

Matthew 10:1-15

Who and How – Proclaiming the Gospel to Israel

Section 1: 10:1-4

Summoning his twelve disciples, he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to drive them out and to heal every disease and sickness. ²These are the names of the twelve apostles: First, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.
(CSB)

Jesus calls His twelve disciples together to send them out into the harvest. We just finished reading that the harvest is plentiful and harvesters need to be sent out. Jesus is teaching and showing the disciples how this looks and works. This is important because later the disciples will begin sending others out. It's difficult to teach someone how to do something that you have never done. Jesus was incredible in how He would teach and then do. He's been going around proclaiming the gospel, which the disciples have witnessed, and now He is sending out the twelve. We know from Mark 6:7 that Jesus would send them out by twos. This is why their names are in groups of two in this passage. Craig Blomberg, in his commentary on Matthew, explains the possible reason as to why Jesus always paired the disciples: *"This grouping no doubt enabled the disciples to support, protect, and empower each other better than if they went alone, and it perhaps was patterned after the law that required at least two witnesses (Duet. 19:15). By not staying together as a larger group, the disciples also maximized their ability to reach large numbers of people."*

Jesus ALONE has the authority (1) over unclean spirits, (2) to drive out demons and (3) to heal every disease and sickness. Why is this statement, *"He gave them authority"* so significant? Ultimately, the disciples, and all believers of all time, have zero power or authority over unclean spirits, demons or sicknesses. That means that ANY TIME a demon is cast out or a sickness is healed it is the work of God alone. From the simplest cold to stage 4 cancer, only God heals. We can throw all the medicine at something we want to, but unless God heals, nothing will happen. Pills and medicine have no authority over sickness or disease. Does that mean we should never be treated for anything? No. God uses many different avenues to bring about His will. Later in Scripture we see Paul encourage Timothy to drink juice for his stomach problems. To ignore all treatments would be equivalent to never eating food because Jesus is the bread of life; therefore, you don't need earthly food. What this phrase, *"He gave them authority"* reminds us of is that we have far less control over our lives than we like to realize or acknowledge. Therefore, we are to acknowledge and give all credit to God every time we are sick or injured and recover.

The twelve apostles are a very interesting group of people. We see brothers, zealots, tax collectors, fishermen, hot tempered, doubters, complainers and a betrayer. If you are starting a church, this would not be your dream lineup. The twelve disciples remind us that God's work is not limited to our abilities. God is more than able to do amazing things through common everyday people with common everyday issues. The gospel is more powerful than we could ever begin to imagine.

Application

We, as a church, are made up of a variety of different personalities, gifts, abilities and life situations. On paper we should not be able to accomplish anything together. But because of the gospel and the grace of God our Father, through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit we can step out together in unity and glorify God as one body.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How difficult is it to put what you have learned about Christianity into practice?
- ❖ Are you currently discipling someone else?
- ❖ Are you living in such a way that others could imitate your life and be faithfully living out God's Word? If not, why?

Section 2: 10:5-6

⁵ Jesus sent out these twelve after giving them instructions: "Don't take the road that leads to the Gentiles, and don't enter any Samaritan town. ⁶ Instead, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (CSB)

Jesus begins His ministry work with the people of Israel. This matches His command that would later come in Acts 1:8, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* Why did Jesus want to start with the people of Israel? Simply put the people of Israel were God's chosen people to proclaim the gospel to all the world. We see this starting with the covenant God made with Abraham. This has nothing to do with God loving Israel more or that somehow the people of Israel are more worthy of the gospel. The gospel ministry and the church had to begin somewhere and God sovereignty chose Israel. God often chooses the weak and least likely to do His greatest work through (1 Corinthians 1:27).

Paul would later follow this example. He always went to the Jews first in every city he entered. Why did he do this? Paul explains this in Romans 1:16. The gospel going to the Jews first was just a stepping stone unto the nations. The gospel was for all tribes, nations, people. Jesus is fulfilling the covenant of Abraham. The phrase *"go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel"*, reminds us of Isaiah 53:6:

We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all. (CSB)

Application

Practically, we see that Jesus gives us specific scopes of ministry. The disciples were given particular areas and people to reach with the gospel. We as a church today have a specific scope of people to reach. We are not equipped to reach the cities of Murfreesboro, or Nashville, or Huntsville, or Knoxville or even Manchester. We have been given the mission to reach the area in and around Franklin County.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ God has a reason to do everything He does. What is the "reason" you do everything you do? What should be your "reason"?
- ❖ How does it encourage you that God doesn't need the greatest and most gifted people to accomplish His work?

Section 3: 10:7-10

⁷As you go, proclaim, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you received, freely give.⁹Don't acquire gold, silver, or copper for your money-belts. ¹⁰Don't take a traveling bag for the road, or an extra shirt, sandals, or a staff, for the worker is worthy of his food. (CSB)

Before Jesus sends out the twelve, He gives them a few simple instructions. Let's examine them one by one.

- Proclaim: "The kingdom of heaven has come near". This is a direct reference to Jesus being the Son of God, the Messiah.
 - Heal the sick.
 - Raise the dead.
 - Cleanse the lepers.
 - Drive out demons. Without Jesus giving authority to the 12, this would be impossible.
 - Freely give. The gospel and the work of the gospel is not for sale. It's not a money-making business.
 - DON'T ACQUIRE: gold, silver or copper. Ministry isn't about money it's about souls.
 - DON'T Pack.
 - No extras: shirt, sandals, staff.
 - Work hard: God will provide the food.
- Jesus gives authority to the 12 to expand His ministry and work to all Israel.
- God will provide what you need when you need it. Trust Him.

Application

When God gives us a mission, He will most certainly provide all we need to accomplish the mission. Too many times we try to put our trust in earthly methods, strategies, gifts, abilities or tools. We need to be searching through the Word of God to learn how we are to approach all that life may bring our way. More times than not worldly wisdom will be in direct conflict with God's wisdom. We must live out the Word of God, especially when the world tells us different.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ What message are you proclaiming with your words and lifestyle choices?
- ❖ Do you rely on Jesus to accomplish the work He has called you to do or do you rely upon your own abilities and gifts?
- ❖ Do you view the work of God as a means of personal gain or as a way to impact others for God's glory?
- ❖ What worldly things do you really need to accomplish God's call on your life? Do you rely on the things in this world more or on the faithfulness of God more?

Section 4: 10:11-15

¹¹When you enter any town or village, find out who is worthy, and stay there until you leave. ¹²Greet a household when you enter it, ¹³and if the household is worthy, let your peace be on it; but if it is unworthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴If anyone does not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. (CSB)

The "dusting off your sandals and moving on" may seem harsh at first, but we are not responsible for making sure all people believe, we are responsible to make sure all people hear. The reality is not everyone will believe or accept the gospel. We must remember that we are not the ones being rejected, God is the one they are rejecting. But rejection should not stop us from faithfully sharing the gospel with all people.

Application

Seek the approval of Christ more than the approval of man. Don't live your whole life worried about what others may think. Instead, focus on what God wants for your life and how He sees your thoughts and actions.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How faithful are you in making sure that all people hear the gospel?

The Twelve Apostles

Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	John	Acts 1:13
Simon, who is called Peter	Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter)	Simon, who He named Peter	Simon Peter (1:40-42)	Peter
Andrew his (Simon) brother	Andrew	Andrew his (Peter) brother	Andrew, Simon Peter's brother (1:40)	Andrew
James the son of Zebedee	James the son of Zebedee	James	Unnamed son of Zebedee (21:2)	James
John his (James) brother	John the brother of James	John	Unnamed son of Zebedee (21:2)	John
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip of Bethsaida (1:43-44)	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Nathaniel of Cana (1:45-49; 21:2)	Bartholomew
Thomas	Thomas	Thomas	Thomas called the twin (11:16)	Thomas
Matthew the tax collector	Mathew (Levi, son of Alphaeus, a tax collector, 2:14)	Matthew (Levi, tax collector, 5:27)		Matthew
James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus		James the son of Alphaeus
Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Judas the son of James	Judas (not Iscariot) 14:22	Judas the son of James
Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot	Simon, who was called the zealot		Simon the Zealot
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas the Son of Simon Iscariot (6:71)	Mathias replaced Judas of Iscariot