

God's heart for the world is revealed throughout the Bible – from Genesis to Revelation. Throughout history He has desired to call people from all nations to worship Him. Our prayer for this lesson is that God would use this survey to awaken in you a desire to participate in the Great Commission, anywhere in the world.

In Genesis 12:1-3, we find what is commonly referred to as the Abrahamic Covenant. Here God makes a commitment to Abraham stating His loving intentions for the world.

“The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. ‘I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”

One of the earliest revelations of God's heart for all people was when Abram was called by God to become a great nation, Israel. Take a look on a map and find Israel. What do you think is significant about its location? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some things God promised to Abraham? \_\_\_\_\_

One of them is that God promised that in Abraham all families of the earth would be blessed. This is a reference to the Messiah coming from Abraham and the nation of Israel. The Messiah would bring salvation to all peoples by paying for sin for the whole world. Look up Galatians 3:8 to see how Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12.

In Isaiah 49:5,6, the prophet also foresees a day when all the people of the earth will have the opportunity to walk with God.

“And now the LORD says. . . ‘It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.’”

Throughout the Old Testament God speaks of His desire that His salvation be known in all the earth. This is one of hundreds of references to His heart's desire for all peoples to know Him and His love.

In Matthew 28:18-20, also known as the Great Commission, Jesus states:

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

In the Great Commission, the last thing Jesus said to his men was to make disciples of all the nations, all people groups. This command continues for us today, for every generation until He comes.

After Jesus' resurrection, He walked with the disciples for 40 more days. As He was departing, this time in a cloud, He left marching orders for His followers in Acts 1:8:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jesus instructs His disciples on the progression of the spread of the Gospel in the first century. Since that time, the Gospel has spread throughout all the nations of the earth in the past 2000 years. We live in a time in this generation in which we are closer than any other generation has ever been to reaching all the peoples of the earth. We have the technology, money, training, and strategy. The greatest need is still the laborers who are willing to fully engage in God's purposes, submit their agenda to His, and be willing to do whatever He asks of them to fulfill His plan.

Revelation 5:9 says:

"And they sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.'"

The end of the story is expressed in the scene in Heaven where there will be people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. This has been God's plan all along – to redeem a great international people for Himself. The only thing that will go on into eternity from this planet will be the souls of men and women. God will make a new Heaven and a new Earth, but souls from all nations will live on for all eternity.

We can be a part of what God is doing in the world - it is a guaranteed reality. His plan will come to pass and we can get in on the excitement, thrill and the great adventure of partnering with God to accomplish a world wide vision. It is in being a part of what He is doing, that gives our souls a sense of destiny!

## How to Get in on What God Is Doing

How might we be a part of reaching people in other nations? \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways can we make a difference? \_\_\_\_\_

Below are several "bridges" to the world.

### 1. Praying

Pray for specific people groups or nations, for individuals you know who are laboring overseas, and for your church locally. The book, *Operation World*, is a great prayer guide you could use.

### 2. Giving

Do you give any money right now to any causes? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

After our tithe to the local church body, do you know of other people or organizations that are taking part in the Great Commission in other parts of the world? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **3. Going**

Have you ever considered going on a mission trip? Part of our own growth in Jesus comes as we see the world as Jesus sees it. Taking part on a mission trip may enhance our vision.

### **4. Sending Others**

Even if you cannot go yourself, could you be a part of encouraging, and possibly financially sending, another Christ follower to missions abroad? Going is not everyone's calling, but we can all be engaged in sending others.

Which bridge to the world do you want to utilize at the present time? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there a "going" opportunity that would help you develop your world vision? \_\_\_\_\_

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Close by praying together for other parts of the globe, that God may open a door for the Gospel to reach into every corner of His creation.

**Memorize Acts 1:8**