

Audio Teaching Sermon    Message #4    Intellectual Belief Alone is Not Enough

[ A    Intro – Pastor Jefferson    0:00 thru 1:30 ]

Hello friends, I'm **pastor Jefferson**, welcome to DWJD Ministries audio teaching message **number 4**. We've been discussing the one commandment Jesus gave to us before He departed up to Heaven to be with His Father, God Almighty. Christians refer to this as the **Great Commission**. The word **commission** is defined as **'the authorization or command to act in a prescribed manner or to perform prescribed acts.'** If you recall from our discussion of **Matthew 28**, Jesus commanded us to, <sup>1</sup> *"Go and make disciples <sup>2</sup> of all the nations."* He in essence was giving us the authority to act as His agent in helping to spread the good news of the Gospel. We are to act in the manner He prescribed by teaching the newly minted disciples to observe all that He commanded us to do. And Jesus gave us prescribed acts which we are to follow, that being, <sup>1</sup> *"Baptizing them in the name of the Father <sup>2</sup> and the Son <sup>3</sup> and the Holy Spirit."* And He then promised that He would be right there with us until the completion of this specific task. And while the task seems simple enough on its surface, there is far more to the Words of Christ hidden here for those willing to dig down deep into Scripture.

[ B    Setting the Stage    1:30 thru 3:01 ]

So, if Christ is giving some level of authority to us, where did Jesus receive His authority from? Look now in **Matthew 28:18**. To set the stage, Jesus was crucified and died on Friday and was laid in the tomb. He remained in the tomb all day Saturday and was resurrected Sunday morning. Word spread fast that Jesus was no longer in the tomb. His body was gone! Speculation was rife that it had been stolen. Well, to quell any fears, Jesus met up with several groups on that day in person to prove that He was very much alive. And He had a message He wanted passed onto His disciples. By the way, in the course of these sermons, we will discuss why Jesus did not directly appear before them first. His message was that they were to proceed to Galilee, to a mountain which He had designated. So, the eleven remaining disciples proceeded to the place where Jesus told them to go. <sup>1</sup> The Bible says in **Matthew 28:17**, that <sup>1</sup> *"When they saw Him, <sup>2</sup> they*

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<sup>1</sup> **Matthew 28:16** *But the eleven disciples proceeded to Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had designated.*

worshipped Him,<sup>3</sup> but some were doubtful.”<sup>2</sup> So, just think, these men had just spent the past three and one-half years under the direct teaching of Jesus, and some were yet doubtful. Let’s discuss that for a moment.

[ C The Meaning of Worship 3:01 thru 4:25 ]

Using the original Greek words as spoken by Jesus from **Matthew 28:17** we see a clear picture emerge. The direct word-for-word translation contains two phrases and reads as follows: “And having seen Him they worshipped;” [semicolon] “some however doubted.” So, via the first phrase, we can envision that when the His disciples first saw him, the Bible says they worshipped. The Greek word we find used here for worshipped is *pros-sek-kigh-NEH-san*, and it means ‘to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with one’s lips or forehead.’ To put this into plain English, it tells us that upon seeing Jesus, the disciples fell down prostrate before Him, in clearly what is an expression of profound reverence. I must admit that this will be something which I will be inclined to do upon first laying eyes upon Him. Falling down upon one’s knees is a physical gesture used to show veneration or a high level of respect. Then, continuing on to bow down to the ground and putting one’s lips or forehead in the dirt conveys an even deeper sense of reverence.

[ D To Remain Unconvinced 4:25 thru 6:14 ]

Please pay attention now to the second phrase, “some however doubted.” The word we find for some is *hoi* and it is translated ‘who, which, what or that.’ This word appears 33 times in Scripture, and it is translated *who* all but three times. I am not sure why, but nearly every modern translation uses the word ‘some.’ The original Greek never uses the word ‘some.’ So, we shall use the word ‘who.’ The next word which we see is *however*. In the Greek, the word *deh* is present. It’s a conjunction and is used quite frequently in Scripture, appearing nearly 3,000 times. It can mean ‘but, and, now, moreover or yet.’ Words like that. This conjunction is added to phrases for the purpose of opposing a prior statement; in this case the disciples’ worship of Jesus. The last word in the phrase is *doubted*. In the Greek the word *ed-dis-TAD-san* appears, and it means ‘to waver, have

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<sup>2</sup> **Matthew 28:17** When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some were doubtful.

*misgivings or to hesitate.*’ The word **doubt** means *‘to call into question the truth of something.’* This particular word is used just this one time and here it reveals that each of the disciples, despite having lived with the LORD for three and a half years, still harbored an inclination to not believe or accept the truth of what they were seeing. By using the word *who* instead of *some*, we can determine that most were all still filled with doubt and as a group remained unconvinced that Jesus was the risen Christ.

[ **E** **Disciple Footrace to the Tomb** **6:14 thru 7:57** ]

We just read in the earlier statement that the disciples fell down prostrate and worshipped Jesus. The next phrase tells us that they still harbored serious doubt. There is a big lesson written right here in this verse. A person clearly can go through the motions of physically worshipping Jesus yet remain unpersuaded that He is the risen Christ. This explains how people can perform all manner of beneficial spiritual activity in the name of Jesus, yet themselves not be saved. There is a wide gulf of difference between what a man himself believes, versus the faith that Jesus gives to us. Open up your Bible now to **John 20**. The first 10 verses of this chapter gives us the details of the big footrace between Peter and John to the tomb of Jesus. Mary Magdalene had gone to the tomb early and observed the stone was already removed from the opening. She then ran and told Peter and John that the LORD’s body was missing. So, Peter and John began running towards the tomb to check it out. John got there first and looked into the tomb, He observed there were loose linen wrappings lying around but were minus the body of Jesus. John had not yet entered. Peter arrived and immediately went into the tomb. Peter noticed that the wrappings on Jesus’ head were also there, but lying off in a place by itself. It was at this point John entered the tomb.

[ **F** **Intellectual Belief Alone is Not Enough** **7:57 thru 9:30** ]

Look now at **verse 8**. It reads, <sup>1</sup> *“So the disciple who had first come to the tomb (that was John) <sup>2</sup> then also entered and <sup>3</sup> he saw <sup>4</sup> and believed.”* The Greek word seen here for **believed** is *ep-pis-TOY-sen* and finds its roots with the word *pis-TAY-os*. Recall from the intro sermon starting this series, that the word *pis-TAY-os* was translated as being the faith given to us by God as coming from Jesus, which upon delivery cements our

eternal salvation. The Greek word *ep-pis-TOY-sen* is a different form of faith. It means **'to have a level of human inspired belief or confidence.'** This particular word is used 14 times and in each case it's discussing the intellectual belief held by a person. For example, when God made His promises to Abraham, Abraham *intellectually* believed Him. This word is describing a level of trust or faith that is constrained by our mortal limitations. Our personal belief alone is never sufficient to achieve salvation. Even if you say you believe in Jesus with all your heart, by itself that's not enough. God has a path, He has a plan, and it always goes through His Son, Jesus. As you will shortly see, this faith must always come from God.

[ **G** All Authority in Heaven and Earth 9:30 thru 11:05 ]

Going back to **Matthew 28**, now **verse 18**. We see here, it is Jesus speaking, and sensing the disciples' doubt, the Bible records the first words the LORD said to them after His resurrection. <sup>1</sup> "All authority has been given to Me in Heaven <sup>2</sup> and on the earth."

The Greek word for **authority** is *ex-oo-ZEE-ah* and it translates to **'have power, right, force, and jurisdiction.'** The word for **all** is *PAS-ah* and means **'all, the whole of, in its entirety.'** Jesus was given all power, all rights, all force and total jurisdiction over the whole of humanity. The word **jurisdiction** is a legal term and means **'the power, right or authority to interpret and apply the law.'** In this case, God's law. So with just one simple statement, Jesus told His people that He has the total authority to govern and legislate over all of Heaven and earth. I want you to understand something. Jesus didn't run up and hug His compatriots and friends, dancing around and reveling in His resurrection and victory over death. No, He sure didn't. He went straight to business in what was an unemotional reunion. I say this this because Jesus knew that the serious business of saving souls was almost upon them.

[ **H** Baptism is a Process 11:05 thru 12:29 ]

The very next two verses after His words are the ones we've been discussing. This is where Jesus states the Great Commission. He gave them their assignment which they would follow for the rest of their lives. Jesus was letting them know that He was now the One in charge over humanity's salvation. Let's now return to the part where Jesus commands , <sup>1</sup> "Baptizing them in the name of the Father <sup>2</sup> and the Son <sup>3</sup> and the Holy

*Spirit.*” I am well aware that most churches participate in the ritual of baptism. But, just like with all the other verses, there is a much deeper meaning to Christ’s words. The Greek word we find here for **baptizing** is **bap-TEED-zone-tes** and means **‘to submerge or to sink.’** This word is only used just this one time and so its meaning is special. In the Jewish culture, ritual washing and purification were common practices performed with water. Now, we know that the act of baptism doesn’t actually wash away a person’s sin. But it’s an important symbolic picture of what the sacrifice of Christ achieved for each of us. So, if the act of baptism doesn’t save us—then what is its true purpose?

[ **I** **It was Ceremonial Dipping** **12:29 thru 13:36** ]

To figure that out, we need to look at the other places where derivatives of the Greek word for baptism is used. When Jesus was **baptized** in the Jordan river by John the Baptist, the Greek word used was **bap-TIS-then-nigh.**<sup>3</sup> This is a commonly used word in Scripture. And predicably it means, **‘to immerse, but specifically of ceremonial dipping.’** Jesus had no need for the absolution of sin. But his baptism did serve a purpose. It immediately preceded the arrival of the Holy Spirit upon Him, descending as a dove from Heaven, marking the beginning of His earthly ministry. So, to understand the difference between the assorted words used in the Bible for baptism, we must go back to the Great Commission. Jesus said to baptize them *“in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”* No such words were uttered when John was ceremonially washing people in the Jordan. So, what does it really mean?

[ **J** **It’s All in the Name of God** **13:36 thru 14:55** ]

The real key to determining what Jesus is saying to us can be found in the word used in the verse for **name**. It is **ON-nom-ah** and means **‘a person’s character, fame or reputation.’** In ancient Greek a name was far more than just a label. It was their identity, used to encapsulate the essence and total character of a person. A person’s name was defined to include all there was and is to know about them. Every thought or feeling which is aroused within the mind by the mention or remembrance of them is reflected in their name. So, Jesus is telling us that our discipleship training is a form of immersion learning.

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<sup>3</sup> **Matthew 3:13** *Then comes Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him.*

The fledgling disciple is to be submerged in learning all that can be known about God the Father, Jesus the Son and His Holy Spirit. Jesus said, we are to do it by <sup>1</sup> “teaching them to observe all things, <sup>2</sup> whatever I commanded you.” The mere act of baptism is simply a picture of how a disciple is to be trained. And I can plainly tell you that is not happening in very many houses of worship today.

[ **K** Immersion Learning is the Key 14:55 thru 16:15 ]

The practice of **immersion learning** can be defined as **‘instruction based on extensive exposure to surroundings or conditions that are native and pertinent to the object of study.’** Jesus defined the object of study with His words: the three members of the holy trinity. He also defined the instructor: Himself. And Jesus told us how we are to garner the knowledge: via God’s Holy Spirit. We are to learn all we can know about God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is the key to forming an intimate and personal relationship with Jesus. And friends, there are very few ways in which to accomplish this. I can guarantee that sitting in most church services, Sunday school classes and even small group Bible studies, do not accomplish this. First of all, God’s instruction is designed to be one-on-one with Jesus, with no other distractions present. No cell phones, tik-Tok, televisions, not even other people. We are to focus only on the word of God. Now, I recommend the use of a dictionary because words have meaning, which we frequently get wrong.

[ **Z** A Few Final Thoughts 16:15 thru 17:00 ]

I hope that you are beginning to see the bigger picture here listening to these audio sermons. I pray that you are starting to see how all of Scripture is indelibly connected and fully supports itself. God is absolutely magnificent! Again, we are just beginning to crack open the Word of God. There is so much to learn. My mission is to bring you to the point where you can immerse yourself in God’s Word. It is the only way which leads to salvation. We will continue the discussion of this topic in the next sermon. **So, until next time my beloved, this has been Pastor Jefferson, speaking in God’s Holy name and for His glory alone. Amen.**