us a share and with it equipping to play that part how might things change? How far do we limit what God understands mission to be? How far do we limit our involvement by too quickly ruling out what we can't do? How might things change if we were to adopt Paul's line "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength"?
5. There is more than one way to do mission – but mission is really important to God. How can we get more involved in God's mission? To what extent is that different from "what ideas for mission can we come up with"?
6. It is important that we don't set Father, Son and Holy Spirit against one another. They work really closely to further one combined purpose in love but there are aspects of mission that one of God's persons are more to the fore. Can you point to aspects that have been particularly helpful for you or for the congregation? Anything else that arises from the passage or the service?

Prayer Thank you that you are so much together in love in all that you do, God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Help us to be open to participating in your great mission of love and to be ready to receive the equipping we need to play our part. Amen.