

The Real Reason Believers Haven't Finished the Great Commission

When Christ was dying on the cross for the past, present and future sins of the world, He shouted, *telelestai*, which is translated, "It is finished!" Jesus had completed His divine mission, finishing what He came to the earth to do.

The heavenly Father had only one Son and He was a foreign missionary. Jesus descended down the starry skies of glory to be born in a stable and laid in an animal trough that served as a makeshift manger. He came from a heavenly to a hellish realm; from a nether world to a needy world; from a splendid place to a sinful place. Yet, by the end of His short life and ministry, Jesus accomplished why and for what He came.

The Church's Mission Statement

Some years ago, it was quite popular for ministry organizations and local churches to rewrite or create mission statements. I have often wondered why this trend came to be since Jesus already gave us our mission statement, which is to fulfill the Great Commission.

In 1984, we formed Cutting Edge International, the parent company of all ministries we operate, which today continues under our original purpose statement that Jesus Christ gave to His disciples in Matthew 28:18-20. We specifically seek to accomplish that task through evangelizing the world with Christ's power (Matt. 28:18), Christ's program (Matt. 28:19-20a) and Christ's presence (Matt. 28:20b).

I am often asked, "Do you really believe we can complete the Great Commission during our lifetime?" My answer is always the same, "It is the only lifetime I have. Of course, we can

finish it!"

In 2016, Dr. Timothy Hill, general overseer for the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, was flying to the Netherlands from Africa. While the plane was descending into Amsterdam, the Holy Spirit flooded his mind with an acronym for FINISH. After arriving home, he unpacked for me the God-given meaning of the acrostic, and we knew that a plan needed to be developed and implemented to impact God's kingdom.

We decided to utilize it throughout the body of Christ as we continued our mission to fulfill the Great Commission, but it wasn't until 2017 that *finish* became an official ministry initiative. It was then that several key Christian leaders encouraged me to write a . declaration to be read at the Wittenberg Congress at the graveside in Castle Church of Martin Luther, the founder of the Protestant Reformation. The Holy Spirit deeply moved upon me as I crafted the FINISH Declaration in less than three hours:

- **Find**
- **Intercede**
- **Network**
- **Invest**
- **Send**
- **Harvest**

How Does the Church Fulfill The Great Commission?

So, what does the church need to do? To start, the church must *find* the remaining unreached people groups and *intercede* until the demonic barriers are broken and Christ is lifted up for all to see. We must *network* like never before to bring the finest training and teams to both the saved and the lost while *investing* time, talent and treasure. It is also necessary for the church to *send* an equipped missionary force into the hardest-to-reach areas and *harvest* who the Lord gives us and make disciples of them.

What will finishing the Great Commission look like? First, we will need a synergized and mobilized church. We must move past ego and logo and arrive at “we go.” Only then is the Great Commission within our reach. What got us here will not get us there. It is possible to respect one another’s Christian identity and obey our Lord’s final command to take the gospel to every ethnic group. All of us have a role in the goal and a part in God’s heart!

Secondly, we need a global hub, a central meeting location if you will, for churches in every nation to synergize the best relationships, systematize the best training, strategize for unreached peoples and scripturalize new Bible translations. Presently, the Global Church Network has nearly 120 hubs and is on track to have more than 200 hubs in 2022 and 800 hubs by 2030. Each hub is multipliable and unites the best leaders in a nation, teaches world-class training and designs missional strategies.

Thirdly, we need a Bible in every language. Twenty years ago, I talked with the president of a Bible translation agency, who shared that it would take more than 200 years to provide the Bible in all languages of the world. My heart sank with the reality that the human population would have to die two or three more times—totaling 16 to 20 billion people—before God’s Word would be available in every tongue and dialect. I was speechless. I didn’t know the answer but knew this was not it; there has to be a speedier process for the sake of the billions of lost people.

Approximately two years later, I was holding my two-year-old Chinese daughter up above my head in a lovely park, looking into her eyes. The Holy Spirit whispered, “Look at who has been raised up around the world.” From that divine moment, I began to travel worldwide just to meet with a key leader, whom the Lord had raised up in the body of Christ. As a result of this global research, I learned, “It is not the West going to the rest, but the best around the world going to the rest of

the world.”

One of the greatest, if not the grandest, missional shifts is the progress in Bible translation. It is the entire church’s responsibility, not a select few ministries, to make the Word of God available in the native languages of people who want to read it..

Fourthly, we need a harvest of young equipped leaders. In fact, the global church needs at least 1 million more young men and women called into full-time ministry. In 2019, I was asked, “Why do we need so many new ministers?” I answered, “For us in the West, it is to save Western Civilization as we know it!” The Global Church Network calls this the *Million Ministers Mandate*. I don’t know of any major Christian organization that can say, “We have plenty of up-and-coming young ministers for our future.”

In every global hub, our goal is to have at least 40% of the hub membership be between 15 and 35 years of age. If we are going to finish the Great Commission, we need a huge army of kingdom-minded and Christ-centered young leaders who are willing to go to the hardest places in the world with the gospel. The reason the Great Commission is not finished is because it is hard. If it was not a challenge, it would have been completed centuries ago. The Global Church Divinity School () was built to bring the finest training to at least 1 million ministers in the body of Christ.

Fifth, we need a church within walking distance of everyone on earth. You may say, “That is impossible.” But the majority of the world does not drive a car or take a bus to church on the weekend. I think about my friends in the underground church in the Middle East and those in the upper-ground church in the Himalayan Mountains—they must have a church within walking distance. The most efficient way to break the back of demonic oppression in any local region is to plant a Bible-based, Spirit-filled church. There is a tidal wave of church planting

currently engulfing the world, as more than 10,000 churches are planted each week, totaling over 500,000 per year.

The Real Reason We Haven't Fulfilled The Great Commission

Fulfilling the Great Commission is not about money; it's about motivation. It's not about competing but completing. We have enough money, people, time, talent and resources in the kingdom of God. FINISH is about taking the gospel to the hardest places in the world.

Several years ago, I was fortunate to co-host a Middle East Summit made up of 229 Christian leaders from every nation in that region. We were humbled to have pastors and leaders join us from Libya, Turkey, Armenia, UAE, Qatar, Lebanon, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan and Kazakhstan. During the summit, upon rising early one morning for my personal devotions, the Holy Spirit asked, "How many chairs are you willing to take responsibility for at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?"

At first, I was taken aback by the question and did not know how to respond to the Lord. After pondering and praying, I finally answered out loud, "I really don't know the number for which I can take personal responsibility, but I am willing to do my best to keep the angels extremely busy creating and placing chairs at the table of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!" I will never forget that morning when the finish line became so clear to me.

I want to ask you the same question. How many chairs will you take responsibility for at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb? How many unreached people groups will you adopt? How many souls will you help to win? Will you invest into the launch of more global hubs? Will you help translate phenomenal training courses into different languages, so that ministers around the world can be more effective in reaching their nations for Christ?

Everyone has a role in God's eternal goal. He is challenging us to become a part of something bigger than ourselves. All of heaven is cheering us on to *finish*! We need to be motivated about what motivates heaven.

I invite any and all to run with us to the finish line by the 2,000th birthday of the church in 2030.

What does FINISH look like? For the lost, it is found in these words, "Whoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire," (Rev. 20:15, RGT). For the saved, the finish is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. For the first time, the entire family of God will gather together around the Lord's table. Until that day, may each of us keep the angels extra busy placing more chairs at the table (Rev. 20:7-11).
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