

“For it is by grace you have been saved ...” Ephesians 2:8 (NIV)

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GET INTO THE GAME

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Let's Watch ...

River Walk with Sam and Grandpa George (Clip 4)



Sam is frustrated that he is now partnered with Mac, a man who appears to dislike everyone that is different than he is. Mac's angry and bitter attitude toward life is opposite Sam's joyful demeanor. On top of that, Sam is now starting to question his true calling as a pastor. The prior Sunday, Sam delivered a message to his church in which he confessed his frustration with Mac and his inability to love others as Jesus does. He also let his congregation know they weren't much better at loving others than he is. As you can imagine, *that* went over like a lead balloon! As Sam walks along the banks of the Mississippi River in Memphis with his grandfather

George, he's about to learn a life lesson from his mentor ... although it may take a while to sink in.

Let's Read ...

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 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.’” Matthew 28:16-20

Other Key Scripture: 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Timothy 1:15; Matthew 4:19

Let's Consider ...

This passage in Matthew takes us into the Disciples' world in the aftermath of Jesus Christ's sacrificial atonement (in which He paid for the sins of the entire world with his life's blood) and Resurrection (in which he provided undeniable authenticity that he indeed is the Lamb of God, our Lord and Savior). Now, about to ascend back to the side of his Father in Heaven, Jesus delivers to his followers The Great Commission.

How important is this? Of all the things Jesus could tell his followers before leaving, *this* is the final call he gives. With the establishment of the New Testament Church forthcoming, Jesus tells his followers to “... *go and make disciples.*” In essence, he is saying: Get into the game! Don't wait for the tired and weary to come

to you, *go to them* and make disciples! For many of us in today's churches, we would rather worship with fellow believers than go into the streets to interact with non-believers. But without those interactions, who will point them to Jesus?

Grandpa George tells Sam that as a Civil Rights leader in Memphis, he learned from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. the importance of getting into the game instead of sitting in the locker room. The locker room is where the game plan is delivered—on Sundays in the sanctuary of the church. While that's important, the actual game is played Monday through Saturday on the streets! After hearing the game plan in the locker room, we have to get into the game.

The goal of the New Testament believer is to make disciples. The more disciples you mentor and help to mature in the faith, the more the Kingdom of God (and the church) will grow. We need a steady diet of corporate worship; one of the mistakes believers often make is not exercising the discipline to get their own batteries recharged by receiving a fresh anointing from God. That is done in and through corporate worship. But we can't be in the game if we stay in the locker room!

When those in the world who are floundering see joy and the passion in a committed follower of Christ, it ignites a hunger within them. But how many in the world will walk into our churches—our locker rooms—to catch a glimpse of that? Our passion and joy have to be seen when we get into the game Monday through Saturday and live our lives intentionally with the goal of reaching our communities with the love of God and making disciples through his grace!

Let's Discuss ...

What does it mean to *get into the game* when it comes to Christ's command?

In what ways do you see the church today keeping it in the locker room instead of getting in the game? Does the locker room or the playing field best describe the focus of your church?

Would you describe yourself as someone who gets into the game? Give a recent example. Do you find yourself enjoying the locker room or the game more?

Re-read the passage from Matthew 28. According to the Great Commission, **When** are we to make disciples? **Where** are we to make disciples? **How** are we to make disciples?

In what ways are you demonstrating or sharing the grace of God with others? How could you increase your impact in this area?

Let's Not Forget ...

In Matthew 4:19, Jesus began his public ministry by calling his disciples to become fishers of men. How is this related to his final challenge that we are responsible to make disciples of all nations? The term *apostle* actually means sent one; one is who sent away. Are we doing enough to send people into the game, or is our focus solely on the locker room? We need to be in the game.

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