



THE

# **GREAT COMMISSION COURSE**

YOUR GUIDE TO WORLD MISSIONS.





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# GETTING STARTED

Welcome to The Great Commission Course (GCC)! We are so thrilled that you have taken a step forward to learn more about missions. Our heart is that you would be going through this course in community, whether as a church or small group, or as an individual.

In order to help you on this journey, we have put together course notes with discussion questions, guided notes and additional resources. The notes are designed not to be required homework, but to enhance your experience for the duration of this course.



To facilitate each gathering, please review the Session flow on the next page.

## STEP 1 WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER

The best way we can begin this time is by setting our sights on the Lord. This course is not about man and what we are doing. It is about what our Almighty Father is doing around the world! Take time to calm your heart before the Lord in prayer. Ask Him to be your guide as you listen and discuss each session's topic.

## STEP 2 BEFORE YOU WATCH

You do not need to answer all of these questions, but we do encourage your group to reflect on what you have learned previously and to begin thinking about what will be covered in the upcoming video. There is space for you to write answers so that you can come back to your original discussion and see how your view has changed or grown stronger after watching the video.

## STEP 3 VIDEO AND SESSION NOTES

After having some discussion with your group, begin the videos. As you can see, we have provided session notes. Feel free to use the space provided to remember key ideas from the video, as well as points you want to hold on to.

## STEP 4 REFLECT AND DISCUSS

Read through the reflection questions at the end of the session. Take time to write down your answers and discuss them if you are in a group.

## STEP 5 CLOSING PRAYER

As you wrap up the session, check out the additional resources listed at the end of the page. They will help you delve further into the topic.

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# SESSION 1

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## Introduction



### Steve Sanford

Ethnos360 CEO and  
former church planter to  
the Joti people

**“The gospel is only good news if it  
gets there in time.”**

— selected

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

This session will give you an overview of the course. You'll be introduced to the concept of missions and key missions terms. You'll hear about the Joti people's experience and learn a brief history of Ethnos360.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- What do you hope to gain from this course?
- What is your definition of worship?
- Take a few minutes to consider the following terms and how you would explain or define them: missions, people group, lost, unreached people group, unengaged people group.

# SESSION NOTES

## Story of the Joti

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## Worshippers from all *Ethnos*

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## History of Ethnos360 and Our Global Partners:

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## Defining Important Terms

Missionary:

Lost People:

Unreached People Groups (UPGs):

Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGs):

## How this course can help you

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# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What are you looking forward to about the course?
- Was there anything Steve shared that surprised you?
- How did the definitions of key terms (such as people group, unreached, unengaged) challenge your way of thinking about missions?
- What does God want in worshippers?
- How do you think God's love impacts the concept of missions?



## Closing Prayer

Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Video: State of the World/ The Task Remaining



Website: A Third of Us



# SESSION 2

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## Seeing God's Heart in the Old and New Testament



**Brett Gordon**

Advancement Director of  
Ethnos360 Bible Institute

**"The Bible is not the basis of missions;  
missions is the basis of the Bible."**

— Ralph Winter

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

Missions was not an idea that began at the time of Jesus' ascension but in the earliest pages of Scripture. In this session, you'll see how both the Old and New Testaments demonstrate God's desire for all peoples to know Him.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- Review what you discovered in the last session.
- How do you see the Great Commission tie into the rest of the Bible?

# SESSION NOTES

## Introduction: Genesis 1 — 11

## Plot: Genesis 12 — Jude

## Conclusion: Revelation

# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What is God's will?
- What are practical ways we can be involved in His will?
- What was new or surprising to you in this session?
- What personal impact does this session have on your worship?



## Closing Prayer

Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Book: The Abrahamic Revolution: God's Mission in Motion by Todd Ahrend

Passages shared in this session –

- Genesis 1:28, 6:5-8, 9:1, 11:4, 12:1-3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4, 28:13-14
- Exodus 9:16
- Deuteronomy 28:9-10
- 1 Kings 8:41-43
- Psalms 46:10, 67:1-7
- Isaiah 49:6
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Mark 16:15
- Luke 24:46-47
- John 20:21
- Acts 1:8
- Revelation 7:9



# SESSION 3

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## Missions History Part 1



**James Baker**

Teacher at Ethnos360  
Bible Institute

**“God isn’t looking for people of great faith, but for individuals ready to follow Him.”**

– Hudson Taylor

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

The book of Acts gives an account of how the early Church responded to Jesus' final command before His ascension. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel spread from Jerusalem to surrounding locations, and the Church grew swiftly. This session explores examples of obedience and worship found in Acts, while tracing the spread of the gospel.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- Review what you discovered about God's heart for the nations in the Old and New Testament.
- What do you know about the book of Acts?

# SESSION NOTES

**The Power of the Great Commission:**

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**The Progress of the Great Commission:**

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**The Prompts of the Great Commission:**

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**The Purpose of the Great Commission:**

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**The People of the Great Commission:**

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# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What encourages you about the unfolding of the Great Commission in the book of Acts?
- How do you believe obedience and/or worship play out in your life?
- Explain the two aspects of the Great Commission: planting and watering.
- Why does God choose to use us in the fulfillment of the Great Commission?



## Closing Prayer

Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Video: The Bible Project: Book of Acts





# SESSION 4

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## Missions History Part 2



### Dr. James Hansen

Teacher at Ethnos360  
Bible Institute and former  
missionary in Bolivia

**“I’m not afraid of failure; I’m afraid of succeeding at things that don’t matter.”**

– William Carey

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

In this session, you'll learn how God has been using His people over the 2000 years after the book of Acts ends. Considering significant movements and key people of the past allows you to have a greater understanding of missions today.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- Review what you discovered in the last session.
- What do you know about the history of missions? What challenges you about that history?

# SESSION NOTES

**The Great Commission in Early Centuries:**

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**The Great Commission in the Middle Ages:**

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**The Great Commission in the Reformation:**

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**The Great Commission in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and Onward  
(First, Second, and Third Waves):**

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**The Great Commission Today:**

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# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What stood out to you about missions history?
- Describe the growth of the early Church. What were some of the reasons that people became believers even when there was intense persecution?
- What are some ways that prayer influenced missions movements/key people?
- What is worship? How does looking at Church history influence your worship of God?



## Closing Prayer

Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Book: A Concise History of the Christian World Mission by J. Herbert Kane



Book: What in the World Is God Doing? by C. Gordon Olson





# SESSION 5

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## Global Realities and the Unfinished Task



**Larry Brown**

Member of Ethnos360  
Executive Leadership Team,  
former CEO of Ethnos360  
and former missionary in  
Papua New Guinea.

**“No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once.”**

– William Carey

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

Although there have been many missionaries and missions movements throughout history, many people around the world still do not know Christ. The Great Commission remains unfinished. This session explains current global realities, statistics on the unreached and stewardship of the gospel.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- How has looking at the Great Commission influenced your worship as you have gone through the course?
- Review key terms in Session 1.

# SESSION NOTES

## Important Definitions:

## Current Realities of Missions and the Need for the Gospel:

# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What challenged you in this session?
- Compare the opportunities and challenges faced in missions today with those faced in earlier periods of Church history. What differences and similarities do you think there are?
- How do we determine where the greatest need is for someone to bring the gospel?
- In your opinion, how does the idea of stewardship connect to sharing the gospel?



## Closing Prayer

Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Book: Commissioned by Marvin J. Newell



Video: What is Globalization?



Website: Missions Statistics - The Traveling Team





# SESSION 6

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## Church Planting Part 1



**Greg Greenlaw**

Teacher at Ethnos360 Training  
Center and former church  
planter in Papua New Guinea

**“Find out what is important to God and make that  
important to you.”**

– Doug Schaible

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

In this session, you'll hear Ethnos360's perspective on the planning and preparation that should go into church planting — even before the gospel is shared. Not only does it require significant training for the church planters themselves, but it requires a team of support missionaries, consultants and churches. This session is designed to help you see what it takes to be prepared to reach the unreached. If you are interested in missions, you don't need to choose Ethnos360, but we encourage you to find an organization that will provide you with quality training and support.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- What skills do you think would be needed to plant a church cross-culturally?
- Review what you discovered in the last session.

# SESSION NOTES

## Church Planting: Skills and Training

## Church Planting: Arrival and Pre-Evangelism

# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What stood out to you about the training necessary for cross-cultural church planting?
- Think about the couple of support roles that Greg shared. What other roles do you think would be needed to help support missionaries?
- Why do you think it's important that missionaries spend time preparing before they enter a people group to plant a church?
- Before sharing the gospel, what are some specific things a church planting team would need to have in place, whether physically, culturally, relationally or spiritually?

## Closing Prayer



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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Book: No Shortcut to Success: A Manifesto for Modern Missions  
by Matt Rhodes



Book: The Messenger, The Message, The Community: Three Critical Issues  
for the Cross-Cultural Church Planter by Rolland Muller



Video: The Nukak: Needing Christ, Needing Light // Ethnos360





# SESSION 7

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## Church Planting Part 2

**“Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.”**

— William Carey

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

Once missionaries learn the language and culture of an unreached people group, what happens next? This session explains strategies for teaching and translating God's Word. When a church is born, the new believers need discipleship to grow in their understanding and spiritual life. Eventually, a maturing church will have its own leaders, will be discipling their people and will be sending out their own missionaries.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- Review the initial steps you should take when preparing to present the gospel from Part 1.
- When sharing the gospel, where would you start?
- How would you recognize when a church is born?
- How would you identify a church that is maturing?

# SESSION NOTES

## Church Planting: Teaching the Bible Chronologically

## Church Planting: The New Church

## Church Planting: The Maturing Church

# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- What surprised or challenged you in this session?
- How would you explain the importance of chronological teaching for a clear understanding of the gospel?
- List some of the challenges a new church may face.
- What characteristics would you expect to see in a maturing church?
- How are worship and church planting connected?

## Closing Prayer



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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Book: Building on Firm Foundations Volume 1: Guidelines for Evangelism and Teaching Believers by Trevor McIlwain



Video: Darkness to Light Among the Moi People



Video: The Tagbanwa Story





# SESSION 8

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## Next Steps



**Andrew Royer**

President of Ethnos360  
Bible Institute and former  
missionary in Brazil

**“Only one life, 'twill soon be past; Only what's  
done for Christ will last.”**

— C.T. Studd

# GETTING STARTED

## Session Introduction:

In this final session, you'll be encouraged to consider how the Lord is worthy of your life. Following Him is a tremendous privilege and joy. You'll also learn about practical ways you can be a part of the Great Commission.

## Begin with worship through prayer



Worship: the submission of one's whole being to God out of a heart of awe, reverence and adoration for who He is and what He has done.

## Before you watch...

- Review what you discovered in the last session.
- Who is the Great Commission for?
- How do I obey the Great Commission?

# SESSION NOTES

## God's Character and Our Motivation:

## An Eternal Perspective:

## Practical Next Steps:

# REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

- Explain how worship relates to the Great Commission. What impact should God being our Creator and Redeemer have on how we live?
- What motivates you to be a part of the Great Commission?
- What are two practical, specific ways that you can be involved in the Great Commission?

## Closing Prayer



Take some time to remember who God is. Remember that this course is not about man and what he has done. This course is about the Lord and what He is doing through us. Take time to worship the One whose heart is for the nations.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



- Learn and Pray
- Short-Term Experience
- Train
- Long-Term Options

THE  
**GREAT COMMISSION  
COURSE**

YOUR GUIDE TO WORLD MISSIONS.

Thank you for joining us as we explored what the Great Commission is and who it is for. We pray that this course was a blessing, encouragement and challenge to you.

If you have more questions, we recommend connecting with your pastor, missions pastor or missions committee. If you would like to connect with us, you can book a 20-minute meeting with one of our Missions Guides by scanning the QR code below.

