

"ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL"
MATTHEW 28:16-20
HOLY TRINITY SUNDAY
MESSIAH, BOERNE
JUNE 4, 2023

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT. AMEN.

TEXT: MT 28:16-20

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST:

MANY OF US ARE FAMILIAR WITH *THE THREE MUSKETEERS*—IF
NOT FROM THE BOOK, THEN AT LEAST FROM TELEVISION OR THE
MOVIES. THE THREE MUSKETEERS—ATHOS, PORTHOS, AND ARAMIS—
WERE SOLDIERS, PART OF THE ELITE ROYAL GUARD OF THE KING
AND QUEEN OF FRANCE. ALONG WITH THEIR FRIEND, D'ARTAGNAN,
THEY FOUGHT AGAINST EVIL AND CORRUPTION IN THE 17TH CENTURY.
IN THEIR QUEST FOR JUSTICE, THEY OFTEN RALLIED AROUND THE
MOTTO, "ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL."

THIS RALLYING CRY IS A FITTING SUMMARY OF OUR LORD'S
DIVINE MISSION AND MISSION MANDATE FROM OUR GOSPEL LESSON
TODAY. JESUS SAID TO HIS DISCIPLES, "ALL AUTHORITY IN
HEAVEN AND ON EARTH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME. GO THEREFORE AND
MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME
OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,
TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE EVERYTHING I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.
AND BEHOLD, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE"

(VV 18-20). CHRIST JESUS RECEIVED ALL AUTHORITY FROM THE FATHER, AND BY HIS SUFFERING, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION HE BECAME THE ONE SOURCE OF ETERNAL SALVATION FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM (HEB 5:9). WITH THAT SAME DIVINE AUTHORITY CHRIST SENDS FORTH HIS ONE BODY, THE CHURCH—INCLUDING YOU AND ME—WITH THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS. YOU SEE, ACCORDING TO JESUS MESSIAH, IT'S "ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL."

FIRST, JESUS SAYS, "ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND OF EARTH HAS BEEN GIVE TO ME" (V 18). JESUS IS THE ONE LORD AND SAVIOR OF ALL PEOPLE, AND THE TRIUNE GOD HAS GIVEN HIM ALL AUTHORITY AS THE LORD OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION. FOR MOST OF JESUS' LIFE, HOWEVER, THIS AUTHORITY WAS HIDDEN. PEOPLE DID NOT SEE OR RECOGNIZE IT. FOR EXAMPLE, ALTHOUGH JESUS WAS TRUE GOD, AS A TRUE HUMAN BABY, HE DIDN'T WRAP HIMSELF IN SWADDLING CLOTHES. MARY, HIS MOTHER, DID. EVEN LESS DID HE APPEAR TO HAVE AUTHORITY OVER ALL THINGS WHEN JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA AND NICODEMUS LOWERED HIS LIFELESS BODY FROM THE CROSS AND WRAPPED HIM IN BURIAL CLOTHS. THIS WAS BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH JESUS HAD THE AUTHORITY, HE DIDN'T ALWAYS USE IT DURING HIS EARTHLY LIFE. BUT AT HIS ASCENSION, JESUS CLEARLY STATES THAT ALL AUTHORITY IS HIS, AND HE USES IT.

PERHAPS THIS IS THE REASON WHY OUR GOSPEL LESSON SAYS THAT SOME OF THE DISCIPLES DOUBTED. THE DISCIPLES DID NO DOUBT THAT JESUS HAD RISEN FROM THE DEAD OR THAT HE WAS GOING TO MEET THEM ON THE MOUNTAIN. BUT PERHAPS SOME DOUBTED BECAUSE THEY HAD NEVER SEEN JESUS APPEAR THE WAY HE DID JUST PRIOR TO HIS ASCENSION. REMEMBER: ONLY PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN HAD SEEN HIM GLORIFIED ON THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION. WHATEVER THE REASON FOR THEIR DOUBT, HOWEVER, FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE DISCIPLES, "WHEN THEY SAW [JESUS], THEY WORSHIPED HIM" AS TRUE GOD, AND ONCE JESUS CAME AND SPOKE TO THEM, THE DOUBTS DISAPPEARED.

SECOND, BY HIS ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS, JESUS BECAME THE ONE SOURCE OF ETERNAL SALVATION FOR ALL WHO BELIEVE IN HIM (HEB 5:9). NOW, THE WORLD AT THE TIME OF JESUS WAS FILLED WITH MANY NATIONS OR PEOPLE GROUPS WHO WORSHIPED GODS OF VARIOUS TYPES. PEOPLE GENERALLY WORSHIPED THE GODS OF THEIR ANCESTORS IN ORDER TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL LIFE, AND THIS OFTEN INCLUDED MAKING OFFERINGS NOT ONLY TO THE GODS BUT ALSO TO KEEP THE SPIRITS OF THEIR ANCESTORS HAPPY. THERE WERE NATIONAL GODS, TERRITORIAL GODS, FAMILY GODS, AND PERSONAL GODS. INTO SUCH A POLYTHEISTIC WORLD, GOD PLACED ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS, THE ISRAELITES, WHO WORSHIPED THE ONE TRUE GOD, THE LORD

GOD ALMIGHTY, AND WHO LOOKED FORWARD TO "THE COMING ONE," THE MESSIAH, WHO WOULD RULE OVER THEM AND DELIVER THEM FROM ALL THEIR ENEMIES.

JESUS CHRIST WAS A DESCENDANT OF ABRAHAM. HE BELIEVED IN THE LORD, THE ONE TRUE GOD OF HIS FATHER ABRAHAM, AND IN THE PROMISE OF SALVATION FOR ALL PEOPLE GROUPS THROUGH THE DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM, THE JEWS (GEN 12:1-3). HE TRUSTED IN THE LORD AND LIVED ACCORDING TO HIS BELIEFS, WORSHIPPING THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY. IN OTHER WORDS, HE WORSHIPED AND OBEYED HIS HEAVENLY FATHER, BUT THE JEWISH RELIGIOUS LEADERS ARRESTED HIM AND PUT HIM TO DEATH AS A FALSE TEACHER. THEY FALSELY ACCUSED HIM OF BLASPHEMY AND OF BEING A SABBATH BREAKER, BUT JESUS SIMPLY SPOKE THE TRUTH AND DID THE WORK HIS HEAVENLY FATHER HAD GIVEN HIM TO DO. THEREFORE, JESUS CHRIST SERVED AS THE PERFECT SACRIFICE FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD, THAT IS, FOR ALL PEOPLE GROUPS, AND HE "BECAME *THE* SOURCE OF ETERNAL SALVATION FOR ALL WHO OBEY HIM" (HEB 5:9).

THIRDLY, CHRIST HAS GIVEN HIS *ONE* BODY—THE ONE, HOLY, CHRISTIAN, AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH, THAT IS, ALL BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST—THIS COMMAND: MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS. PERHAPS WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD *NATIONS*, YOU THINK ABOUT PEOPLE IN FAR OFF, EXOTIC PLACES, BUT JESUS IS ACTUALLY

TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THE GROUP OF PEOPLE AMONG WHOM YOU LIVE AND WITH WHOM YOU HAVE DAILY CONTACT. CHRIST EVEN TELLS YOU THE MEANS TO USE IN MAKING DISCIPLES: HOLY BAPTISM AND HIS HOLY WORD. SINCE THAT'S THE CASE, HOW MANY OF YOU PARENTS CAN SAY THAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE JESUS' DISCIPLES BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED? HOW MANY YOUNG PEOPLE CAN SAY THAT OTHER PEOPLE IN THEIR PEER GROUP ARE JESUS' DISCIPLES BECAUSE THEY HAVE TOLD THEM ABOUT JESUS? HOW DO WE RESPOND AS A CONGREGATION TO THE MANDATE CHRIST HAS GIVEN US IN OUR COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY IN OUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD? GOD HAS PLACED MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH ON THE BROW OF THIS HILL NOT TO BE HIDDEN BUT TO SHINE AS A LIGHT—TO BEAR WITNESS TO JESUS MESSIAH, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

NOW, WE HAVE ALL FAILED AT TIMES IN FULFILLING THE MISSION OUR LORD HAS GIVEN US, AND IF IT WERE NOT BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD SHOWN US IN THE ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS, WE WOULD ALL HAVE REASON TO DISPAIR. BUT JESUS PROMISES TO FORGIVE US ALL OUR SINS BY HIS SHED BLOOD AND, IN SPITE OF OUR SINS, TO BE WITH US. HE PROMISES, "SURELY I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS, TO THE END OF THE AGE" (V 20). JESUS CHRIST IS PRESENT WITH US TODAY AND FORGIVES US THROUGH HIS WORD AND THE SACRAMENTS OF

BAPTISM AND HOLY COMMUNION. BY CONTINUING TO MEET TOGETHER TO HEAR GOD'S WORD AND TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SACRAMENTS, JESUS ASSURES US THAT HE IS WITH US IN THE FULNESS OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

DEAR FRIENDS, THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS A MOTTO: "AN ARMY OF ONE." THIS MOTTO EMPHASIZES UNITY AMONG THE SOLDIERS. ALTHOUGH THE ARMY IS MADE UP OF MANY INDIVIDUAL SOLDIERS, THEY ARE ONE ARMY, ONE CORPS, ONE BODY. THEY ARE "ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL." MAY WE ALSO HAVE SUCH UNITY OF MIND AND PURPOSE HERE AT MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH, SO THAT WE MAY FULFILL OUR LORD'S ONE MISSION OF MAKING DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS. AMEN.