

Jesus Prepares His Disciples (10:1)

10:1 *Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.*

A Lesson on Prayer

- They themselves are the answer to the prayer Jesus commanded them to pray in 9:38.

Discipleship’s Goal

- The word “disciple” means “learner.” The resurrected Jesus will command His “disciples” to “make disciples of all the nations” (28:19). It is our chief goal to learn of Him and lead others to learn of Him.

Sending Authority

- The authority of the “disciples” is given; it is not their own. It declares and shows the authority of the King over the domain of darkness.
- After His resurrection and ascension into heaven, Christ manifests this sending through the local congregation. No one sends themselves apart from the local congregation, and no one is sent without accountability to the local congregation. For example, Paul is sent by the church in Antioch (Acts 13:1-4); he returns there after the mission to give an account to them (Acts 14:26-28).

Discipleship Becomes Application (10:2-4)

10:2 *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 10:3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 10:4 Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.*

From “Disciple” to “Apostle”

- These “twelve disciples” (10:1) are now called “the twelve apostles” (10:2). The verb form of the noun

translated “apostle” is “sent” (10:5,16,40). Just as the 12 fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel had physical children who became that old covenant nation, these 12 apostles bore spiritual children through the spread of the Gospel – these children became the new covenant “holy nation” (1 Peter 2:9) of which we are a part.

- These are the Christ-given “foundation” (Ephesians 2:20; Revelation 21:14) of His Church. How? Through the New Testament, an apostolic, Spirit-inspired collection of documents.¹ By the end of the generation of the apostles, their authority is preserved in the Bible alone, which was complete from that generation and is fully sufficient for all our needs today. We need no new word.

The Calling Unifies the Diversity

- Only Christ could bring together “the tax collector” and the “Zealot.” The “Zealot” should have hated “the tax collector” for his collaboration with the Romans.
- This should be normal in the community of Christ-followers. Worldly divisions have no place in the Church.
- The other names are Hebrew in origin, except “Andrew” and “Philip.” Their Greek names reflect the influence of Greek culture in “Galilee of the Gentiles” (4:15).

¹ By “apostolic” I mean that their teaching was written down by the providence and inspiration of God the Holy Spirit either by the apostles themselves or by those closely associated with their ministry. These books were uniquely recognized in the Church for their divine authority from the beginning. The authority of the ascended Jesus is manifest in the New Testament, which is the written teaching of His apostles.

Jesus Sends Out His Followers (10:5-15)

First Things First (10:5-6)

10:5 *These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: “Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; 10:6 but rather go to the lost sheep [see 9:36] of the house of Israel.”*

- The Jewish people were to receive the ministry of the Gospel first (Romans 1:16), since God worked through them in their history to reveal Himself in Scripture and ultimately to bring the Christ into the world through them. We see the Jew-then-Gentile pattern through the book of Acts (13:44-49; 18:4-6; 28:17-28).
- After Jesus’ ascension into heaven, the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-15) and then the Gentiles (Acts 11:1-22) would be included in the mission. This worldwide mission would be predicted in Matthew 24:14, and commissioned among His disciples in 28:19-20.

The Message and Power of the Kingdom (10:7-8a)

10:7 *“And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ 10:8a Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.”*

- This was the message of John the Baptist (3:2) and Jesus Himself (4:17). “People need to have good truths pressed again and again upon them” (Matthew Henry). See also Philippians 3:1; 2 Peter 1:12-15; 3:1.

Trusting God for His Servants’ Provision (10:8b-10)

10:8b *“Freely you received, freely give. 10:9 Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, 10:10 or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support.”*

- The principle here is both a daily trust in the Lord for needs (6:11,25-34) and that the Gospel ministry is worthy of vocational support (1 Corinthians 9:14; Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

What Makes a City of Peace (10:11-14)

10:11 *“And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave that city. 10:12 As you enter the house, give it your greeting. 10:13 “If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. 10:14 Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet.”*

- READ Isaiah 52:7.
- The apostles, just like us, might think that the miracles they came performing (10:1,8) would have provided them welcome everywhere. Remember the words of Jesus in Luke 16:31.
- To receive the apostolic Word of the Gospel is to welcome peace into the city. A household, city, or nation that rejects the apostolic Word forfeits any claim to peace.

Grave Warning (10:15)

10:15 *“Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.”*

- Reception of the apostles is reception of Jesus (10:40), since they are preaching His message and doing His work. Similarly, a person does not have Jesus apart from receiving the apostolic word contained in the entire New Testament.
- READ Genesis 19:1-29. The mistreatment of fellow covenant community members in Old Testament Israel is said to be equal to (Isaiah 1:10-17) and worse than (Ezekiel 16:48-50) the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. Sodom and Gomorrah are “undergoing the punishment of eternal fire” (Jude 7), as “an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter” (2 Peter 2:6).
- Rejecting the Word of the apostles (the New Testament) merits greater punishment than the sin of Sodom.