

Sent By God

Luke 10:1-9

PW Emerson – 02/02/2020 – Ten:27 Ministries

Luke 10:1-9

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

⁵"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

⁸"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

A teacher noticed that during his lecture one of the students was sound asleep. The teacher said, "Billy, wake up that boy sitting beside you." To which Billy replied: "You put him to sleep, you wake him up!"

There are MANY people all around us in our community today that have fallen asleep spiritually because Christians have put them asleep. They have

- Watered down the message of God's love
- Ignored the message of God's love
- Set aside the message of God's love in favor of messages from this world
- Put works of fiction on a higher plain than God's Word

Now, it's time for us to wake them up!

If you look at the meaning of the word 'disciple', the dictionary defines it as: **ONE WHO IS SENT**

The term Apostle can refer to the twelve disciples of Christ.
But broadly it means anyone sent on a mission with a message.

That includes you and me.
WE have a message, a message of God's love!

There is a common misconception that evangelizing or sharing God's Word, God's love, is the work of professionals: ministers and missionaries.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

According to a recent survey on how people come to know the Lord:

- .0001% TV or Crusade
- 2% Street evangelism
- 4% Church program
- 6% Sunday School
- 6% Walk-in
- 8% Pastor or Minister
- 74% Friends and relatives.

More people will come to know God from you than from me!

One of the earliest lessons we teach children in a social setting (day care, preschool, etc) is the importance of sharing

- Share your toys
- Share your treats – your chocolate or candy
- Show & Tell – sharing about something important to you
- What did you do for Christmas, Johnny?

You and I have the greatest message in all history. And more than anything, we need to share it!!

There are a lot of lessons we can learn from the innocence of children.

Children ...

- Will talk to total strangers ... (sometimes we wish they wouldn't)
- Will make friends easily ... while playing, in the bouncy house, etc

You and I need to reach out to people as easily as children do!

We have a message of vital importance!

Missions is not a matter of marketing but of the Lord directing his people to share faithfully the grace they have experienced.

One of my boys, Andy, told me he thought I should write a book ... that with all the experience I have had helping people, there would be a lot of great stories and lessons. I thought about it and said that if I ever do, the title will be “The Harvest Is Plentiful But.”

As I wrote in the devo that went out last week, there is a great deal of hurt in the world. And it seems like there are fewer and fewer people trying to do something about it.

Yet that's what God calls us, Christians, to do.

The world's population today is 7.5 billion.

Only 2.3 billion are Christians.

5.2 billion people in the world today are without Christ.

The harvest is really plentiful.

If we are going to see the crowds as Jesus did, we must open our eyes. The world is full of people who are not like us.

The first step is to see them.

Jesus said to his followers in John 4:35

I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

He says that to us too!

I PEOPLE WERE SENT TWO BY TWO

Luke 10:1

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

God makes sure that we are not along.

That's why today when we commission people, they will be sharing the mission God laid on their hearts.

WHY?

Because there may be others with a similar passion and it makes sense to work together!

Ten:27 is not the Phil show!

NO ministry is about any one person.

When Mother Theresa died in 1997, the organization she was a part of, Sisters of Charity, had thousands of members. It wasn't the Mother Theresa show.

God sends people out with other people.

Why two-by-two? It gives courage, confidence and strength to go out with a partner.

One reason Mormon missionaries are the most effective missionaries in the world today is because they are trained in missionary faith and then they are sent out together.

Going together made for effective evangelism two thousand years ago and still works today.

Paul is known for missionary journeys but he was not alone. There were others with him.

- Mark was with him
- Epaphroditus
- Barnabas
- Timothy

And others

When God sends you out to be in his service, you won't be alone either.

II THE WORK IS URGENT

In Luke 10:2, Jesus said

The harvest is plentiful

There is no time to waste!

In Jesus' day as in our times, people understood when the fields were ripe for harvesting. Plowing, planting, watering, caring for, weeding are all different activities ***BEFORE*** harvesting.

Harvesting means that the plants are ready to be gathered in, or picked off the tree, or reaped from the field.

Jesus was saying that people were ready to be harvested, gathered in.

Jesus is saying, it's time!

Jesus knew there were people ready to belong to the kingdom but what was needed were more disciples.

Jesus believed that people were

- ripe and ready for the gospel
- ripe and ready for the kingdom
- ripe and ready to hear the love of God

The time was right; the people were ripe. We dare not wait a moment longer.

Sometimes it is a lot easier to tell when a real harvest is ready to be brought in than it is to tell when one is ready to hear the message. Perhaps this is why Jesus says we should be generous in our sharing.

"Just go and do it," Jesus seems to be saying. And leave the results up to God.

The same is true today in the twenty-first century: there are people all around us who are ripe and ready to hear about the love of God. But the laborers are few.

Although there are some faithful people who are members of the church, sing in the choir, sit on the vestry, work on social projects at church, and do everything at church, we **ALL** must do everything we can to lead people to the church and the love of God.

The church in America has plenty of people who are willing to do church work in order to keep the church running smoothly, but there are very few disciples willing to do the evangelism work to help people know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Our mission field consists mostly of the people you see every day. There is a plentiful harvest to be had; but, how often do we actually reach out.

I talk to people **ALL THE TIME** who are

- desperate for a word of encourage
- longing to hear words of love
- **CRAVING** forgiveness
- Wanting to know that someone, **ANYONE**, cares!

It's time for us to get off the sidelines and get in the game!

For the sake of people everywhere, for the sake of the world, we need to get out there!

There is not time to waste.

The harvest is ready.

A Word of caution

III IT'S NOT EASY

Luke 10:3 Jesus says

³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Check out lambs/sheep in a herd.

- When they are by themselves, they are relatively calm, just grazing
- When they see a wolf off in the distance, they are a basket case. They run around like crazy, trying to hide behind other sheep, who are also moving.

From the Scripture, we heard that Jesus was sending and is still sending people out into situations where others may attack.

Lambs NEVER feel safe and secure when wolves are around to attack them and eat them up.

Christians NEVER feel safe and secure among folks who may be hostile to the gospel, who may be resistant to having Christ rule their lives with love and compassion.

Illustration ... it's not easy

There was a teacher who was helping one of her nursery school students put on his boots? She pulled while he pushed and the boots just wouldn't go on. The

teacher worked and finally got them on when the little fella said, “Teacher, they’re on the wrong feet.” Pulling them off wasn’t any easier than putting them one. Once they were on the correct feet the little guy said, “These aren’t my boots.” The teacher bit her tongue as she took the boot off again. Once off, the little guy said “The boots are my brother’s boots. My mom made me wear them.” Biting her tongue yet again, the teacher finally got the boots back on. When she finished, she asked him, “Now, where are your mittens?” The little boy replied, “I stuffed them in the toes of my boots.”

Working in God’s service is not always easy.
But it is important.

IV HOW???

We are told
GO

Luke 10:5

⁵“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’

Luke 10:9

⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’

We aren’t told HOW to do these things.

WHY?

Because we are all wired differently.

We have different gifts and talents and passions and abilities and strengths.

Culture changes; but, the needs and desires of people never really do.

Every person *longs* for peace.

Every person wants to know they have a real purpose.

Every person wants to be a part of something that will last, that won't wash away or crumble.

Every person wants to be loved.

CONCLUSION

The disciples had joy in doing the work of God. This is how it is meant to be.

We may lack joy because we are not taking a rest day, or not where God designed us to be.

John 10:10 Jesus said

I have come to bring you life and life in abundance

Irenaeus tells us "The glory of God is a human being fully alive."

By sending the disciples out, Jesus transferred His Spirit to them, so they would be equipped for leadership in the new faith.

The seventy were to be the hands, feet, legs, hearts, and minds of Jesus.

That is still true today.

For Jesus to complete his mission in today's world, He needs hands, feet, legs, hearts, and minds; he needs *willing* hands, *willing* hearts, *willing* minds and *willing* spirits.

Jesus still gets work done today through his disciples. These were not religious professionals or rabbis, but common ordinary people.

You and me.