

HOW LONG IS AN 'AGE'?

Thoughts About Christ's Promise to 'Be With Us Always'

Last words are important. They're meaningful.

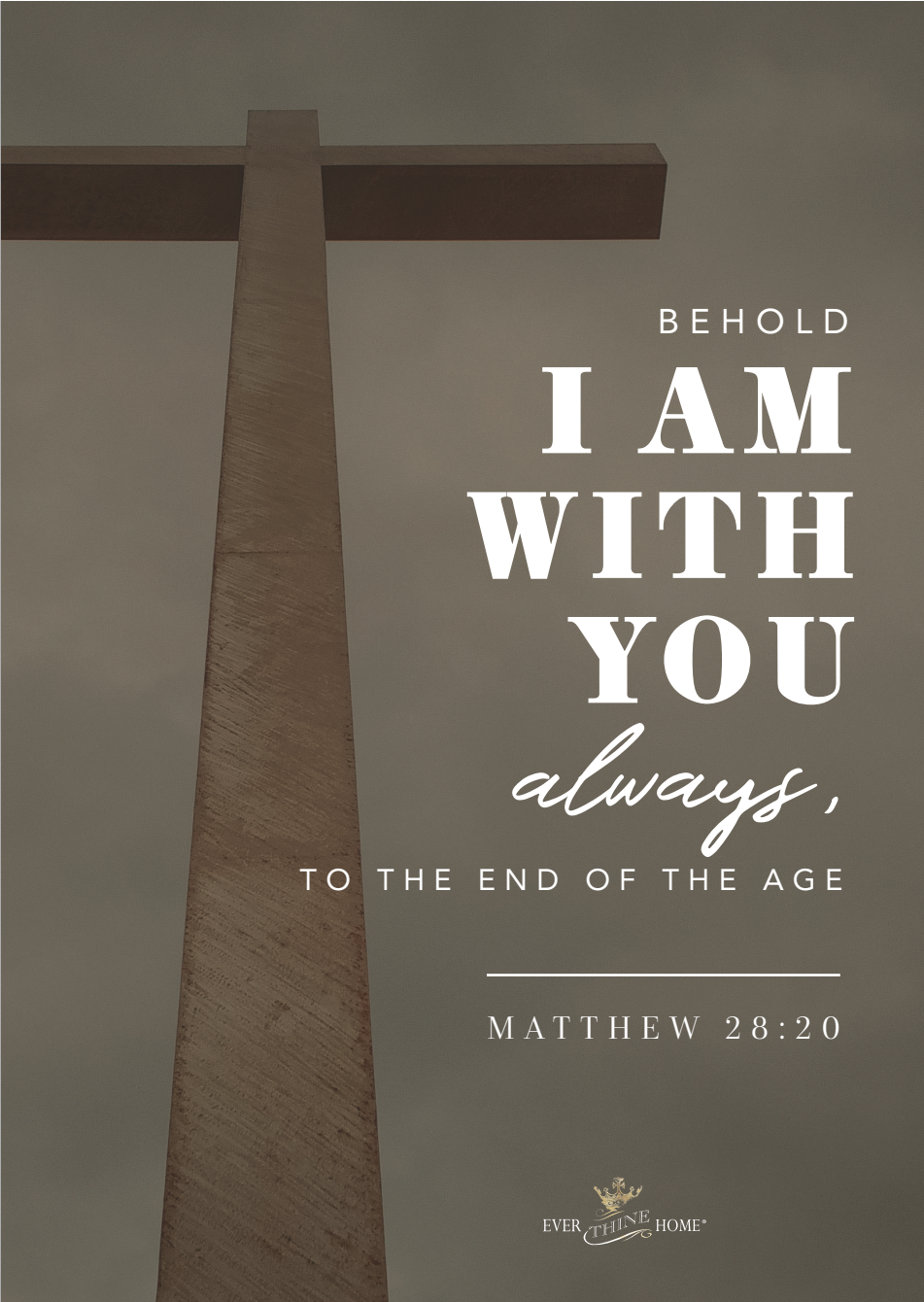
Spoken before death or by a soldier leaving for deployment, parting words are memorable. Often those words keep the left-behind ones getting up each morning, counting the days **as they wait for the anticipated reunion.**

So the last words Jesus, before He ascended to heaven, are some of the most influential words ever uttered ... they were remembered by His disciples both in the first century and by we His disciples in the 21st century.

Jesus charged His followers to make disciples in all nations. Then, with risen-from-the-dead authority, Jesus said, "... **behold I am with you always, to the end of the age**" (Matthew 28:20). Those who heard this promise believed it. Jesus had never lied.

Like all of us, I think of Jesus being with me always very personally; with *me* only, in *my* circumstances, in *my* world today. But I forget He has been with millions of His disciples for 2,000 years! **His presence is never ending. It lasts beyond our lifetimes, "to the end of the age."** We today know what the disciples couldn't have imagined: "to the end of the age" has been a very long time.

His disciples had wondered out loud, "Tell us, when will these things be, ... and the end of the age?" In reply Jesus gave warning signs, vivid descriptions of days to come and told multiple parables. Though much is still unclear, two of his direct commands are unmistakable. "Be on the alert, be ready," ... "as you did it to the least of these my brothers, you did it to Me" (Matthew 24:42 and 25:40).



BEHOLD
**I AM
WITH
YOU**
always,
TO THE END OF THE AGE

MATTHEW 28:20



Our commission is to be ready and to be servants.

His promise is to be with us always.

From our first breath to our last, His presence has been and always will be with us. Psalm 139:16 describes it: *"In your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."*

His presence spans farther still, not just the length of my life and yours but to the end of the age when He will be physically on earth again. *"Be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming"* (Matthew 24:42).

During the days after His Resurrection, Jesus was **with** His disciples and hundreds of followers for 40 days, reminding them that **He was both alive and present with them.**

Though we cannot see His physical form as did the twelve disciples and others, He is **with us** even more closely. We who believe and follow Him today are indwelt by His Holy Spirit! This is astounding news. Jesus was only physically present with His people when He was on earth. At Pentecost His Spirit came to live, to dwell, to inhabit our physical bodies so that **Jesus' with-us presence is multiplied around the globe!**

No matter how long it is until the end of the age comes, **God is with us!** That is the good news every day of our lives. We will never outlive His abiding presence!

Give thanks today for **His with-you** presence no matter what your world feels like today.

HE IS WITH YOU!!! Always!!!