

MISSION POSSIBLE

Christ's Great Commission

STUDY ONE

The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

God is the God of limitless possibilities. Think about that. Perhaps for the first time in your life, think rightly about God. With Him there are no limitations. No restrictions. No boundaries. There is no stopping. There is no hindering. There is no impossibility. In fact, God has yet to experience a challenge. It's all as good as accomplished when He determines His will be done.

—Charles R. Swindoll

ONLY once must God speak a decree for it to carry eternal weight. How significant then that God should declare one truth *four* times?

“O Sovereign LORD! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you!” (Jeremiah 32:17)

“I am the LORD, the God of all the peoples of the world. Is anything too hard for me?” (32:27)

“For nothing will be impossible with God.” (Luke 1:37 NASB)

“What is impossible for people is possible with God.” (18:27)

But the revered sages of this finite world like to imprint in our minds a namby-pamby god or even a self-starting universe. Like a careful editor, then, we must grab our eraser to rub out what's false and take up the divine pen to realign our perspective with the Mind of heaven.

Because our view of God determines our life's course, Chuck Swindoll teaches us from Luke 18 that God is the God of limitless possibilities. We can live big. Dream big. Give big. Pray big. God knows no confines. That's why Jesus calls us to engage in His planet-wide mission.



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The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'" (Luke 24:45–47)



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Before seeking God through His Word, we should seek help from His Spirit. Do that now, making the prayer below your own.

Father, overwhelm me with the truth of Your revelation in this study. Cause it to make a difference in how I think, first, and then in how I live. I want to see You as You are, hear You as You speak, and love You because You first loved me. The cross proved it. Jesus' resurrection sealed it. I know He's coming soon. In His name, amen.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Luke penned a two-volume treatise tracing the work of God in and through Jesus as well as the acts of God's Spirit in and through the church. We call it Luke-Acts. The salvation that Jesus secured, the Spirit applied—renewing souls. Renewal happens quickly and slowly. Jesus can open our eyes to His glory in an instant, like He opened Saul's eyes when He appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus. But knowing Jesus is a lifelong Spirit-led process.

In Luke 18, we come to know Jesus through two of His parables and then two of His conversations.



Observation: Melting Away the Limits

For each of the four sections in *Luke 18:1–30*, we will:

- 1) Observe the passage
- 2) Hone our observations into a brief subject statement
- 3) Add a complement statement that clarifies what we should know about the subject



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

Remember, in observation, we pay attention to what the text says. For the first passage, we provided subject and complement statements as examples. You can write your own statements for the other passages.

Keep Knocking—Luke 18:1–8

Record below key observations from Luke 18:1–8.

Write a short phrase that captures this passage's subject.

Example: *We should always pray.*

What do we need to know about the subject of the passage?

Example: *We should always pray because God will not ignore us.*



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

What is the need that you face? Bother God with it! Bring it to His attention every morning when you get up, through the day, every lunchtime, every evening meal, before you go to bed every night. Stay on it, stay on it, stay on it, and guess what? The God of limitless possibilities, lest He be worn out by your frequent coming, will break through and do what no one can do. This passage either means that or it's mockery, and I have never known the Scriptures to mock us. —Chuck Swindoll

Those Whom God Exalts—Luke 18:9–14

Record below key observations from Luke 18:9–14.

Write a short phrase that captures this passage's subject.

What do we need to know about the subject of the passage?



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

No Little People—Luke 18:15–17

Record below key observations from Luke 18:15–17.

Write a short phrase that captures this passage's subject.

What do we need to know about the subject of the passage?

If He's got time for the little children and said, "The kingdom belongs to such as these," believe me, He's got room for those of us who struggle with feelings of inadequacy. Mission possible. You see, with God there are no little people. —Chuck Swindoll



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

Sacrifice for the Kingdom—Luke 18:18–30

Record below key observations from Luke 18:18–30.

Write a short phrase that captures this passage's subject.

What do we need to know about the subject of the passage?



Interpretation: God Knows No Boundaries

Now that we have worked through what the text says, let's explore the text's meaning in light of the history and culture in which it was written. Scanning a Bible dictionary and a commentary or two can uncover helpful background information. Use these tools to excavate Scripture to find treasure worth more than handfuls of diamonds: eternal truth. Truth about God. Truth about yourself. Truth about others. Truth as valuable today as it was when first written.

In this study, we will use interpretation to focus on truth about God.



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

God's Limitless Possibilities

In each of the four sections of Luke 18 listed below, Jesus portrayed God's limitless possibilities that we might worship Him as the God of limitless possibilities and live in light of that reality. *How does each passage contribute to our understanding of God's boundless nature?* Don't forget to marshal those resources that will help you grasp the mind of Luke. The *NET Bible* offers excellent tools on the web.

Luke 18:1–8

Luke 18:9–14

Luke 18:15–17

Luke 18:18–30



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

You who have put your priorities straight, you who have set aside ego and the nonsensical pursuit of just more and more, let me tell you, it's worth it. It's worth it. You've lost nothing, and look at the peace of mind you live with. Look at the pleasure of engaging with all kinds of people and touching all kinds of lives, simply because you just got the priorities straight.
—Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Christ's Greatest Benefit for His People

To ensure the believers in Ephesus understood the gospel, Paul wrote that majestic letter, which we call Ephesians. This letter expounds our identity in Christ and the power He gives us to live out that new identity. In Ephesians 3:14–21, Paul recorded a fitting prayer in view of God channeling His limitless power for the Ephesians' benefit through Jesus. Let's review that prayer now.

According to [Ephesians 3:14–21](#), what did Paul want God to do for Christians?

What did Paul want Christians to understand and experience from God?



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

How does God glorify Himself in the church?

If you allow God to be God and to be as powerful as in fact He is, you will have no difficulty with worry, or praying as you should, or thinking and living as He would be pleased for you to do. —Chuck Swindoll



Application: Embracing a Mission-Possible Life

During application, we simplify what we have learned, develop a game plan, and implement it in our lives. Application fosters intimacy with Jesus, obedience to Him, and our ability to express His love to others.

First, reflect on your view of God. How has this study expanded it?

Have you marked off anything specific as impossible? Healing from a past scar. Overcoming a struggle or addiction. Perhaps it's leaving the familiar. Remember, God does the impossible all the time. Record whatever it may be and pray to your Father in heaven to not only change your heart but also to accomplish the impossible. Remember Jesus' parable—pray, pray, pray.



The God of Limitless Possibilities

Selections from Luke 18

Have you joined in the work of Jesus' Great Commission—to make disciples in every nation? Sure, it's big. Like 6,875 languages big. But it's *mission possible* with God because He knows no limits. It delights Him to include us because He made us in His image to be His ambassadors. Record one new way below you can reignite your passion for Jesus' mission and contribute to His work.

You can do it. Live big. Dream big. Pray big. God made all this possible for you by taking on the weaknesses of human flesh. Jesus shed His divine privileges, so you can “share his divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). Immortality. Everlasting joy. Communion with the Almighty. All yours through the Prince of Peace.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for lifting the burden of sin and giving me the blessing of life with You. Find in me an open heart to do, to go, to give, to spend, to invest—whatever I sense You leading me to do—all for Your glory, Your pleasure. You have made the impossible possible in Jesus, my Savior and Shepherd. Amen.



The God of Limitless Possibilities

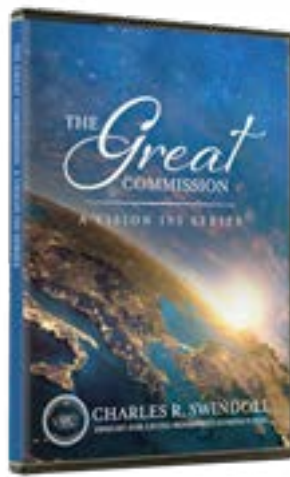
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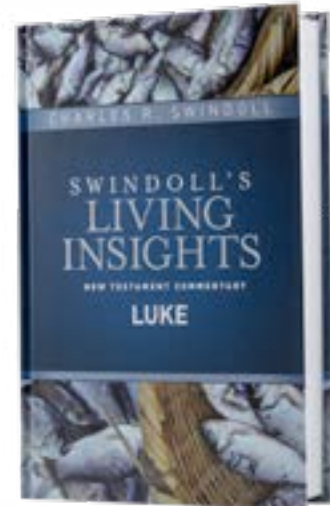
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MISSION POSSIBLE

Christ's Great Commission

STUDY TWO

Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

Do you share the message? Do you know that is the responsibility of every child of God? Do you know that you have been commissioned? Oh, I'm not talking about ministry in the formal sense or vocational Christian service. I know a very, very small segment of humanity falls into that category. Jesus did not commission us to become clergy. He did not commission us to carry our pastor with us wherever we go so that he might share the news. He commissioned you and me individually with the plan that has never been replaced with another. It's one person telling another how to find bread, how to locate pure water that will satisfy forever.

—Charles R. Swindoll

AT first, Matthew, Peter, John, and the other disciples began following Jesus, the *teacher*. As Jesus taught from village to village, they viewed Him as *prophet*. As Jesus healed every disease and ailment, they viewed Him as *Messiah*. Then as *friend*. And then as the Master who washed feet like a *servant*. But when they stood before the resurrected Jesus on that mountain in Galilee, they viewed their Messiah and friend as *God who is over all*.

So He has resurrected. Now what? The Great Commission. In just a few verses, Matthew captured the words of the risen Jesus to the disciples as well as to those of us today who follow Jesus. It's the divine game plan until the return of the Divine Son.

In this study, we stand alongside Chuck Swindoll on that mountain in Galilee before the risen Lord to better understand and renew our commitment to Jesus' mandate. Every nation. Every tribe. Every speaker of every language.



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Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Before we study Jesus' charge, consider how you have engaged in the Great Commission, and record a prayer below asking the Father to increase your understanding of it. Request the Spirit's aid in this study—for the strength and clarity to do what God has uniquely called you to do in this work.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

In each of these *Searching the Scriptures* studies, we use the same Bible study method Chuck uses and has used for more than fifty years during his Bible-teaching ministry. This process equips us to uncover spiritual gems and live lives of godliness.

“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.” (1 Timothy 4:8)



Observation: Jesus' Simple and Clear Message

Observation is our first step in getting to know the Bible. During observation, we examine:

- 1) The who, what, where, when, why, and how
- 2) What you can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell
- 3) The logical connections, flow of thoughts, and range of subjects
- 4) What's repeated, emphasized, related, alike, and unlike

On observation, Chuck writes:

Through observation, we discover what the Bible says. This part of the process is absolutely foundational. I go through this process every time I prepare any message, lesson, or sermon. Yes . . . *every* time. One hundred percent of the time, I start right there. My goal is to discover what is written in the verses I'm studying.¹



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

Observe *Matthew 28:16–20* and write your notes below.

What three requirements accompany Jesus' command to make disciples?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What concept did Jesus repeat four times in this passage?

Let's recap Jesus' mandate to His followers. First, *He talked to very ordinary people who knew Him personally.* Jesus didn't entrust the treasure of His message to an elite class of super-smarts. His followers were common folk like us without any special talents, but they had a unique and essential qualification: they knew Jesus.

Second, *Jesus presented the game plan clearly and simply.* The command was to the point: make disciples. And the strategy was basic: teach what Jesus taught and baptize converts. That's a plan anyone can follow!

Tucked away at the very end of Matthew's gospel is the commission in few words. It's become so familiar that our lips move when someone reads the Great Commission back to us. We know it by heart, but we're never commanded just to know it. We won't be held accountable for repeating it from memory when we get to heaven. Responsibility lies in the doing of it. And until you come up with a better plan, which will trump this one, I suggest we stay with this one. —Chuck Swindoll



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20



Interpretation: Intense about the Message, Not the Method

Now let's enter the next phase of Bible study: interpretation. When we interpret our passage, we study:

- 1) The author's language and literary genre
- 2) The author's culture
- 3) The historical events
- 4) The biblical context
- 5) The author's beliefs about God and life

On interpretation, Chuck gives us the following encouragement:

As you dig in and discover biblical truths on your own, you will realize that interpretation is both a science and an art. It's a science because it's guided by rules that form a system. When you know and follow those rules, you'll begin to interpret Scripture accurately. You'll guard against error, and you'll gain discernment. You'll be able to spot false messages, whether written or spoken. You'll become more stable in your faith; you'll be able to stand on your own as you master the science of interpretation.²

Using your Bible study tools, research and explain the meaning of the following statements from the Great Commission and their significance for us today. For an online resource, consult [Constable's Notes](#) at [netbible.org](#).

I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

Make disciples of all the nations.

Baptize these new disciples in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.

I am with you always, even to the end of the age.



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

Not only did Jesus talk to ordinary people and issue a simple game plan, Jesus was *intense about the message but not the method*. He issued the “what” but wasn’t specific about the “how.” To make disciples, do we hold classes, facilitate mentoring groups, use computer technology? Training and baptizing comprise the plan, but the methods are many!

Jesus gave His simple and clear game plan to very ordinary people who knew Him personally. Remember, the plan is a very simple one. There won't be some heavenly breakthrough where ten million angels suddenly blow trumpets and announce to the universe that Jesus is the Savior of the world. There's no magic kit that Jesus hands out saying, "Do that. Impress people." There's no powerful wand to wave over a group. There's one life touching another life and winning for Christ that soul, who in turn touches others. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: On a Mountain, In a Room

During correlation, we compare:

- 1) Our passage's history with biblical texts addressing the same event
- 2) Our passage's theology with biblical texts addressing the same truths
- 3) Our passage's application with biblical texts addressing the same principles

On the importance of correlation, Chuck shares:

When we carefully compare one Scripture with others, we are accurately handling the Word of God.³

In [Luke 24:44–49](#), Luke recorded a different scene from Matthew's gospel, but it functions as Luke's Great Commission passage. He recorded how the resurrected Jesus appeared to His disciples behind closed doors to explain His identity and their new mission. This passage complements Matthew 28:16–20, so it will be our focus for correlation.

What similarities do you see between Luke 24:44–49 and Matthew 28:16–20?



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

Which of Luke's emphases are less emphasized in Matthew?



Application: Committing to the Task

During application, the final step of our Bible study, we:

- 1) Look for ways to pray in light of the what the passage teaches
- 2) Ask specific questions about thoughts and actions we may need to change
- 3) Heed our Lord's warnings
- 4) Obey our Lord's commands
- 5) Believe our Lord's promises

Chuck urges us to continue our Bible study through to the very end by applying what we've learned:

I repeat: the crowning part of your task in searching the Scriptures is to discover the ways the truth applies to your own life and the lives of others.[†]

Our final point of this study is that *Jesus' commission required action*. Jesus didn't commission His followers to do nothing. So, how do we put shoe leather on His commands?

In the first *Searching the Scriptures* study of this series, we considered ways in which we could get involved, or more involved, in Jesus' Great Commission. For now, consider ways you can partner with those living abroad or with those who've dedicated their days to making disciples. Record how you can help them or



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

encourage them, and then take time in the next few days to follow through on that plan. Whether it be sending a simple note or twenty bucks, you never know what God might use to strengthen them in their work.



A FINAL PRAYER

Jesus said, “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields” (Matthew 9:37–38). Do that now. Pray for spiritual fruit to grow in the group your church is seeking to reach. Pray for your continued commitment to the task and for more workers who are willing to go.

ENDNOTES

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 80.
2. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures*, 110.
3. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures*, 143.
4. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures*, 160.



Our Commitment to Christ's Commission

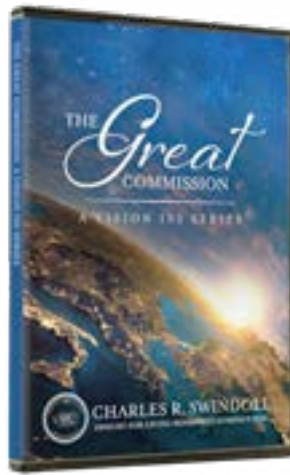
Matthew 28:16–20



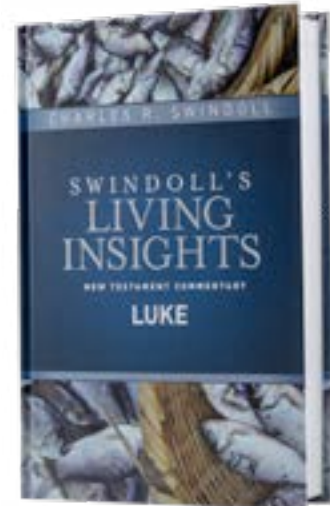
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MISSION POSSIBLE Christ's Great Commission STUDY THREE

An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

When the church is doing what it ought to be doing, the world discovers what it's missing. Then, when the world sees what it does not have, it wants to know what it is that makes the Christian so different, so unique, so full of zest and life and enthusiasm and purpose.

—Charles R. Swindoll

If onlookers from the first century could pull back the curtain of time and glimpse civilizations today, who knows what they would think about. Medicine's many cures. The cell phone and Internet. Central air and heat. Automobiles and airplanes. Supermarkets and malls.

Even with humanity's finest inventions, the most powerful force for good has remained the same for two thousand years: the church. God showers humanity with His eternal blessings through Jesus Christ and His church. Renewed lives. Restored relationships. Clarity of purpose. Faith. Peace. Hope. Joy. Love.

From the first portrait of the first church in Acts 2:41–47, we see an example of the church humming according to Jesus' design like a perfectly tuned engine. Doctor Luke made certain to detail the church's innerworkings in a way that could be understood and replicated by any church—no matter its era of history, the language spoken by its congregation, or the land where it is located.

We will explore with Chuck Swindoll this remarkable passage so we might learn how to live out Jesus' Great Commission in the community of His people.



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An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Before we examine God's Word, take a moment to pray for the Holy Spirit's help. Since the Bible is God-breathed, we depend entirely upon the Spirit to illuminate our minds, soften our hearts, and receive what God says. Record your prayer below.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

In these *Searching the Scriptures* studies, we study the Bible just as Chuck studies the Bible. Through this method, the pages of Scripture come to life before our eyes and we see God as we have never seen Him before.



Observation: Awe Came over Them All

Begin observation with a couple of slow readings of *Acts 2:41–47*. Let the passage grab your imagination. Hear the prayers. Taste the bread. Watch the miracles. Feel the joy. Afterward, record your observations.



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

List the characteristics of the church that Luke mentioned in this passage.

What two ways did the non-believers respond to the church?

In the most natural and zealous and exciting way, they shared their lives that had been transformed by Christ, and the church made room for the growth of brand-new believers. They just kept their arms open and the welcome mat out. —Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: What Every Church Must Have

Through the Bible, God refers to His people as His bride. For example, in Revelation 19:7, John wrote:

*Let us be glad and rejoice,
let us give honor to him.
For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb,
and his bride has prepared herself.*



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

For this reason, Chuck created the acronym **W.I.F.E.** to describe the four components of a true church, which we see in Acts 2:41–47.

- 1) **W**orship: every church devotes itself to worship of the true God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit.
- 2) **I**nstruction: every church devotes itself to the apostles' teachings.
- 3) **F**ellowship: every church practices baptism as well as the Lord's Supper, and its members love one another with a selfless love.
- 4) **E**xpression: every church shares the gospel message, and its members share their transformed lives with non-believers.

How did the first church, portrayed in Acts 2:41–47, exemplify these four traits?

Why did God give power to the apostles to perform miraculous signs and wonders (Acts 2:43)?



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

Why might the origin of the believers have caused the need for such generosity (Acts 2:44–45)? Secondly, how might their radical unity, perceived from each believer's ethnic diversity, have attracted outsiders? Do not forget to consult your commentary, Bible dictionary, or [online resources](#) during interpretation.

Evangelism is not a “churchy” thing. Evangelism is a Christian thing. It is the life of Christ being shared with someone else. We need to remember that. Evangelism happens outside the church so that the people of the church might then grow while meeting and gathering together. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: The Lord Grows the Church

Acts 2:47 says, “Each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.” Luke showed how *the Lord grew the church* as the church increased in number all over the world in its beginnings.

But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000. (Acts 4:4)

Yet more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord—crowds of both men and women. (5:14)

So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too. (6:7)

The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers. (9:31)

The same thing happened in Iconium. Paul and Barnabas went to the Jewish synagogue and preached with such power that a great number of both Jews and Greeks became believers. (14:1)



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

Again and again, the church expanded, spreading all across the Roman Empire because the Lord produced the growth. How does God's primacy in church growth both encourage and direct Christians today as we seek to foster healthy churches?



Application: His Global Mission through the Local Church

In this epoch of time, local churches are springing up by the Spirit of God. Disciples are making disciples, who are making more disciples. The Great Commission is not yet fulfilled; therefore, it will go on until all people of all languages hear the gospel, and then the Father will say, "It is time."

During this portion of our Bible study, we will provide Chuck's own principles from Acts 2:41–47 for you to create specific steps you can take to implement God's Word today.

Principle One

The first Christians were unique and creative in their outreach.

Consider how you might contribute to your church's outreach in ways you have not done before. How might you and your church be unique and creative in your outreach?



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

Principle Two

Their outreach was not limited to church gatherings.

How does your church already reach out to the community and across cultures in a way that is not through regular worship gatherings? Have you considered helping or organizing an outreach program in your local community? What can you do to help this work?

Principle Three

Outreach was usually connected to nonreligious events.

What might this look like in your local community? Are there fun events, organizations, or clubs that you can get involved with in your community, which would allow you to shine the gospel light?



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

Principle Four

Church growth was never the result of force or coercion.

God drew non-believers to Jesus through the attractive and winsome community of Christians. What are two ways you can ensure your outreach is winsome and attractive instead of forceful and coercive?

Principle Five

The majority of first-century Christians did not personally leave home to serve Christ on foreign soil.

The great British missionary to India, William Carey, could not have completed his mission without faithful believers holding the rope and supporting him. Andrew Fuller stayed home raising support, creating awareness, and sending encouraging letters to the far-off Carey. In what ways do you and your church currently hold the rope for those on foreign soil? Is there an area or two in which you could strengthen your aid to those who are reaching non-believers in foreign cultures?



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

Acts 2:41–47

Those who believed were together. They were really in harmony. They were in unity, not uniformity. Many different personalities, many different cultures, different languages represented in this group . . . different colors, but they were together in heart. They had things in common, and with the awe and the wonder and the intermingling of their lives and the absence of selfishness, there were love and forgiveness and acceptance and joy and the magnetism of Christ. —Chuck Swindoll



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, without some having made the sacrifice of going, giving, and telling, I would not know You. But I do know You. I have come to know You as a good and faithful Father who takes care of His children. I realize many around me have not come to know You in that way, and so many across the world have never known the name of Jesus. I depend on You for the strength and wisdom to use what time and resources You have given me to further the Great Commission of my Lord, Jesus Christ. For the sake of His name among all nations, amen.



An E-Ticket for Reaching the Lost

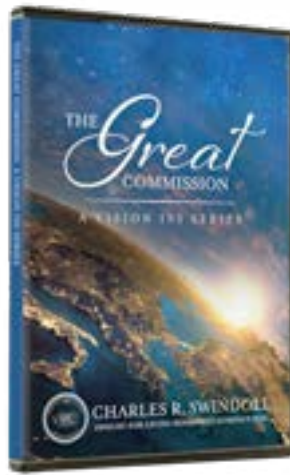
Acts 2:41–47



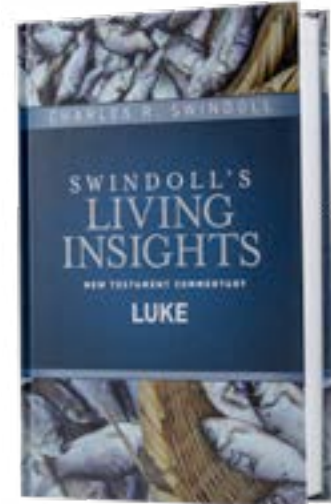
Tools for Digging Deeper



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MISSION POSSIBLE Christ's Great Commission STUDY FOUR

Needed: A Few Good Neighbors

Luke 10:25–37

Jesus gave His best words and did His best work among people on the street.

—Charles R. Swindoll

A highly trained Jewish lawyer, skilled in applying Mosaic law, approached the famous Galilean teacher to show himself competent, even superior. The lawyer's simple question, "Who is my neighbor?" prompted Jesus to answer with a parable so profound that it has rooted itself in cultures worldwide. Some countries even name a certain law after it: the Good Samaritan Law.

Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan clarifies a basic concept by answering the question, "Who is our neighbor?" from the divine perspective. Driven by self-righteousness, the lawyer wanted to nuance God's meaning of neighbor, but his excessive complexity only muddied the second part of the Great Commandment.

In this study on Luke 10:25–37, we join Chuck Swindoll to explore Jesus' conversation with this legal expert that we might gain a fresh perspective from Jesus' timeless story. We will see that like a ball is essential to an athlete or an instrument to a musician, so is a neighbor to a Christian. Basic. Inseparable.

You see, the core issue of Jesus' story has nothing to do with where my neighbor lives, or what he looks like, or what language he speaks, or the color of his skin, or how well we may or may not know him. It has everything to do with what kind of neighbor I am.

—Chuck Swindoll



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

Needed: A Few Good Neighbors

Luke 10:25–37



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Internalize the prayer below as you prepare to engage God's Word.

Father, thank You for this penetrating parable of truth that still hits us as powerfully today as it did when Jesus first spoke it. I pray that it would take root in my heart, that it would reorient my priorities, and that I would see differently those whom I have previously overlooked in my routine of going from here to there, of doing this and that. Thank You that I am no longer a stranger and exile but a child of God adopted because of Your divine love that sent the eternal Son to live among us. In the name of our Lord and Savior I pray, amen.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

We now enter our final study of Chuck's series *Mission Possible: Christ's Great Commission*. First, we explored Luke 18, which taught us that our God is the God of limitless possibilities. No mission, no task, no goal proves too difficult for the Most High. Next, we listened to Jesus give that indelible command from Matthew 28:16–20: "Go and make disciples of all the nations. . . ." In the previous study, we reviewed the innerworkings of the first church so that, nearly two thousand years later, we can anchor our Spirit-driven churches to the same divinely ordained foundation.

The parable of the Good Samaritan gives us tools to live out the Great Commission day to day.



Observation: Who Is My Neighbor?

Begin by reading [Luke 10:25–37](#). Pause as you do so. Reflect on key words. Ask those inductive questions. Even use multiple translations like Chuck's favorites: the New Living Translation and the New American Standard Bible. Take notes on what you discover.



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Luke 10:25–37

What Old Testament texts did the lawyer cite when Jesus reverted the question to him?

What question did Jesus' parable answer?

The Jewish man in the parable traveled from _____ to _____.

Which three individuals passed by the injured Jewish traveler?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

According to Luke 10:37, how did the lawyer describe the Samaritan?

Compassion won't just sit there and be quiet. It accelerates a number of very important steps toward the person to whom your heart goes out. —Chuck Swindoll



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Luke 10:25–37



Interpretation: Who Is My Neighbor's Neighbor?

During interpretation, you will need your Bible dictionary, atlas, and commentaries along with any other resources at your disposal for understanding God's Word.

In the conversation, a Jewish expert in Mosaic law posed a question to Jesus, calling Him "teacher." What societal role did the lawyer have? What societal role did Jesus have as Teacher, also called "Rabbi"?

What societal roles did the priest, Levite, and Samaritan have?

How far is Jerusalem from Jericho? Locate these cities on a map in your Bible atlas and note the rugged wilderness through which the road passed.

The New Living Translation says the Samaritan "handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here'" (Luke 10:35). Consult your resources and note how many days the two silver coins would allow the beaten traveler to stay at the



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inn as well as how many days the average person would have needed to work to make that much money. For an online commentary, consult *Constable's Notes* at net.bible.org.

In what sense was Jesus' parable a realistic story for His day and culture?

In what sense was Jesus' parable a radical twist on social norms for His day and culture?



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Luke 10:25–37

Was Jesus' answer to the lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" an indirect or direct answer? How did Jesus' answer change the focus of the conversation, and why was this effective as an answer?

The Samaritan saw what others did not see because of the man he was. That to me is the message of the story. What you are determines what you see, and what you see determines what you do. —Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Love One Another

We just studied how Jesus defined the Great Commandment, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). John's short epistle, 1 John, uses the word *love* twenty-six times in just five chapters according to the New Living Translation. Take time to read through that short letter or review a [list](#) of every verse where John mentioned *love*.

What impression did you receive from John's use of *love*?

What importance did love have for John, and how does that still ring true for us today?

We love each other because he loved us first. (1 John 4:19)



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Luke 10:25–37



Application: Loving Our Neighbors, One at a Time

For this stage in our *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study method, we will focus on just one person whom we can love as we would love ourselves.

Begin by choosing that person. He or she could be a family member, a friend, an acquaintance, or even someone you know of but have yet to meet.

Now decide what you can do to express your care for that person. First, pray for that person, then ask the Spirit to guide you as you develop a plan to reach out to him or her. It could be a single act, or it could be a new practice you would like to keep as a routine. Record your plan below.

List below the date you would like to act. Remember: Jesus is with you.

We don't know what happened to the lawyer. I want to believe that he believed. I want to believe he trusted Jesus as his own personal Lord. But I don't know. I want to believe that, as a result of his trusting Christ, he became not a sophisticated professional but a compassionate neighbor. More importantly, I want to believe that that's what we're going to become. —Chuck Swindoll

By the Spirit's power, we can and will become compassionate neighbors!



Needed: A Few Good Neighbors

Luke 10:25–37



A FINAL PRAYER

End this study and series by writing a prayer asking Jesus to increase your role in His Great Commission. This type of prayer accords with prayers the church has prayed from the very beginning. See how Paul wanted the church at Colossae to pray for him:

Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains. Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should. (Colossians 4:3–4)



Needed: A Few Good Neighbors

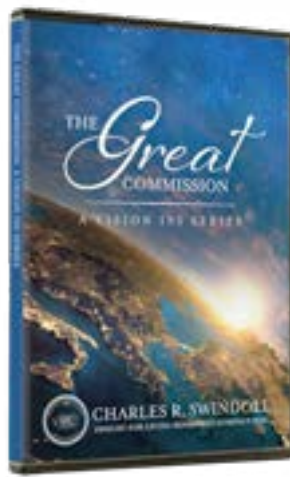
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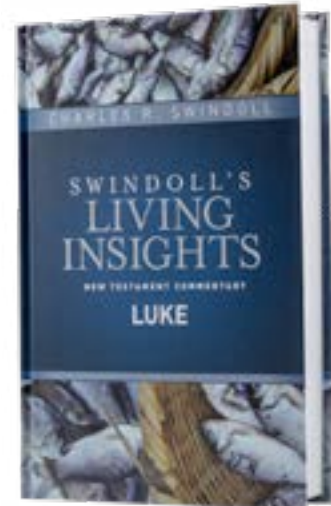
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