

PURE PASSION



AN ATHLETE STUDY

ZERO TO HERO

Everybody loves a Cinderella story—from zero to hero. This Week, we are looking at some of Jesus' last words to his disciples—a challenge to go and make disciples. As we examine this passage, we may be tempted to think this can't be talking about me—I'm not good enough, I don't know enough, (insert excuse here). Whatever excuse you have, the Apostle Peter had more. He wasn't eloquent. He wasn't educated. He had no special qualifications. He even repeatedly denied Jesus to save his own skin.

Thankfully, Peter's story didn't end there. Jesus redeemed Peter's three denials with three affirmations (John 21:15–17). Peter never forgot his failure and subsequent restoration. This fearful fisherman, who swore against his Savior with an oath, became a bold teacher of truth. Eventually, he stood and defied the very council who killed Jesus and from whom he ran (Acts 4:8–13). That is life-change. That is the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Through this semester's study of *Pure Passion*, our prayer and our hope is that you would hear this story of Jesus and trust in what he accomplished for you at Calvary's Cross. If you have trusted in Christ for this gift of salvation, you have everything you need to grow in Christ and to join with the Lord in his mission. Peter went from zero to hero, and with the power of Christ in your life, you can too.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Imagine standing in line awaiting your entrance into heaven. There's a line beside yours going to Hell. As you step forward you see people you knew in life and they ask why you never shared your hope in Christ with them. That made-up image drives and motivates me to share the Gospel. If you need help learning how to share, scan the QR code to review an evangelism method we introduced last Fall.



DISCUSSION

What has been the most interesting or challenging thing you've learned through this study?

ICEBREAKER

1. What one main thing did Jesus tell his followers to do? (19)

2. What two supportive actions were involved in doing that one thing? (19-20)

OBSERVATION

3. What resources did Jesus offer to accomplish the mission and for how long? (18, 20)

4. What is the relationship between Jesus' authority, his command to make disciples, and his promise to be with them until the end?

INTERPRETATION

5. How can/do you make disciples? What motivates or hinders your pursuit?

APPLICATION

MATTHEW

28:16–20

MARK

16:15–18

LUKE



JOHN



MATTHEW 28:16–20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Leave it all on the field. If you have any questions or anything unsaid, now is your last chance. Don't wait. Talk to your Coach today!

PURE PASSION

WEEK 12

AN ATHLETE STUDY

STUDY NOTES

PASSING THE TORCH

This Week, we pick up the story from last Week in the Gospel of *Matthew*. Thankfully, *Matthew* is not the only account of Jesus' days on Earth after the resurrection before the ascension. Thus, we know that Jesus walked the Earth for 40 days teaching about the God's Kingdom (Acts 1:3). He appeared to more than 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:6). He confirmed himself as the Old Testament fulfillment (Luke 24:27). Strategically, he met with his closest followers to redeem, reassure, and send them forth to continue with the ministry he started.

The passage we'll examine today has famously been labeled the "Great Commission." This passage stands as one of the clearest statements through which Jesus passed the torch to every Christian to come.

This event pick up with *the eleven disciples* (the betrayer, Judas Iscariot, is gone) on a *mountain* in *Galilee* where *Jesus had directed*. This gathering may have been Jesus' final appearance on Earth before the ascension so this was not the first post-resurrection encounter for the disciples. *When they saw him they worshiped him*, however, the Bible says that *some doubted*.

The Bible doesn't hold back the uncomfortable truth that skepticism existed from the very beginning. This should give us comfort in our moments of doubt. As a wise man once said, "It's OK to have doubts, but it's not OK to live in doubt." Yet one day, like Thomas, we will see Jesus face to face, with pierced hands and side, declaring, "*My Lord and my God!*" (John 20:28). In those moments, remember Jesus' words to Thomas, "*Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are the people who have not seen and yet have believed.*" That means you!

GODLY PASSION

EMPOWERS OTHERS

Finally, Jesus issued the Great Commission. The marching orders for all Christians. "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*"

Accomplishing the great rescue mission, Jesus claimed his rightful authority. How much authority? All of it! The phrase "in heaven and on earth" means everything everywhere in all visible and invisible Creation. Nothing escapes his authority.

Based on Jesus' authority, we are commanded to "make disciples." The English word "Go" is a participle in the original language. Some people have misunderstood this idea as they need to leave their current location to share the Gospel. False! A better understanding would be, "Wherever you go, make disciples there!" You don't have to go overseas, or to some far off and distant land. Make disciples at home, in class, on your team, at work—wherever you are!

Although Jesus commanded making disciples of the "nations," he doesn't necessarily mean a foreign country. Instead, he meant something more like people groups. The gospel is for every nation, race, socio-economic status—it doesn't matter. Anyone anywhere can be a disciple!

The next disciple-making step involves "baptizing." It's more than getting dunked. Baptism means personally identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We bury our old life and receive God's resurrection-empowered new life. This is through regular dependence on every Person of the Holy Trinity—"Father, Son, and Spirit."

Finally, Jesus' focus on obedience ("observe all that I have commanded") reflects his teaching on the night of the Last Supper, "*The person who has my commandments and obeys them is the one who loves me*" (John 14:21). This kind of willing submission shows our genuine love for him, and this lesson must be passed on.

EMPOWERMENT MULTIPLIES

The Great Commandment should mark the every believer's life. Yet, survey after survey consistently shows that the overwhelming majority of church-goers have never, not once, shared their faith! Take a moment and reflect on our study. All that Jesus taught, all that he suffered so that we might have a relationship with God through him. He surrendered his life and three days later rose again. That's amazing news—that apparently most so-called Christians *never share!*

Friends, with all the encouragement we can muster, may that never be true of anyone reading this. If not us, then who? Each of us *receive* Christ personally, and each of us are called to *share* Christ personally. It isn't your Coach's job, your pastor's job, or that "extra-spiritual" friend that invited you to this study. It is *your* job!

With a final word of encouragement, Jesus wanted his disciples to remember that he would "always" be with them, even "to the end of the age." The same is true for you. So, get off the bench, and "Go" get in the game!