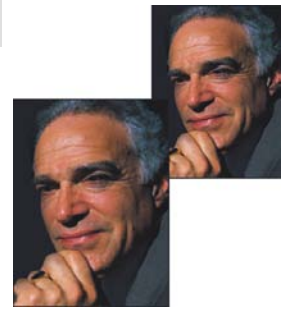


Study Six

What Final Task Did Jesus Give His Disciples



Please write your name above and fill in the Bible references in the spaces provided.

They Must Call On All To Repent

Jesus appeared alive to His disciples on many occasions and explained to them (again) that it was essential for Him to die and be raised from the dead.¹ He also told them to proclaim forgiveness, through His death, to the *whole world*² beginning at Jerusalem. This wonderful offer of salvation was conditional on turning from sin and believing on Christ.



The New Testament tells us that Jesus was finally received back to Heaven in a cloud³ and enthroned at God's right hand.⁴

"Go into all the world!"

THEY MUST INVITE ALL TO REPENT

Jesus commanded His disciples to tell people everywhere to turn from their sinful ways.⁵ This is called repentance. The first person to proclaim repentance after Jesus came alive was Peter, one of the leading disciples.

He proclaimed forgiveness (by faith in Christ) to those in Jerusalem who had killed Jesus – but they must first *repent* of their sin. **Look up Acts 2:38**

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If the worst can be saved, then I can.

THE TRUE NATURE OF REPENTANCE

True repentance begins with a deep awareness of personal failure. See how conscious they were of their sin when Peter preached to them.

Look up Acts 2:37

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They were cut to the heart

¹ Luke 24:25-27, 44-46

² God's Spirit would give them courage for this great task. See Acts 2:1-4.

³ Acts 1:9-11.

⁴ Acts 5:31

⁵ Luke 24:46-47

Living differently

But true repentance is more than regretting our sin; it is confessing⁶ and forsaking it. Repentance always involves a change of life.⁷

Look up Acts 26:20

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Once sin has been confessed and forsaken, there is only one remaining condition for salvation. It is faith in Christ (next).



They obeyed His command

They Must Call On All To Believe

Jesus commanded His disciples to proclaim Him to a world that had never seen Him. And although they had never seen Jesus, they must believe the witness of those who had.⁸

They must not only believe *about* Jesus, they must also believe *on* Jesus by trusting His saving death to put them right with God. Faith in Christ is the second condition for salvation.

THEY MUST INVITE ALL TO BELIEVE

John the disciple wrote “The Gospel of John” so that his readers might *believe*. **Look up John 20:31**

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Spreading the Good News

Paul was a church leader who was wrongly imprisoned. He preached the Gospel to his jailer. He told him to believe *on* Christ for salvation.

Look up Acts 16:31

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A drowning man cannot save himself

THE TRUE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH

A person who has Saving Faith trusts Christ’s death *alone* to put him right with God.⁹ A drowning man will often struggle to save himself, and even resist or hinder the efforts of a rescuer. Only when he stops struggling can the rescuer save him. Those who trust their goodness to put them right with God are unlikely to trust the cross to save them.

⁶ Luke 15:21.

⁷ Consider Luke 3:7-8.

⁸ John 20:29.

⁹ It is not just *any* faith that will save sinners. Even demons believe (James 2:19).

Forgiveness is by faith alone, not good deeds,¹⁰ lest any person should boast.

Look up Ephesians 2:8-9

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No chance
of boasting

Real faith will lead to *action*. If we really believe a building is on fire we will quickly leave it. And if we sincerely believe that God hates sin we will do our best to forsake it. Faith without works is dead. Real faith will be seen by the way we live. Read James 2:17-18.

Write out James 2:18

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I *must* act on
what I know.

Faith is not an idea in the mind, or a written statement of doctrine. It is a strong sense of certainty¹¹ that is unashamed to own Christ before others.¹²

They Must Baptise New Disciples

Before Jesus left His disciples to return to Heaven, He told them to baptise those who would believe on Him as a result of their preaching the Gospel. This would become the practice of the church. But unlike repentance and faith, baptism was *not* a condition for salvation.

BAPTISM IS A TEST OF OBEDIENCE

When Peter preached Christ, he told those who believed to confess their faith in baptism (see Acts 2:38). He did this because Jesus had commanded believers to be baptised. True believers will want to obey their loving Saviour and be baptised. **Look up Matthew 28:19**

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A modern day
baptism

BAPTISM SYMBOLISED THE WASHING AWAY OF SIN¹³

Those baptised by Peter and Paul had *already* become Christians. They did not become Christians by being baptised. Baptism symbolised what Christ had *already* done for them – their sins had been washed away.

No ceremony
can wash
sin away

¹⁰ Salvation is a gift, it cannot be earned by the things we do (Romans 6:23).
¹¹ Hebrews 11:1.
¹² Romans 10:9-10.
¹³ See the course “Starting Out As A Christian” for a fuller appreciation of Baptism.

Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. **Write out 1 Corinthians 6:11.**

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Baptism cannot wash away sin – only Christ’s blood can. See the footnotes.¹⁴



Taking our opportunity!

They Must Proclaim Him As World Judge

One of the last instructions Jesus gave is often overlooked. The disciples were told to tell the world that Jesus would be its future Judge. Yes, the very person who had come to save the world would return to judge it! This is an awesome thought, and should motivate us to get right with God now, while we have the opportunity.

JESUS THE WORLD'S JUDGE

Much of Jesus’ teaching was about His future role as Judge. So it is not surprising that Jesus should give this command. **Look up Acts 10:42**

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JESUS THE FAIR JUDGE

Jesus will justly condemn those who have not repented, for He is too righteous to judge unfairly. **Look up Acts 17:31**

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He will be fair

and FINALLY

The New Testament is a record of the amazing lengths to which God has gone to reconcile sinners to Himself. However, the writers warn us against ignoring what God has done.¹⁵ Now is the time to act –“now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”¹⁶

It is wrong and offensive to put off our response to another time. What excuse can we make to Almighty God for keeping Him waiting? If we have not turned from sin, and trusted Christ as Saviour, we should do so *now*. We must not hesitate. Jesus said that if we are not *for* Him, we are *against* Him.¹⁷

Remember: faith leads to action!

¹⁴ Revelation 1:5. Also Acts 22:16, which portrays baptism’s *symbolic* meaning.

¹⁵ Hebrews 2:3.

¹⁶ 2Corinthians 6:2

¹⁷ Matthew 12:30.