

# John Piper: 'Your Life Is Too Small' If You Don't Think About This

Never, never, never forget that Jesus commanded us to make disciples of all the peoples on this planet – the whole planet (Matthew 28:19–20). This is the greatest challenge in the world.

Let the emphasis fall on “all the peoples” – Greek, *panta ta ethne* (all ethnic groups in the world). Jesus bought men “from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9). Not some, but every.

The point is not that we can draw sharp boundaries between all the peoples (tribes, languages, nations). The point is that the scope of Jesus's command is wider and amazingly more diverse than we think.

## Remember the Mission

What a wonderful day we live in when we consider the sacrificial, rigorous, extensive research that is being done to help us know the progress of Jesus's mission! Perhaps the most accessible, clear, and thorough accumulation of these facts is at [this site](#). I think Jesus would be very pleased if you were familiar with this site for the sake of his name.

They estimate that the total number of people groups in the world is 9,736 if you don't count any group twice for being in different countries (16,067 if you do).

Then they estimate that 4,067 of those 9,736 are unreached (see the definition). This is the challenge of the church globally—the greatest challenge in the world.

- In Luke 24:46–47 Jesus said his commission was written

in the Old Testament: “It is written that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

- In John 17:18 and 20:21 Jesus said his command is a continuation of his own mission to earth – he was the perfect cross-cultural missionary. He bought the redemption. We take it to the world. Without us they don't have it. “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”
- And in Acts 1:8 Jesus said to the disciples that he sent the Holy Spirit specifically for the empowering of this mission. “The Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Your life is too small if it is not connected to this great challenge. Not all Christians are missionaries. But all care about the mission. All are connected. And want to be connected. No Christian should go for months and never think about this greatest of all enterprises.

## **The Challenge and the Greatness**

World missions is greater than any other challenge in the world.

- It is vastly greater than the challenge of stamping out all disease, for the consequences of our failure are infinitely worse than that failure would be.
- It is vastly greater than the challenge of bringing literacy to all the peoples because it includes that (since one goal of discipleship is reading the Bible) and goes beyond it to the infinite results of believing what is read.

- It is vastly greater than the challenge of ending all war, because there are greater and worse hostilities against mankind than come from armed combat.
- It is vastly greater than the challenge of feeding all the hungry of the world because it addresses that and goes beyond it to the hunger that leads to starvation beyond death.

Why is it the greatest?

- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it carries the greatest news in the world: There is salvation from God's judgment only through faith in Christ's death and resurrection.
- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it involves the most complex task of embedding the Christian faith authentically in thousands of diverse cultures without diluting the saving message.
- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it will require the greatest sacrifice of any other challenge not only because of the greatest complexity, but also because of the greatest opposition. Jesus promised it. "You will be hated by all nations" (Matthew 24:9).
- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it was given by the greatest person in the world, Jesus Christ.
- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it has the greatest authority behind it, namely "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18).
- It is the greatest challenge in the world because it is backed by the greatest promise in the world: "I – the creator and sustainer and redeemer of all – will be with you to the end of the age."

- It is the greatest challenge in the world because Jesus has given us supernatural power that comes to its fullest enjoyment when actualized in world missions (Acts 1:8).

Oh, take hold of this! Never let it go. Stay connected to this. Let this be in your prayers without ceasing. Don't drift away from this. Yes, by all means give yourself to many causes. But remember this cause sums them all up, because this cause carries the possibility of all good causes to all the nations.

Love the mission of Jesus. Because you love Jesus. And because you love the lost. Yes you do. You are Christian.

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