

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for May 1, 2011

**“Why Should Christians Expect to Make a
Difference in the World?”
John 20:19-23**

After Christ’s disciples became convinced that He had risen in John 20:19-20, what did Christ tell His disciples in John 20:21-23 which should have alerted them that they, in respect to this world, were about to become powerful agents of change?

The first thing that Jesus told His disciples that should have alerted them that they were about to become powerful agents of change was that He was sending them into the world (John 20:21).

When Jesus told His disciples “as the Father has sent Me, I also send you,” He meant that just as the Father sent Him into the world He was also sending them into the world.

The main verb and central command in Matthew 28:18-20 is “make disciples” (MATHETUEO).

A disciple is made when an individual, in responding positively to the gospel, exercises faith in Christ thus transferring their trust from themselves and their good works to Jesus Christ alone for their salvation.

But even though sharing the gospel is the one necessary required action in making a disciple, Christ highlighted three other complementary actions in Matthew 28:19-20 that support the work of disciple making.

The second thing that Jesus told His disciples which should have alerted them that they were about to become powerful agents of change was when He breathed on them and said to them “receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).

When Christ breathed on the disciples and said “receive the Holy Spirit” He was clearly connecting the success of their mission with their reception of the Holy Spirit.

When Christ breathed on the disciples and said “receive the Spirit,” He was speaking prophetically of an event that would soon occur, but that would not take place until after His ascension on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).

The third thing that Jesus told His disciples that should have alerted them that they were about to become powerful agents of change was when He spoke to them about “forgiving” and “retaining” sins (John 20:23).

When Jesus spoke to His disciples about forgiving and retaining sins in John 20:23, He was speaking about their authority to declare a person saved or unsaved based on whether they received the gospel or rejected the gospel.

May we, by the grace of God, see clearly the great impact that we can have on this world if we, in the power of the Spirit, go into the world with the gospel of Christ.