



World Christian Fellowship

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Task of an Apostle!

Matthew 10:5-7

Matthew 10:5-15, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. ⁶But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ ⁸Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. ⁹Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, ¹⁰nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food. ¹¹“Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. ¹²And when you go into a household, greet it. ¹³If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. ¹⁵Assuredly, 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!*

Matthew chapter 10 can be divided into three parts.

1. **V 5-15, Tasks of the Apostles.**
2. **V 16-26, Response to their ministry.**
3. **V 27-42, Cost of being a disciple.**

V 15, Assuredly, 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!

V 23, When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

V 42, And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

If you are going to go out and do the Lord's work, representing Him, it is essential that you understand these principles.

Unfortunately, one of the tragedies of contemporary Christianity is that the people who purport to represent Jesus Christ don't represent Him at all.

If we are to be sent from Christ to the world, to touch the world with the reality of Christ, then we need to examine carefully what our Lord told the ones He sent out.

1. Divine commission.

V 5, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans."*

They didn't volunteer, although they were willing to go.
Christ did not act over against their will. But they were called.
They were commissioned in great measure.

Jeremiah 1:5, *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."*

They were called sovereignly called by God.
They were given a divine commission.
They were sent.
They were dispatched.

They were under orders.
It is first and foremost needful in the ministry to recognize that
God has sent you.

Were you sent or did you just went?

God called Abraham but Lot went along with him!

You want to be sure that you are sent before you go.

Mark 6:7, *And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.*

Jesus sent them two by two.

- They would be companions in times of loneliness.
- They would be strength to one another in times of temptation.
- They would be an encouragement in times of misery and persecution.
- They could relieve each other in the matter of preaching and healing.
- They need a witness to their testimony since it was known well to them that the testimony of anyone was confirmed in the mouth of two or three witnesses.

So, the Lord sent them two by two.

Probably only lasted a few weeks, but they were still the ambassadors of Christ, officially sent.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2, *Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.*

A trust is given me.

1 Corinthians 9:16-17, *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.*

Paul have been given a divine commission.

Here their commissioning was direct. The Lord walked up to them and said, "You, follow Me."

They didn't have to put fleeces out and pray and ask the Lord to show them signs.

How do you know you are called to the ministry?

a) A strong desire.

If I delight in the Lord, He will give me the desire of my heart.
I believe God has planted in my heart that desire.

1 Timothy 3:1, *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*

Ministry is something that God puts in the heart today.

b) Confirmation of the church.

You may say, "I am called to preach"

Everybody else will say, "We have heard you. You are not called to preach."

1 Thessalonians 5:21, *Test all things; hold fast what is good.*

So, you must have the confirmation of the church.

1 Timothy 4:14, *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

Confirmation of those around you in the church.

c) Opportunity

The ministry is made possible by circumstances.

1 Corinthians 16:9, *For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.*

- Desire,
- Confirmation and
- Opportunity.

If you go through all those things and your heart is set and fixed on a goal, that is the call of God.

The Apostles were called in a very immediate, external, visible, and physical way.

We are called internally.

But nonetheless called and commissioned.

V 5, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans*

He not only sent them, but He commanded them.

The Greek word, ***parangellō***.

The word usages in the Greek language, we find some very interesting things.

i) A military word.

It means a superior giving orders to an inferior.

It is a command issued to soldiers.

It is an aggressive, definitive statement of absolute behaviour that requires obedience.

That is its primary use in a military way.

ii) A legal word.

There are some papyri that have been discovered in which this ***parangellō*** verb is used of summoning a man to court.

In other words, he is bound by the law.

He is bound by legal injunction against him to obey and respond.

iii) An Ethical Word.

The word is used of an ethical concept.

It is used, as Aristotle teaches morals or ethics to his students.

They become binding based on the integrity of the individual.

When you learn what is ethically right, you are bound to that, if you have any character.

iv) A technical word.

A technique word used to define certain technique.

For example, it is used of the rules of grammar or the rules of oratory or the rules of literary composition.

It is a word then that defines exactly how something is to be done.

v) A medical word.

It is also used as medical term.

It is used of a doctor prescribing something for someone who is sick, instruction for one who wants to be well.

Summary:

- ✓ A word of military command, you don't have any choice but to respond.
- ✓ A word of legal obligation, you have no choice but to respond.
- ✓ A word of ethical standard, you have no choice but to respond.
- ✓ A word of technique, which means if you are going to do it right, this is the way to do it, you have no other way to respond.
- ✓ A word of medical prescription, if you want to be well, you do it this way.

It is a word, then, that in every dimension bind upon man a response.

In the New Testament it is used 30 times at least, you find that it is repeatedly used as the standard Christian term for instruction.

Luke 5:14, Jesus used it to instruct a leper.

Luke 8:29, He used it to give command to an evil spirit to come out of a demoniac.

Luke 8, He used it to instruct Jairus.

Luke 9, He used it to command His disciples.

It's used in the book of Acts of the command of the Sanhedrin's to Peter and John.

It's used in the pastoral epistles.

It's used many places. It's just the word that means we are bound to respond.

When you realize you are commissioned by the Lord Jesus Himself, and that you have no choice but to respond.

- ✓ Because you are a soldier, and He is the commander.
- ✓ Because you are drawn into the court, and He is the judge.
- ✓ Because you are the one who is to live the life, and He is the one who sets the moral standards.
- ✓ Because you can only carry out the task, He is the one who determines how it is to function.
- ✓ Because you are the patient and He is the doctor, you respond.

What God wants in a ministry is not your creativity and innovation. What He wants is your obedience!

We are servants under divine commission.

I am bound to fulfil that commission before God.

It is good that the Lord binds us, because there are so many days we would like to get out. But we are bound.

All of us are bound to obey Christ's call to go and represent Him in this world. I thank God for these people who go down to streets and walk up and down and present Jesus to those people.

There are people go to hospitals.

There are people carry the Gospel to prisons.

There are people carry the Gospel to tribal areas.

You can do it anywhere, and I believe the call of God is binding on our lives in that regard.

Anyone who is in the service of God must understand that they are under divine orders. Doesn't have any options.

He is committed to obedience.

He is committed to follow the principles of the Word of God as commanded.

Go into all the world to make disciples, we baptize, and we teach them to observe all things whatsoever He commanded you. Because that's the whole issue.

The Lord wants obedience.

2. Objective.

There must be a very clear focus.

V 5, *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.*

Don't go near Gentiles or Samaritans.

What has Jesus got against them?

Is this the Jewish gospel?

V 6, *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

This is not a permanent command.

This is a very dispensational statement.

Limited to this time and place and this the plan of God.

This illustrates how God gives people very clear objectives.

Self-styled Messiahs are always megalomaniacs who want to win the world and win it now. Some people's perception of ministry is so vast that their ministry winds up being like a birdbath, a mile long and an inch deep.

But the focus that our Lord gives to us here.
This is the very narrowness of ministry.

Does God not care for Gentiles?

Of course, He cares for Gentiles.

Just in case you might wonder about that, turn back to **Matthew 8:5**, *Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him.*

He is a Gentile. Roman soldier who commands a hundred men.
Jesus responded to him.

Jesus not only brought healing, but I believe He brought salvation to that household.

Jesus makes a great statement.

Matthew 8:11-12, *And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

The Lord has already made it abundantly clear that He will reach Gentiles.

Isaiah 49:5-6, *“And now the Lord says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, And My God shall be My strength), ‘Indeed He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.’ ”*

Jerusalem will carry the message to the nations.

He loved the Gentiles.

Matthew 28:19, *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

From **Matthew chapter 13** how Jesus begins to turn away from Israel and begins to talk about the church, which is called by Paul, “The fullness of the Gentiles.” The Lord always had the Gentiles in His plan.

What about the Samaritans?

Does He got something against the Samaritans?

No.

The Samaritans were hated by Jews.

It was one thing to be a Gentile. You couldn't help that. You were born a Gentile.

But to be a Samaritan is to be a corrupted person because a Samaritan was a half-breed, and they reflected the intermarriage of the Jew with the Gentile, which was a crime unforgivable in the minds of many Jews.

Jesus didn't have a problem with that.

The first person that Jesus ever announced His Messiahship to was a Samaritan woman living in the city of Sychar who had a handful of husbands and was living with a man who wasn't her husband.

It was to her that He revealed His Messiahship.

Jesus had no problem with Samaritan.

When He was talking about how men ought to love and how they ought to love their neighbours, He used a Samaritan as an illustration. **Luke 10:25-37 Good Samaritan.**

If God loves Gentiles and Samaritans, why does He tell them not to go to them?

The Samaritans had fomented the hatred, because 20 years before the time of Christ, the Samaritans had stolen into the temple in the middle of the night during Passover and thrown

dead men's bones all over the temple enclosure, which polluted it.

So, there was just a terrible hatred at that point in time.

There were lots of problems in going to a Samaritan town and lots of problems in going to a Gentile town, particularly for this little group of unqualified guys.

The special place of the Jews.

They were just God's chosen people, and they were the ones to whom the covenants and the promises were given and the law.

So, in the line of God's plan, it was that the kingdom was to be first offered to them. They were approached by John the Baptist.

Matthew 3:1-2, *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

It's imminent. It's here.

It's available.

Then Jesus came along and preached the same.

Matthew 4:17, *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Now Jesus commands His disciples the same thing.

V 7, *And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*

You offer them the kingdom.

You offer them the rule of God on earth.

Heaven has come to earth. God wants to rule.

It is a spiritual dimension.

It is within you.

It is in your heart.

It is the acceptance of the lordship of Christ, but it also has an earthly aspect.

Had they responded to the Messiah, the internal and the external would have come together at the same moment.

They can have it if they repent and believe. They are the people through whom the rest of the world is to be blessed. They are the tents of Shem, through whom all the nations are blessed.

"Salvation is of the Jews," it says in the New Testament.

That doesn't mean it's only for them. It means it comes through them. They were to be the emissaries, the witnesses.

Jerusalem was to be the launching point for evangelism.

Jerusalem was to be the place where the nations came to see the Messiah.

They were to be His witness people, so He said, "Go there first."

Paul on his missionary journeys he will always go to the synagogue first though he was a missionary to the Gentiles.

Because he went to the people of God first to gather them together to help him to reach the Gentiles.

So, Jesus says, "You go first to them."

If they had gone first to the Gentiles and the Samaritans, the Jews wouldn't have listened to them. So, the special place of the Jews was the first reason.

i) Cultural problem of the Apostles.

They were hardly up to this task, reaching their own people.

The Gentiles and Samaritans, whose culture they did not understand that well, whose biases and prejudices they could not have overcome easily.

They were not equipped for that.

Do you know that nothing every really cracked open the Gentile world, with the exception of Peter's confrontation of one God fearing man named **Cornelius**, nothing ever made a dent in that world until a man came along by the name of Paul?

Paul, from the tribe of Benjamin, an Israelite of Israelites, zealous for the law, trained under Gamaliel, a true Jew in every way, but educated.

Instructed in Gentile culture and from a Gentile area, was able to make the bridge to reach those Gentile people.

These Apostles just weren't up to that. It just wasn't time yet for them.

They weren't ready.

They didn't have the technique.

They didn't have the background.

Couldn't build the bridges.

If they had started there, they never would have been able to come back to the Jews. The Jews would have just written them off as those who brought about a Gentile and Samaritan religion.

ii) Jesus gives them a specific target.

“Just do this. Go to Galilee, and go to the Jews, who are the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

‘The lost sheep of the house of Israel’ simply refers to the Jews.

Matthew 9:36, *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*

They were sheep without a shepherd.

They are the lost sheep.

They have been disconnected from the Shepherd.

They are out of the fold.

They are wandering, hopeless, and helpless.

He says, “Go to them. Go to My people, Israel. They are the ones to whom the promises were originally given. They are the ones with whom you can communicate and have an audience and reception, so go to them.”

So, our Lord Himself reflects to them what was His own specific ministry.

Our Lord Himself never went to the Gentiles. His ministry was almost exclusively to the Jews.

Matthew 15:24, *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

That was His focus. The Gentile world would come after that.

Jesus had a tremendous economy of effort, tremendous clarity of objective.

One of the things that frustrates people in ministry is that they don't have a clear objective. They just don't have that, and you can get so diverted.

An effective ministry is to have a clear objective.

Know your gifts, what God has equipped you to do.

Know the needs and the callings and the opportunities and the desires of your heart and find a track and run in that track.

Jack of all master of none!

We get so many calls to do so many things, but we are clear with our call of our ministry.

I know what God's called me to do. God has called me to preach and teach. That is what I am to do.

He has called me to preach and teach expositing His word. I know that because I am compelled to do that in my heart.

A lot of other things I could do, and sometimes you have to fight it off. But you just keep that constant focus.

What about this? What about that?

The Lord will take care of that.

He has got other people.

I don't have to do it all.

If I just do one thing right, just one thing that He gave me to do.

If I take care of the depth of it, He will take care of the breadth of it. If He wants to spread it around, that's His business.

John 6:38, *For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

Luke 5:32, *I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."*

A narrow focus and perspective, but that's an effective ministry. Do one thing and do it well. Precision in ministry.

3. Clear Message.

Ministry work involves a clear message.

Our message is anything but clear.

Demonstration.

Glass of water changing colours.

Part of the problem is that we don't stick with the central message.

What did Jesus say?

V 7, And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Very simple.

Can it be any simpler than this?

Kingdom of God is at hand.

Is this the whole sermon?

Where is the rest of the sermon?

The kingdom of heaven is a big enough subject to cover everything that God is interested in.

So, if you want to open your mouth, then make sure you talk about God's projects, not man's. Preach the kingdom, the rule and reign of God, that heaven has come to earth.

In conversion, when men enter the Kingdom.
in consecration, when we live out the kingdom.

Romans 14:17, *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

The kingdom come is ultimately earthly in its millennial form.
But until that time, we preach the kingdom.

You know, Jesus taught His disciples nothing but that. All the principles of God's rule.
He is Lord.

Men are to submit. Men are to obey. God rules.

Then even after His resurrection Jesus taught them.

Acts 1:3, *to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

He taught them things pertaining to the kingdom.

It can get confusing out there for people when they listen to preachers. They haven't got a clue what your message is until they hear you.

Because all kinds of preachers preach all kinds of stuff. The average unbeliever who turns on even the television and listens find such disparity that it would be impossible to know what the real message was.

Who called themselves ministers who were not talking about Christ, who were not talking about the kingdom of heaven. It's no wonder some of those people were paranoid.

Satan is not stupid. The best way to render the gospel of no effect is to make sure nobody knows what it is. It is the message that the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Kingdom is imminently and available to every person is the rule and reign of God in their lives, here and now, as well as earthly, millennially, and eternally. That is our message.

I won't get pulled into politics, although I have some strong feelings about things.

I won't get pulled into other things. I say no to that stuff all the time because my focus cannot change from the kingdom.

Christians every time we opened our mouths should say something about the kingdom.

Let's just talk about God's rule and His kingdom.

Jesus says to them, "*kingdom of heaven is at hand.*"

Just go around saying that repeatedly?

No, of course not.

Fill it up with all the content that that term deserves.

We have been through that term about ten times in the previous ten chapters.

It wasn't long after this until the Lord turned away from Israel because they didn't take the message offered to them.

I think there is urgency and immanency in this world too.

I don't know how long we have before the Lord comes, and we need to be proclaiming the kingdom with urgency.

Effective missionaries have a divine commission, clear objective, and a clear message.