



Week of  
August 18

# Catch Excitement for the Gospel

**Every person has an important, God-given role to play in helping to fulfill the Great Commission.**

Bill Bright

Today I lay before you the greatest challenge ever given to man by the greatest person who has ever lived.

No matter how wealthy, famous, brilliant, or powerful you may be, you will never give yourself to any cause that can compare with this life-changing, even world-changing, call of God.

No matter how many honors, awards, or achievements may be placed in your hands, nothing can even begin to compare with this command of our Lord Jesus Christ to help take His message of love and forgiveness to every person in every community, in every city, in every country of the world and make disciples of all nations.

Today we live in a world of rapid and radical change. Men's hearts are filled with fear and dread, frustration and despair. Mankind has proven incapable of coping with the pressing problems of our time – the population explosion, the pollution of the environment, the rising tide of crime and violence, sexual rebellion, alcoholism, drug addiction, abortion, pornography, urban sprawl, and wide spread political, social and moral decay.

## **The Power of the Gospel**

Oh, what an hour for Christians to become involved in the greatest spiritual harvest since Pentecost! This dark and desperate hour in the affairs of mankind is an hour of destiny, a time of unprecedented opportunity for Christians. This is the hour for which we were born – to set in motion a mighty, sweeping spiritual revolution that will turn the tide and reveal to mankind that the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ offers the basic solutions to every problem facing mankind.

If such a statement sounds simplistic or melodramatic, just apply the Ten Commandments, the Golden Rule and other teachings of Jesus such as His command to love God with all of your heart, with all of your soul and with all of your mind, and your neighbor as yourself – even your enemies – to each of these problems, and watch them evaporate before your eyes.

## The Greatest Event of the Centuries

If I had the privilege of writing a news story about the greatest events of all the centuries, one of the most important would be a meeting on a mountain near Galilee where a small group of men were given a global strategy for carrying God's love and forgiveness to a lost and dying world. On this mountain these men received that greatest challenge ever given to mankind, to which I referred, by that greatest Person who ever lived, concerning the greatest power ever revealed and the greatest promise ever recorded. I refer, of course, to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He gave to His disciples and through them to us. He said:

***I have been given all authority in heaven and earth. Therefore go and make disciples in all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and then teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you; and be sure of this - that I am with you always, even to the end of the world .***



Later, on the Mount of Olives, our Lord gave His final word to His disciples and to us before He ascended to the Father. He said:

*“When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power to testify about me with great effect, to the people in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, about my death and resurrection.”*

Had these meetings not been held and had our Lord's command and promise not been given, you would not now be experiencing the love, forgiveness, joy and purpose of God's matchless grace available to all who believe in Christ. In fact, I would not be writing this message.

## **Bill Bright's Great Commission Story**

The Great Commission has been the focus of my life ever since one midnight hour in the spring of 1951 when God spoke to me in a sovereign, unique, supernatural way concerning my role in helping to fulfill His command. The vision embraced the entire world and resulted in the ministry of Cru.

Since that time we have grown from a staff of two – my wife Vonette and me – on the campus of UCLA to more than twenty thousand full-time and associate staff and volunteers serving our Lord in 133 major countries representing 97 percent of the world's population. Tens of millions of people have received Christ as their Savior and Lord through this ministry, and millions of these have been discipled to win and disciple others – spiritual generation after generation.

I try to evaluate everything I do every day in light of how it will contribute the most to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Sometimes I am asked the question, “Are you surprised at the phenomenal growth and success of Campus Crusade for Christ?” My answer is “No,” for according to that original vision which God gave me in 1951, we have only begun to see what God is going to do. The best is yet before us!

I am truly humbled and deeply grateful for the privilege of serving this ministry. Yet, I am not surprised at the miracles of God's grace during the last four decades in light of the dramatic vision God gave me of the world, and what was to happen in terms of spiritual harvest.

Our Lord's Great Commission is for every believer, not just the staff of Campus Crusade and a few missionaries and pastors who love our Lord. Every Christian is commanded to be involved in helping to reach the world for Christ. Each of us has an important, God given role to play in helping to fulfill the Great Commission.

## **Discussion Questions**

- What does the word “witness” mean? How is it used in the Bible?
  - a. Proverbs 14:5
  - b. Isaiah 55:1-7
  - c. Luke 24:48
  - d. Acts 1:18
  - e. Acts 2:40
  - f. Acts 8:25
  - g. Acts 20:17-24
  - h. Acts 23:11
  - i. Acts 28:23

- Modern communication technology has brought the world into our homes and workplaces. Share with your group the evidences which you have seen in the last week that there is a global need for the gospel.

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## Sermon Discussion Questions

Big Idea: The engine of the Great Commission is the Mighty Resurrection!

- Randy noted in his sermon that after Mary and Mary discovered the empty tomb and were told by the angel that Jesus has been raised, they ran to tell others. In the process, they encountered the risen Jesus and worshiped Him. What can you do to make worship your first reaction each day as you remember our risen Lord?
- We're called to be a part of the communication chain that started with the angel. Sometimes we miss opportunities to communicate the Gospel for various reasons. Share with your group one of these missed opportunities, and then remind each other that because of the resurrection, Jesus is with you next time you have an opportunity.
- Talk about why going and making disciples of all nations is not offensive even in our diverse and pluralistic culture?
- How do you plan to fulfill Christ's command to *go make disciples, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you* this week? Reconcile a broken relationship? Turn the other cheek? Do unto others the types of justice, kindness, mercy, forgiveness, fairness, and grace that you would want for yourselves? Serve others? Initiate a deeper conversation with your friend? Enter into a spiritual conversation with your neighbor? Remember, Jesus is with you every step of the way!
- We want to take the next four weeks to position our hearts to what God is calling us to do as the church. Fasting is a way that can help us do that. Share with each other what you will be fasting from over these four weeks and then take some time to pray for each other.