

# THAT'S GOOD NEWS

OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF SHARING OUR FAITH

WORSHIP SERIES

AUG 25 - SEP 22

## The Commission

Date: August 25, 2024

Text: Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:44-49

This week's weekly challenge is centered on prayer. First, let us pray that the Lord would begin to work in our hearts and that we would be filled with compassion for the lost and a willingness to share our faith. Second, let us pray for the Lord to soften the hearts of the lost and begin opening doors for us to have faith conversations!

### BIG IDEA

Jesus came to earth, died, and rose again so that our lives might have purpose. When He returned to Heaven, He made that purpose clear with His last command, "Go and make disciples." This would have been an intimate calling for those first eleven disciples who knew firsthand the life-changing experience of being called a disciple. It would be from this knowing, this deep realization of how following Jesus can change everything, that they would "go and make more disciples." This is our calling today; that we too, from our intimate relationship with Jesus and personal experience with His love and healing, would be compelled to share it with the world. Though this command is

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simple, it is not easy, but Jesus promises that He will be with us every step of the way.

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## ***Conversation Starter***

- Why is it important that we make disciples *from* our own experience with the love of God?
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## **COMMENTARY #1**

**(Matthew 28:16-20)** This is the last appearance of the risen Savior. Here, witnesses would be compelled to worship Jesus even if they had to overcome some doubt. The word for doubt in this passage does not denote disbelief, but hesitancy; this likely came from fear that it was too good to be true or shame that they had left Jesus in His suffering. Jesus reminds them of His divine authority and gives them one last command—the Great Commission. “[Because of Who I am], go therefore and make disciples.”

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## ***Discussion Questions***

1. What are the places of hesitancy in your own life? Are they linked to fear or shame or something else?

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2. Why do you think it is important that Jesus reminded them of His divine authority before giving the command?
  3. How does truly knowing Who Jesus is motivate us to share the Gospel?
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## COMMENTARY #2

**(Luke 24:44-49)** This is before the ascension during the 40 days when Jesus ministered after His resurrection. Here, He reminds His disciples of the power of Scripture and opens their minds to understand it. Then, He commands them as witnesses to the truth, to go and tell the world what they have seen, and He blesses them with the power of the Holy Spirit.

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## *Discussion Questions*

1. Jesus consistently went to God's Word throughout His life even though He had a perfect relationship with the Father. How does this change your view of Scripture?
2. Just as the disciples knew the words but did not understand them, have you ever struggled to understand God's Word? Explain.
3. Why was it important for the disciples to understand and experience the Word of God before witnessing?

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4. Why is the Holy Spirit necessary for the work that we are called to do?

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## GOING DEEPER

1. What are some practical steps we can take to better understand God's Word?
  2. Is understanding of Scripture a natural or supernatural experience?
  3. In what ways does the Holy Spirit empower us as witnesses to the truth of the Gospel?
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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Devotion - [The Great Commission as a Means of Grace | Desiring God](#)

Sermon - ["The Great Commission Part 1"](#), Dr. Bob Utley

Book - [That's Good News](#), Shane Bishop

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## GROUP ACTIVITY

Have each group member write down one “hesitancy” they experience in their own life. Remember, the disciples saw the risen Lord and still, some doubted. You may have seen Jesus in your own life but still have areas of doubt, shame, or regret that hold you back from sharing Him with others. Take time to consider what this might be in your own heart and mind.

Then, partner up and share your area of hesitancy with each other. Take turns ministering to these places and bringing those struggles into the light to be conquered.

Pray over your partner and take their piece of paper home as a reminder to pray for them throughout this series.

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## The Commission

Date: August 25, 2024

Text: Deuteronomy 31:23, Joshua 1: 1-9

This is additional curriculum for the week that you can choose to use if you want! It carries the same heart and lesson from the primarily curriculum, it just draws from a different text than what the pastor taught on.

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### BIG IDEA

Jesus came to earth, died, and rose again so that our lives might have purpose. When He returned to Heaven, He made that purpose clear with His last command, “Go and make disciples.” This would have been an intimate calling for those first eleven disciples who knew firsthand the life changing experience of being called a disciple; it would be from this knowing, this deep realization of how following Jesus can change everything, that they would “go and make more disciples.” This is our calling today; that we too, from our intimate relationship with Jesus and personal experience with His love and healing, would be compelled to share it with the world. Though this command is



simple, it is not easy, but Jesus promises that He will be with us every step of the way.

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### ***Conversation Starter***

- What is your “recipe for success?” If you want something to happen, what can you do to help ensure that it does?
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### **COMMENTARY #1**

**(Deuteronomy 31:23)** This is the first time God speaks directly to Joshua as the chosen successor to Moses. Joshua is called to be the one to lead the Israelites into the promised land, Canaan. The Lord assures Joshua that he will remain with him as they go. Just as Joshua was called by God to lead God’s children into the promised land, we too are called to lead people home.

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### ***Discussion Questions***

1. Joshua had been an aide to Moses for 40 years. How do you think this had helped prepare him to lead the Israelites?
2. What did the Lord assure Joshua when he gave him the command to lead the people?

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3. How can this assurance help us when we are leading people to Christ?

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## COMMENTARY #2

**(Joshua 1:1-9)** In this passage, more detail is given about the installation of Joshua as leader of the Israelites. Joshua is to lead all of the people across the Jordan River and into the land promised by God. When the Israelites are united in their faithfulness to God, they are not able to be defeated. Unity is an ingredient in their recipe for success. More ingredients are found in verses 5b-9. Joshua is instructed to keep the Book of the Law, meditate on it day and night and do what is written in it. That sounds like a tall order. However, Joshua is not left to do this on his own accord. Surrounding these instructions are two pieces of encouragement: 1) God will never leave or forsake you, and 2) be strong and courageous and not afraid. Joshua and Israel are successful because God is with them and enables them to obey his word, just as Jesus promises to be with the disciples in their mission.

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## *Discussion Questions*

1. What are the ingredients for Joshua and Israel's "recipe for success?"
2. How could the ingredients of unity, obedience, and studying the Word help us as we are called to bring others to Christ?



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## GOING DEEPER

1. To be able to effectively lead others to Christ, we must be in the Word and living a life in step with the Lord. What are some ways that we can put this into daily practice?
2. Tying a string around your finger is a way to remember things. (As we age, I wonder if this still works! Haha!) How can we remember that the Lord is always with us and how can that assurance give us confidence in sharing the Lord with others?
3. Joshua was told to be strong and courageous and to not be afraid. When has someone encouraged you or have you encouraged others not to be afraid or to be strong?

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Right Now Media – [Jesus in All of Joshua](#)

Right Now Media – [Habitudes – The Art of Changing Culture](#)

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## GROUP ACTIVITY

Joshua was called to lead the people into the Promised Land. He was prepared because of his relationships as a mentee of Moses. Think about leaders you know. Make a list of the qualities of good ones. Make a second list of qualities that aren't so desirable.



The second video above is called The Joshua Problem. The problem highlighted states that Joshua had been prepared by Moses, but Joshua had no Joshua. Joshua had not mentored or trained anyone else in his ways. The premise of the video is that the leader's goal should not be to build more followers, but to build more leaders. Do you agree?

To be a leader, we first have to be a follower—a follower of God's word. How can you empower others around you (family members, co-workers, neighbors) to not just be followers, but leaders of others? How can you model and/or train using the "recipe" with the ingredients of unity, obedience, study, strength, courage, and the knowledge that God is with you?

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## Faith Sharing Stories Mike McAlister

Sharing our faith can be really scary! We often believe that we're not qualified, we're going to mess it up, or that we don't speak well enough to be a witness. But God has called each of us, even in our imperfection, to tell the world about Him. He delights in using imperfect, broken people for His glory. Even in our failures and missteps, He can be honored by our simple "yes." His strength is made perfect in weakness! These are some stories of what seems to be "faith sharing flops" but, as you'll see when you read them, maybe they are exactly what God could turn around and use for good.

**That's Good News!**

It was one of the biggest Sundays of the year. The lobbies were all beautifully decorated and looking almost as pristine as the people flooding through their doors. Smiles graced the faces of everyone walking inside as the expectancy of that morning permeated hearts and minds with joy. Easter was here.

While we celebrate all that Jesus has done for us daily, Easter remains set apart as a sacred day to proclaim that our King has risen. Under His resurrected blood, we are one body, one voice, one family united forever in His glory. How could we not praise in light of that truth?

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This past Easter, however, that praise did not go quite as planned. We had picked the songs weeks before and prayed over all that God would do in the space during worship. We had practiced, and rehearsed, and practiced again—we wanted everything to be perfect for this day.

Finally, Resurrection Sunday had come! I was leading *O Praise the Name* during the first service with my eyes closed and my heart echoing the truth of those words. But as I got to the third verse, I began to sing out and noticed the congregation wasn't singing quite as loudly. As I listened closer, I realized that those that were singing weren't singing the same words as me. I opened my eyes and saw that the fourth verse was displayed on the screen and I began to wonder why on earth the media operator had the wrong verse displayed! But soon, that confusion melted into chagrin when I realized that we had already sung the third verse. The words on the screen were, in fact, correct.

I chuckled to myself and said “hey guys, let's sing that verse again, only *THIS* time I'm going to sing it with you!” Everyone laughed and the Lord was still, even in my imperfection, glorified.

It is easy to fall into the trap of perfection; to convince yourself that the Holy Spirit will only move if you do everything right, say all the right words, and do all the right things. But if that were the case, we wouldn't need HIS strength and power. He receives all the glory in our weaknesses because we are reminded that it is *only* because of Him. So next time you feel inadequate, weak, fearful, or too embarrassed to share your faith, remember God still chooses to move in our imperfect obedience.

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“And He said unto me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore, will I glory in my weaknesses that the power of God may rest upon me.’”

2 Corinthians 12:9