

February 6, 2022

Day 1: Luke 10:1

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go.

The number of nations is listed in Genesis: it is ten (see Genesis 10). Jesus sending out 70 represents for Luke a prefiguring of the Gospel being spread to the whole world. In Acts, Luke tells how the Gospel goes from Jerusalem to the end of the world - Rome. Jesus sends these disciples to the villages around the Galilee region to prepare those villages for His coming. We as 21st century disciples can prepare others to hear the word but it is God who, through the Spirit, does the convincing.

Question: Why do you think only 12 disciples are named in the Gospels and why just 12 go to Jerusalem with Jesus?

Challenge: How would you prepare a town for an upcoming preaching mission?

Scripture: Numbers 11:1-25

Day 2: Luke 10:2

He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'

The field is ready to harvest because the world is waiting to hear good news. Jesus expects us to share with the world the reason for our hope. We will not always receive a good reception for sharing our faith but as we share it, God will keep in the mind of the person what we shared and they will come back to hear more.

Question: Why did Jesus say that the harvest is plentiful?

Challenge: What part do you play in helping individuals hear God's call to ministry?

Scripture: Matthew 9:35-10:6

Day 3: Luke 10:3-4

Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road.

Warning - preaching can be dangerous to your health. This label ought to be on our Bibles. Every time the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ has been preached. There have been forces of opposition that have turned violent at times. John Wesley (founder of the Methodist movement) was not allowed to preach in his father's church and was greeted by angry mobs in some of the towns he went into to preach. The 70 were not to take anything for comfort and were not supposed to greet others on the road. Jesus is stating the urgency of the mission by giving these requirements. The mission is so urgent that we cannot take the time (and in the ancient world it might take a lot of time to "greet" someone) to even talk to another person on our way to a village.

Question: Why is it important for a missionary to not take money or extra clothes or shoes when they go to a mission site?

Challenge: What instructions would you give to someone going to a new country to do mission work?

Scripture: Matthew 10:7-28

Day 4: Luke 0:5-6

Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!" And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you.

When first sharing our faith and our story of how we came to Christ, we ought to see ourselves as blessing the other person. Peace is a way of giving a blessing and it is more than a wish. Jesus gave to his disciples the power to grant peace. The granting of peace is in the sharing of the Gospel. It is like putting your arms around someone and having that person feel you care for them. If the other will not accept the embrace then we go onto a different person who is willing to accept the embrace. It is not that the first person is lost forever but that right now they, for whatever reason, cannot accept the love we give to them.

Question: What does "peace" mean?

Challenge: Think about how you greet people this week. Do you bless them in either your greeting or your goodbye?

Scripture: Genesis 26:24-34

Day 5: Luke 10:7

Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house.

The 70 were to accept the hospitality of the host and not demand special treatment. This command, do not move from house to house, is echoed in Paul's words, "I am all things to all people that we might save some." The issue is also who is doing the directing. Is it God or the disciple? The disciple can expect to be paid for their work but at the same time follow God's direction as to where to go.

Question: What social barriers in Jesus' time would prevent someone from eating what the host served?

Challenge: Two situations: 1) You are at supper at someone's house and they serve something you do not think you can eat (and not because you are allergic to it) and 2) You are the host and your guest is very over weight and diabetic but wants high calorie and high fat food. What do you do in each instance?

Scripture: I Timothy 5:17-23, I Corinthians 9:8-14, Deuteronomy 25:4

Day 6: Luke 10:8-9

Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

Eating with others and curing the sick were signs that God's blessing was upon the person. Illness was often thought of as punishment for some wrong. Curing people without a lot of elaborate ritual meant that God was not the problem. The deeds of the preacher had to match up with what they were saying. Our actions must line up with our beliefs. How we treat those in the family of God determines if we really believe what Jesus preached.

Question: What did it mean "The kingdom of God has come near to you?"

Challenge: Is there someone sick that you can cure?

Scripture: Matthew 11:2-6