

June 11, 2017

Matthew 28:16-20

"Best Job Ever!"

Pastor Wayne Puls, Senior Pastor at Hope Lutheran Church

Jesus is **leaving his disciples**. **The Son of God's** time on earth is over. He has done the job he came to do -- taking on our human flesh, dying in our place, winning our salvation. His mission was to save human sinners; and Jesus nailed that mission. His job is finished.

But, before he ascends back to his heavenly home, to reign there with the Father and the Spirit, as one Triune, inseparable, undivided God, Jesus gives his followers *their* job -- their marching orders, their job description. Jesus tells them what he expects them to be doing after **he departs**. **"I'm out of here. Now here's your job," he says. "Peter, James, Matthew, and the rest of you, this is now your job."**

First, though, Jesus makes a shocking claim. **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me,"** he announces. In other words, **"Boys, I'm not just your teacher, or your friend. I'm not just some guy who dabbles in miracles and healings. I am your God,"** Jesus is claiming. **"I am the one and only God,"** he boldly posts on his Facebook and Instagram pages. **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."** Implying, **"You guys either believe that about me, or you don't."**

"And, if you do," Jesus says to his followers, **"Here is your job. Go and make disciples of all nations. Make disciples."**

Disciples are followers, true believers, people who are connected to Jesus by faith. Disciples are men, women, girls, and boys who learn and believe that Jesus is truly God, truly our Savior, truly the Way, the Truth, and the Life. **“Go and make disciples.”**

This is the job of the church. Back then and today. The job of Peter, James, and Matthew; and the job of you and me. The job Jesus gives us to do.

And, I've got to tell you, it is the best job ever. There is nothing like it. There is nothing better!

- Telling the story of Jesus and his love to little children?
- **Sharing the good news of God's grace with desperate sinners?**
- Welcoming the lost and the lonely into the family of God?
- Showing love and compassion to the needy, as Jesus showed love and compassion to us?
- **Opening the power of God's Word with someone who's never experienced it?**
- Helping a Christian youth learn what it means to stand up for his faith?
- **Facing life's storms** – and even facing death – with the sure certainty that nothing can ever separate us from the love of God, thanks to Jesus Christ?
- **Sharing the journey with someone who's just starting to gain that certainty?**

“Go and make disciples,” Jesus directs his church. We have the best job ever!

Once in a while we forget what our job really is. Occasionally we lose sight of our mission a little bit. **Every so often our agendas supersede Christ's**, our to-do

lists bump his aside, our focus shifts from his plan to ours.

Today we push all of that nonsense aside. Today we hit **“reset” on all of that misdirection, and we get back to the default setting of the church.** Today we focus again on our job.

This is why we're here. This is why Hope Lutheran Church was founded. This remains our primary purpose, our number one job. “Go and make disciples.”

We call it the **“Great Commission.” And it is a great job, a glorious task, a fabulously worthwhile endeavor. “Go make disciples.”**

It is the best job ever. Not the easiest job, or the most well-paying job. Not always the most fun, or the most glamorous job. But to pool our resources to help make disciples for Jesus? To allow Christ to use us as his instruments to bring others to salvation? To support the **church's work of reaching more people for Christ in our community? What's more important? What's more worthwhile of your time and effort?**

I remember smiling broadly the first time I worshipped here at Hope, almost five years ago. We ended the **worship hour with our familiar word of dismissal. “The worship is ended. The service now begins.” And I never get tired of saying that, because that is our job. Our God-given job. We go forth from here, and we serve, we love, we witness, and we make disciples.**

I count it an awesome privilege every day to be part of this ministry here at Hope. Because we are **doing Christ's**

work. We are making disciples. We are reaching people for Christ. We are telling the story of Jesus. We are proclaiming and living the word and love of Christ here in our community.

And I hope you feel that same joy when you volunteer here. I hope you sense the Spirit working through you, and the presence of Christ himself in our midst when you serve, when you donate your time, when you participate in the ministry teams and the outreach initiatives of this church.

You are part of something big here, something truly important that God is doing here in this church. Whether you are singing in the choir, or ushering, or teaching Sunday School, or making a cheerful donation in the offering plate, or donating Rice Krispy Treats for the lucky VBS kids, you are helping this church do the job Jesus gave us.

His job is over. Ours goes on. Go **make disciples. It's the best job ever.** Amen.