The purpose of Finish the Job

... is to encourage viewers to:
1) consider what it really means to trust God.
2) recognize the relationship between trusting God and being used by Him.
3) comprehend the truth found in Matthew 24:14.
4) search their hearts as to whether they really want Jesus to return.
5) ask God to show how He wants each viewer to participate in completing the Great Commission.

For maximum impact, please . . .

Preview: View Finish the Job and read this guide before using Finish the Job with your group.

Plan: Determine when, where, and how to use Finish the Job with your group. This guide is intended to stimulate your creativity, not to limit it.

Prepare: Minimize potential distractions in the room where you are viewing Finish the Job, i.e., arrange the seating, set the room temperature, remove the telephone, etc. Adjust the color, sound, and tracking before you roll the tape. Distractions can rob the power of a ministry opportunity.

Pray: Ask God to direct you as you preview, plan, and prepare to use Finish the Job. Ask God to prepare those who will view Finish the Job that they might be receptive to His call in their lives.

NOTE: All scripture references are from the NASB unless otherwise stated.
Possibilities for discussion

1. What is your response to the video you have just seen? Did it stir something in you . . . or not? If possible, explain your response.

2. Dr. Thompson describes the day he received word that his missionary parents were brutally murdered by communists. David went back to his dorm room and cried out to God. God asked him three times, “Do you trust Me?” David knew what God was getting at. Finally, David simply said yes. God said, “Then, thank Me.” David did. David said he didn’t feel like thanking God, but did it anyway. Was he faking it? Is it phony to choose obedience over our feelings? In David’s life, what was the result of such obedience?

3. At one point David said, “I thought trusting God was just asking and waiting and getting.” He describes trusting God like . . . “white water rafting.” “God said, ‘Get into the raft,’ and I got into the raft. He said, ‘Take the paddle,’ and I took the paddle. He said, ‘Stick it in the water when I tell you to stick it in,’ and I did. And He said, ‘Push off from the shore,’ and I went down the river and all I did was hang on for dear life and here I am twenty years later.” Put David’s idea of trusting God into your own words. Do you agree with his view? Why or why not?

4. Consider Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.” The word nations is key to this verse. From the Greek word ethne, this word refers to groups of people which are separated from other groups of people, by political boundaries, race, language, culture, tribal affiliation, etc. Why is this word important? Suppose this verse used the phrase “to every person” instead of “to all nations.” What difference would it make? Would God give us a goal that will never be reached?

nations (nā’ shens)

From Genesis to Revelation we find that God’s unfailing purpose in this world is to populate His eternal Kingdom with worshipers from every nation. “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9 NIV).

Translated from the Greek word ethne, the biblical term nations does not really equate with the concept of a political country. Rather, it is referring to groups of people which are separated from other groups of people, sometimes by political boundaries, but more often by race, language, culture, tribal affiliation, religion, etc. For instance, India is one country, but it is inhabited by thousands of people groups or nations. But how did the nations of the world come to be?

After the great flood, Noah and his family began to repopulate the earth. At that time, “the whole world used the same language” (Gen. 11:1). Then in Genesis 11:3-4, it is recorded that the people of the earth came together to build a city with a tower which would “reach into heaven.” God saw their pride and He was not amused. He confused their language. This resulted in approximately 70 distinct groups of people with different languages, the beginning of the nations. One chapter later (Gen. 12:1-3), God promised Abraham that in him “all the families of the earth” would be blessed. This promise is restated in Genesis 22:18, “And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”

By the time of Christ, these 70 nations had split into about 60,000. Due to modern communications and commerce, these nations have since merged into a smaller number.
In a way, the nations of the world are like the musicians in an orchestra. Each player has a unique identity with a different instrument, and yet they are all meant to play the same symphony in perfect harmony. Such diversity and harmony can only come together when the musicians are following the same score under the leadership of the same conductor. In all of history, man has never achieved lasting peace among the nations, but Jesus promised that one day He will bring the nations together in perfect harmony (Rev. 5:9; 7:9).

NOTE: The number of people groups yet to receive the gospel is constantly being assessed by researchers. For more information, contact The Joshua Project at www.ad2000.org.

5. Two common questions concerning Matthew 24:14 are addressed below, if you would like to go deeper into this issue.

Q-1. How does Matthew 24:14 fit what I've been taught about Bible prophecy?

Concerning the order of future events spoken about in the Bible, two schools of thought predominate. Both anticipate a time of intense global turmoil and suffering, known as the Tribulation, prior to the return of Jesus. One school of thought believes that the Church will go through the Tribulation. This would allow the Church to fulfill Matthew 24:14.

The other school of thought believes that the Church will be taken out of the world prior to, or midway through, the Tribulation. However, there would still be evangelism taking place during the Tribulation, much of it being done by 144,000 Jews (and others) who will come to believe in Jesus after the Tribulation has begun (Rev. 7:4). They will actually complete the Great Commission.

The point is that no matter what your view of future events, Matthew 24:14 is still true. The end will not come until the job is done.

Q-2. Are you saying that Jesus’ return is dependent on us?

No. If we do not finish the job, God will raise up someone who will. But He will not return until the job is done.

Recall the story of Esther. The king of the empire, Xerxes, chose a Jewish orphan girl named Esther as his Queen. He did not know she was Jewish. Sometime later, a decree was signed by Xerxes that on a certain day all of the Jews could be slaughtered.

When Esther’s uncle, Mordecai, saw and heard of this decree, he sent a letter to Queen Esther asking her to go before the king and intervene for her people. Esther responded, “…If I go, I might die.” To this Mordecai replied, “If you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will come from another place, but you and your family will perish. And who knows but that God has brought you to royal position for such a time as this.” Esther went before King Xerxes, pled for her people, and her people were saved.

Notice that Mordecai did not tell Esther that the deliverance of the Jewish people depended on her. He said that if she remained silent, God would raise up another. If we remain silent, deliverance for the unreached peoples of the world will come from another place. God will find someone else. And who knows but that you were created by God for this purpose.

According to John Piper, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the Church. The Glory of God is the ultimate goal of the Church because it is the ultimate goal of God. The final goal of all things is that God might be worshiped with white hot affection by a redeemed company of countless persons from every tribe and tongue and nation (Rev. 5:9; 7:9). Missions exists because worship doesn’t. When the Kingdom finally comes in glory, missions will cease. Missions is penultimate (the next most important thing); worship is ultimate. If we forget this and reverse their roles, the passion and the power for both diminish.”
6. The basic premise of David Thompson’s talk is that Jesus will not return until the job (the Great Commission) is done. So if you want the King to come, then finish the job. What David Thompson is talking about is not really a theological issue. It is a matter of the heart. Do you personally want the King to come? Or is there something you want to happen first? If so, what is it? Are you willing to submit your desires for the sake of His Kingdom? What desires are you willing to give up?

7. If you and I remain silent, relief and deliverance for the lost people of the world will come from another place. God will find someone else. He awaits a generation who will finish the job. But who knows that you were created by God for such a time as this? Would you make this the passion of your life?

**Personal reflection**

1. Recall David Thompson saying that if you don’t trust God, you won’t go where He asks you to go, you won’t do what He asks you to do. All of your thinking will be preoccupied with questions that start with the words, “What if?” Ask the Father to show you if there is any area where you are not trusting Him. Will you trust Him with that area of your life now? If so, then tell Him.

2. The question posed early in the video was “What is God’s design for you in the world today?” Or “What is His destiny for you in the world today?” In light of the video and the discussion, how would you answer this question?

3. Have a time of prayer to search for what God wants you to do to help finish the job.