

The Unfinished Task
Matthew 28:19
Pastor Dave Bennett

Daily Bible Readings
July 20—26, 2009

Introduction – unfinished projects

We believe that God wants people from every nation, every people group and every social condition to know and embrace the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that all followers of Jesus have an obligation to take their part in making disciples of all nations, including faithful prayer, giving and sending people and resources, especially to those places where vibrant churches are not yet established.

I. The Global Scope of God's Plan

- Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6

II. Jesus' Sense of the Unfinished Task

- A. Jesus' own ministry
 - Luke 4:43; John 4:35; 9:4; 10:16
- B. Jesus' commissioning of his disciples
 - Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 3:16; 17:18; 20:21; Acts 1:8

III. The Sluggishness of the Early Church

- Acts 2:7-11,42-47; 8:1,4; 11:19,20; 13:1-5

IV. Paul's Sense of the Unfinished Task

- A. The "regions beyond"
 - 2 Corinthians 10:16; Acts 19:9,10; 1 Thessalonians 1:7,8
- B. The western Mediterranean frontiers
 - Romans 15:19-24

V. The Yet Unfinished Task

- Psalm 86:9

VI. Our Part in Completing the Task

- A. Whose task is it?
- B. The central task: focus on the unreached
- C. Working together
 1. Praying together
 2. Giving together
 3. Sending together
 4. Going together

Follow-Throughs

Monday Luke 4:31-44

Why were people looking for Jesus? Why didn't Jesus stay in that town when there were obviously so many people who wanted his ministry, and there were so many needs still remaining? Have you ever tried to hold someone back from a ministry that they were called to do, when it would take them away from where you were serving or what was most important to you?

Tuesday Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 7:54 - 8:1-8

What clear command did Jesus give the disciples? Why did it take so long for them to get around to obeying him? What events finally precipitated the "going" of so many believers out of Jerusalem? Can you see any parallels in your own life, where unpleasant circumstances finally prompted you to obey God in some area?

Wednesday 2 Corinthians 10:1-18

In this chapter, Paul is defending his ministry against his critics. What were some of Paul's desires and motivations? What might be some of the "regions beyond" in today's world? What might be some "regions beyond" in our own community, i.e. pockets of people who have had no credible, understandable introduction to the good news of Jesus Christ? Pray that some believers in our area would gain access and favor with these "unreached people."

Thursday Romans 15:14-33

How does Paul describe his calling from God, his desires and his plans? What is our part at GBC in "helping on the way" workers who are trying to "finish the task?" Is there any area of obedience to which the Lord is calling you in praying, giving, sending or going?

Friday Acts 1:1-11

Notice the "and" connecting the place names in verse 8. What happens when we think in terms of "or" rather than "and" with respect to Jesus' command? Spend some time in prayer today thinking of our church's outreach in the town of Hudson, in the surrounding communities, among different cultural groups nearby, in the broader New England region, and in our world outreach.

Warm-Ups

Saturday Matthew 22:36-40

Read Matthew 22:36-40 and take a few moments to think about what it means to love your neighbor. Jot a few Scriptures down that relate specifically to loving your neighbor and then think of specific actions come to mind when you visualize loving those around you.

Sunday Matthew 22:36-40

Re-read Matthew 22:36-40, but this time focus on the last part of verse 39, "... as yourself." Is it hard to love yourself? Why or why not? Can you make the connection between loving your neighbor and yourself?