# COMMISSION IMPOSSIBLE

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**Category:** Musing On Mission Themes

A while ago, I wrote a piece suggesting that the Great Commission in Matthew 28 was perhaps not the best call to world mission for our generation (you can find it here).Â  Today, I've been musing a little on the concept that the Great Commission is something which can be accomplished. Just to keep us on track, let's take a look at what the actual words from Matthew 28 are:

> *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.Â  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." (Matthew 28:18-20 ESV)*

Now, you don't have to look very far on the internet to find examples of people saying that we can accomplish what Christ commanded us to do here. Just try this Goolge Search and you will turn up numerous examples like this one:

> *The Great Commission can be accomplished as millions of Christians develop a personal strategy that ties in directly to Christ's global strategy. (Read more)*

But hang about, can we realistically expect to accomplish what Christ is commanding his church to do in this passage? The command in Matthew 28 is to make disciples of all nations. It is not to preach to all nations, it is not to establish churches in all nations or even (dare I say it?) to translate the Scriptures into every language that needs it. Making disciples is a continuous job. No one is ever fully a disciple and even when the Gospel is well established in a country it doesn't mean that the nation is full of disciples. The Christian message has been part of the British national culture for over 1,500 years, but anyone who thinks that this nation has no futher need of disciple making just hasn't been here for a while.

There are some tasks which can be seen as projects, they have a starting point and an end point. Other jobs are not like that; they may have a starting point, but they have to be carried on all the time because there is always something new about them. The Great Commission is like this, every generation is faced with a whole load of new people who need to become disciples of Jesus. Nations which once rejoiced in millions of disciples turn away from God and need to be reached all over again. The Great Commission is not a one off task that can one day be checked off the Church's to-do list, it is our ongoing mission which is being continually renewed as we have the amazing privilege of making disciples anew across the whole of geography and history.