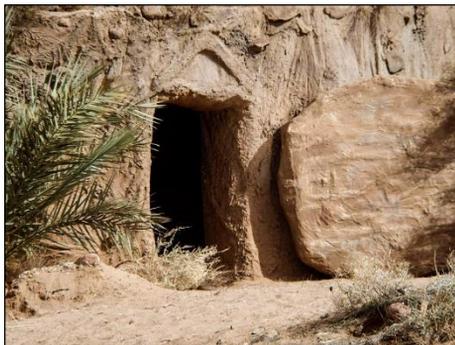


**“He is not here but is arisen!”** With these words the women who had come to the tomb of Jesus at dawn on the first day of the week were greeted by two angels who stood before them. In keeping with the law of Moses they had rested on the Sabbath and had returned to complete the burial rites of the Saviour which they had begun on the day of His death. Now, they found the



stone rolled away and the tomb empty.

#### **The Appearance of Jesus**

The women went to tell the apostles what they had learned. Immediately Peter and John ran to the sepulchre to confirm their report. A little later Mary Magdalene stood weeping near the tomb. Suddenly Jesus appeared to her, but she did not

recognise Him until He called her by name. He told her to go to His brethren to tell them that He would ascend unto the Father. This she quickly did.

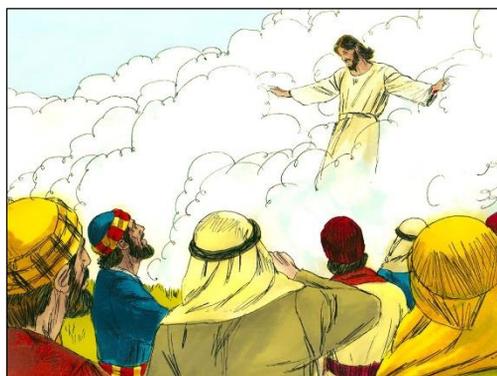
About this time Jesus appeared to the other women, possibly including Mary Magdalene. The stories of His appearances raised the hopes of the apostles who had been as lost as sheep without a shepherd after the crucifixion. Other reports came to their ears. Christ had shown Himself to two disciples walking in the countryside on the road to Emmaus and had been seen by Cephas (Peter).

Even so they must have been startled when later that day Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst as they were gathered in a closed room. But the lacerations of His body soon convinced them that the One who stood before them was their Master in the flesh. He showed them that He was not in the form of a spirit by eating a broiled fish in their presence. (Luke 24:43) The apostles no longer doubted the resurrection of Jesus, except for Thomas who was absent.

When told of these events, he declared, “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.” (John 20:25) Just a week later Jesus again appeared to the disciples. This time Thomas was

present. Christ addressed Himself to Thomas. "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27) Thomas did believe as he cried out, "My Lord and my God." The fact that the apostles, and especially Thomas, were turned from scepticism to belief is one of the strongest proofs of the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Later Christ appeared to seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee and again to the eleven on a mountain. We are told that He presented Himself to 500 at one time and also to James. (1 Cor. 15:6, 7) Finally, He appeared to all the apostles at His ascension into heaven, forty days after the resurrection. As Jesus spoke with them, giving them His final words of exhortation, He ascended into the clouds of heaven and was seen by them no more.



### **The Significance of the Empty Tomb**

The importance of the resurrection of Jesus is summed up by Paul. "And if

Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God ... And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." (1 Cor. 15:14, 15, 17) Jesus died to atone for our sins. But we could not know that He did so unless we also knew that He arose from the grave, for one who did not have the power to conquer death would not have power to forgive sins. Only in the light of the empty tomb does the cross have significance.

Furthermore, the resurrection of Jesus demonstrates the possibility of our resurrection. If He could conquer death for Himself, He can overcome it for His disciples. The Christian's hope of eternal life is inseparably connected with the resurrection of Jesus.

**The resurrection of Christ also shows that Jesus brought an end to the old covenant and its law when He died on the cross.**

**The Mosaic Age in which Israel had been living for 1500 years ended at Calvary.**

**There Jesus blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us ... and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Col. 2:14) From that time forth all men, Jews and Gentiles, have lived in the Christian Age and are subject to the laws of Christ as recorded in the New Testament.**

## The Great Commission

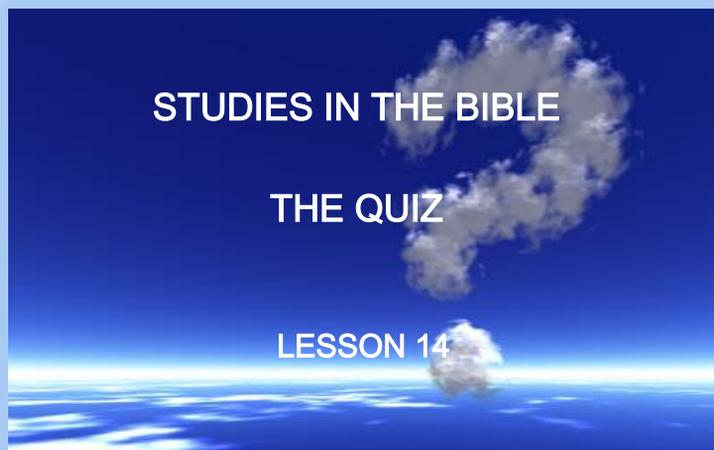
Before His ascension Jesus gave His disciples a commission. It is recorded in different forms in the first three gospels. Although He had previously given them a limited commission to go only to the Jews, His new commission was world-wide in its scope.

Let us read the three accounts of the Great Commission. **“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you away, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”** (Matt. 28:19, 20). **“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”** (Mark 16:15, 16) **“Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”** (Luke 24:46, 47) The chart on the last page shows the sum of the three accounts of the Great Commission. Christianity is aggressive. Jesus insists that His disciples take the gospel to others. Therefore He instructed the apostles to **go**. They were to **teach** or

**preach** the **gospel**, which as we shall later learn includes the good news of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. They proclaimed Christ, not politics, science or economics. Their message was to be taken to **all nations**. Unlike the law of Moses, the gospel story is intended for those of every race or nationality who will accept Jesus as their Saviour. Christians cannot allow racial prejudice to confine their efforts to proclaim Christ.

The conditions of salvation as given in the commission are simple. A sinner must **believe** in Christ, **repent** and then be **baptised**. Baptism is to be into the **name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost** (or Holy Spirit) rather than into the Name of Jesus only. The blessings of forgiveness of sins and salvation come as a result of one's baptism rather than preceding it. Jesus states, **“He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.”** (Mark 16:16)

The Great Commission concluded by instructing the apostles to teach the converts all of those things which Christ has commanded them. It is not enough to show the lost how to come to Christ. They must also be taught how to live for Him that they may receive the eternal reward at the end of the way.



## *Seek and ye shall find*

Fill in the blanks:

1. Jesus was buried in the tomb of \_\_\_\_\_ of Arimathaea.
2. When the women came to the grave on the first day of the week, they saw an \_\_\_\_\_ sitting on the stone before the grave.
3. When they told the apostles this, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ ran to see if the tomb was empty.
4. Jesus first appeared to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Later He appeared to two disciples on the way to \_\_\_\_\_.
6. When he first appeared to the apostles, \_\_\_\_\_ was absent.
7. When Jesus appeared to them He ate a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Once he appeared to \_\_\_\_\_ (number) disciples at the Sea of Galilee.
9. He ascended into heaven \_\_\_\_\_ days after He arose from the grave.

Read John 20 and answer by yes or no:

1. Did Mary Magdalene come late on the first day of the week to the sepulchre? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did Peter go into the sepulchre and see the linen clothes? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did Jesus say to Mary, "Woman, why weepest thou?" \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did she know immediately that it was Jesus who spoke to her? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Did Mary tell the disciples that she had seen the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did Jesus appear the same day to the disciples saying "Peace be unto you"? \_\_\_\_\_
7. When Thomas saw Jesus did he say, "You are an impostor?" \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT EVENT –

1. Makes the death of Christ significant? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ended the Mosaic Age? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Proves the possibility of our resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_

In the blanks after each phrase from the Great Commission, write the name of the book in which the phrase is found:

1. "Preach the Gospel to every creature." \_\_\_\_\_
2. "Beginning at Jerusalem." \_\_\_\_\_
3. "I am with you always." \_\_\_\_\_
4. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." \_\_\_\_\_
5. "Teach all nations." \_\_\_\_\_
6. "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." \_\_\_\_\_
7. "Baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." \_\_\_\_\_
8. "Go ye into all the world." \_\_\_\_\_
9. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." \_\_\_\_\_
10. "He that believeth not shall be damned." \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 14 – ANSWERS

### *Seek and ye shall find*

Fill in the blanks:

1. Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea.
2. When the women came to the grave on the first day of the week, they saw an angel sitting on the stone before the grave.
3. When they told the apostles this, Peter and John ran to see if the tomb was empty.
4. Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene.
5. Later He appeared to two disciples on the way to Emmaus.
6. When he first appeared to the apostles, Thomas was absent.
7. When Jesus appeared to them He ate a piece of broiled fish.
8. Once he appeared to seven disciples at the Sea of Galilee.
9. He ascended into heaven forty days after He arose from the grave.

Read John 20 and answer by yes or no:

1. Did Mary Magdalene come late on the first day of the week to the sepulchre? No
2. Did Peter go into the sepulchre and see the linen clothes? Yes
3. Did Jesus say to Mary, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Yes
4. Did she know immediately that it was Jesus who spoke to her? No
5. Did Mary tell the disciples that she had seen the Lord? Yes
6. Did Jesus appear the same day to the disciples saying "Peace be unto you"? Yes
7. When Thomas saw Jesus did he say, "You are an impostor?" No

WHAT EVENT –

1. Makes the death of Christ significant? The Resurrection
2. Ended the Mosaic Age? The Resurrection
3. Proves the possibility of our resurrection? The Resurrection

In the blanks after each phrase from the Great Commission, write the name of the book in which the phrase is found:

1. "Preach the Gospel to every creature." Mark
2. "Beginning at Jerusalem." Luke
3. "I am with you always." Matthew
4. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." Mark
5. "Teach all nations." Matthew
6. "That repentance and remission of sins should be  
preached in his name." Luke
7. "Baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Ghost." Matthew
8. "Go ye into all the world." Mark
9. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have  
commanded you." Matthew
10. "He that believeth not shall be damned." Mark

## Chart of the Great Commission

Matthew	Go	Teach		All Nations			Baptise	Name of Father, Son, Holy Ghost		Teach
Mark	Go	Preach	Gospel	Every Creature	Believe		Baptise		Saved	
Luke		Preach		All Nations		Repent			Remission of sins	
Sum	Go	Teach, Preach	Gospel	All Nations	Believe	Repent	Baptise	Name of Father, Son, Holy Ghost	Saved, Remission of sins	Teach