

***Mission: Possible —
Living the Great Commission***



Doing Our Part to Complete the Great Commission

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About the Author



PJ (Pastor Jim) Bogoniewski, and his wife, Sandra, have four amazing kids of their own. As they've lived their lives missionally, the Lord has led them to "adopt" four others as older teenagers and young adults. Sandra has dedicated her life to raising and homeschooling their four children. PJ worked as a draftsman, writer, editor, and desktop publisher before entering full-time ministry with the Christian and Missionary Alliance as a second career in 2002.

PJ has written dozens of plays that are designed to creatively convey biblical truths in a church, or Christian school setting.

You will find a complete list of PJ's writings by visiting his Acts of Light ministry page at:

www.ActsofLight.com

Thanks



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And **Jesus** Said to them,
"All **authority** in heaven and
on earth
Has been given to **me**.
Therefore **GO** And
make
disciples
Of **all** nations, Baptizing them
in the name
Of the **Father**,
the **Son**,
And of the
Holy Spirit,
Teaching Them to
Observe Everything
i have
Commanded you.
Matthew 28:16-20

Introduction

“What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

- Jesus in Luke 18:27



“Mission: Impossible” was a popular TV show from the 1960s, as well as a more recent popular movie series. When you hear someone humming the theme song you can’t stop the images of spies, car chases, and thrilling assignments that begin to flood into your mind, along with the statement, “This is your mission, if you choose to accept it...” The premise of the show was that there was a secret military special operations team that made possible what others thought was impossible. At times one of the characters would say things like:

- “I don’t like using the word, ‘impossible’ to describe our missions. The way I see it - everything is possible.”
- “This group isn’t called ‘mission: possible’ – It’s called ‘mission: impossible.’ We do the things nobody else is willing to do.”
- “You’re saying there is a slight chance this operation will work. That’s more than we usually go on.”
- “We just have to find a way to make this work.”

The primary reason this team was able to complete missions that others wouldn’t even attempt was because of their, “We’re not going to quit until we find a way to make this happen” attitude. First, they assembled a team they knew could get the job done. As a team they came up with a plan that they thought would be successful. Each member of the team knew their part, played their part, and depended on each other to play their part as

well. They were able to step out and do the seemingly impossible because they knew the other members of the team had their back. Their courage, their calling, their skill, and their teamwork allowed them to accomplish seemingly impossible tasks.

This same courage, calling, skill, and teamwork should also be employed by those who are called “The Church of Jesus Christ!” Jesus has given us a seemingly impossible mission – it’s called “The Great Commission.” Through His Holy Spirit, Jesus has called us to adopt His mission, He has gifted us with unique abilities to complete His mission, He gives us the wisdom and discernment to develop a successful implementation of His mission, He gives us the courage to go through with His mission, and because of our devotion to Him, we know that we can depend on one another as we complete His mission.

His mission, The Great Commission, is really a simple mission:

“And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’ ”
Matthew 28:16-20.

His mission is simply to Go and Make Disciples.

There are a few key points I’d like to highlight in The Great Commission as we begin to learn what it means to live our lives missionally:

Some Doubted

To me, this is one of the most mysterious statements of the entire Bible. This was a gathering of Christ’s closest followers. This wasn’t a gathering of the crowd. This wasn’t a gathering of all of those who had kept a close watch on His movements over the past 3 ½ years. This was a gathering of His disciples. They had been with Him just about 24/7 for more than 3 years. They had seen Him perform all of the miracles, they had a front seat view for all of His teaching, and they had the chance to know Him intimately through time

with Him in small groups, as well as in one-on-one conversations. They watched Him die on the cross and they had heard many people talk about His resurrection. Most of them had seen Him since His resurrection, but some had yet to see Him in the flesh with their very own eyes. They, like Thomas, weren't going to believe the rumors until Jesus proved that He had indeed risen from the grave.

Of course, when I look at my own life I understand how they doubted. There are many times that Christ has demonstrated His ability to care for me and my family. There are numerous times that He has provided in miraculous ways. Yet when tough times come my way I often doubt that He's going to do something amazing again. I'm sure you've done the same thing too. Can we call it "human nature?" Should we call it "lack of faith?" Do we rationalize it by saying, "The disciples doubted – and they were there with Christ. Why shouldn't I doubt? It's 2,000 years later?" I've done all three. Perhaps you have as well.

Then I think of the times the disciples doubted that Jesus was going to come through for them once again. In Matthew 8 we see the disciples traveling on a boat with Jesus when a storm suddenly comes up on the sea and they begin to fear for their lives. Jesus is sleeping, so they wake Him and tell Him they are afraid for their lives. He replied, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Jesus was there with them. Why should they be afraid?

In Matthew 17 we read of another time the disciples didn't have enough faith. This time they were trying to heal a boy with epilepsy. The disciples tried to heal the boy, but they couldn't. Jesus said to them, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you?"

The disciples were right there with Jesus and still they didn't have enough faith to heal this boy. They had already seen Him heal many people and yet they weren't able to heal this boy without Jesus being right there with them. They had been sent to do His ministry. Was this healing really a part of the ministry that Jesus had sent them to do? Were they doing the wrong thing, using the wrong process, or were they incapable of doing miracles without Christ being present? They watched the Father meet all of their needs as they moved about the region with Jesus, yet they panicked when they couldn't figure things out on their own.

I've learned that when I'm not seeing God work through me it's not because He is unable, but it's because there is some kind of a disconnect on my end. Rather than try to figure out why God isn't doing what I expect Him to do, I must focus on developing more faith, spend more time with Him, trust that He knows what He's doing, and step out in obedience.

Jesus Has All Authority

The little word, "all" here has such great significance. This passage doesn't say that Jesus has *some* authority, or that He *mostly* has authority. No! It says that He has *ALL* authority. That means that He has authority over all things!

Look at these three passages where Paul relates Christ's authority:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross." Colossians 1:15-20.

"...and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all." Ephesians 1:19-23.

"See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according

to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. “ Colossians 2:8-10

I don't have to depend on the world's solutions for the troubles in my life. Like those Paul was writing to, I don't have to try harder, look for another break, or hope for the best. I don't have to become captive by the world's philosophy of Christ, either. Nor do I have to embrace what they think about His power, His authority, or His work. The opinion of those in the world shouldn't matter to me at all. They can say what they want to say. They can believe what they want to believe. I know that Christ is God, that He created everything, and that He has the power and authority to continue that work in me and through me. You can have this confidence as well!

GO!

I think that most of us need to be reminded of this command from Jesus more often! He told us to go and make disciples. This is not a passive command. It requires action! This command of Christ's is translated differently across translations. I think we have to look at a variety of them to get a full nuance of what Jesus was telling us to do!

In Young's Literal Translation, this command to go is translated as, “Having gone, then, disciple all nations...” (YLT).

The International Standard Version says, “Therefore, as you go, disciple...” (ISV).

The God's Word Translation says, “So wherever you go, make disciples...” (GOD'S WORD).

In the Message we read, “God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life...” (MSG).

When we hear the word “go” we're assuming that we're beginning with a “standing still” posture and that we have to exert energy to begin to move so we can accomplish the Great Commission. Looking at these translations gives us the impression that we're beginning from a posture of “already moving.” This command implies that we've been to plenty of places already, and that we're about to go somewhere new. It's a command of action. I

think the proper way to consider this command of Christ is that wherever we've been, wherever we're going, wherever we are now – we need to make disciples.

Make Disciples

Jesus told us to do more than just make converts to Christianity – He told us to make disciples. Many of us make an effort to convert someone to Christianity, but what are we doing to make disciples? There is a marked difference between converts and disciples.

Dictionary.com defines a convert as:

To cause to adopt a different religion, political doctrine, opinion, etc.

A rounded definition of a disciple shows us that it's a far deeper commitment than that of a convert. A disciple of Jesus Christ is a *student* of Jesus Christ, who is submitting themselves to be daily transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. The best way to develop disciples of Jesus Christ is through the experience of relationship, through the development of biblical knowledge, and through effective service as part of the body of Christ.

The experience of relationship is both relationship with Jesus Christ and relationship with someone who is actively involved in doing the discipling. Disciples must develop biblical knowledge and learn how to apply that knowledge to their lives. We must also be involved in works of service for the Body of Christ, His church.

Ultimately, the development of our own discipleship leads us to share our faith with others and this develops the need for them to be discipled as well. They grow in their faith, reach out to others, and then have to disciple them. True discipleship is a never ending circle of spiritual growth, personal evangelistic outreach, and then more discipling.

Teaching Them to Observe All I Have Commanded You

Learning and following the commands of Christ is a key aspect of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. We must learn *all* of Christ's commands, not just the "warm and fuzzy" ones. Jesus made some very difficult commands of His disciples. It's not possible for us to follow these commands apart from the empowering of the Holy Spirit. We must be growing as

disciples, learning the commands of Christ, following the commands of Christ, and depending on the Holy Spirit to empower us to be more conformed into His image. This does not happen in one encounter, but happens daily as we submit our lives and wills to Him. This process is called “sanctification.”

I Am With You Always

Jesus gives us the promise that He is always with us. It’s not the first time He promised to be with us! John 14-16 is one of my favorite passages of Scripture. Here we hear the heart of Jesus as He prays for His disciples – then and now. He promises that the Father will send us the Holy Spirit to be our guide and comforter. Through His Holy Spirit, Jesus is not only with us, but He is living *in us*. What a privilege to have the Creator of the Universe living in us!

Jesus did not give us a job to do and then leave us on our own to do it! No! He gave us this commandment and empowered us to do everything He commanded us to do. We just need to submit to His work in our lives, follow His leading, and trust that He is going to do His work in us and then through us.

Mission: Possible

This writing is designed to help you see how you can live your life in a way that is fulfilling this Great Commission of Jesus Christ each and every day. How you can submit to His work, follow His leading, and let Him do His work in you and through you. Chapter Eleven gives you an easy to follow Six-Step Missional Living Plan. In Chapter Twelve I suggest some ways that a church, church ministry, or a small group can live missionally *together*, as a team.

My prayer is that you will grow closer to Jesus Christ through this book, and that you will become better equipped to see Christ’s Great Commission as one that is possible in your life and ministry! The mission might seem impossible when we look at it in with our human eyes, but we know that as the Holy Spirit works in us, and then through us, this truly is a Mission: Possible!

In the Power of His Blood,

PJ Bogoniewski