

Luke 10: 1-24

As a missionary...wherever I go I like to speak on missions...

- really it a theme that is central to all of the Bible...
- in the OT... (Psalm 67)
- in the NT... (Matt 5 - "You are the light of the world")

As the church we need to have this message front and center... understand it clearly

- in the times in which we live especially...
- opposed to absolutes... opposed to one truth... do not believe the Bible....
- a generation that know little or nothing of the gospel

TODAY a tremendous need for the gospel... (needs to remind us)

- as the darkness grows deeper the light shines brighter
- as a church we have been called....

In our passage → look at the familiar words "The Harvest is great..."

- the other time where Jesus uses these words... Mathew 9 - (Sending 12)
- multitudes → "He saw the multitudes he was filled with compassion"
- saw the great spiritual need

Here...sending the 70...(Only Luke -2X2...to prepare the way...)

- don't know much about these men...
- called to preach the good news...
- "to prepare the ground"

Jesus here is preparing them to go out...

- no doubt with fear.. trembling...
- certain basic things they needed to understand.. (marching orders)

There is much we can learn from this passage.

Four points:

- 1) Harvest is Great
- 2) The workers are few
- 3) Sent as sheep among wolves
- 4) Reliant on the Lord for all things

Finally - The surprising response of Jesus when they returned.

1) Harvest is great...

In the context of our passage...tremendous amount of excitement...

- feeding 5000 (more and more popular - explain)
- In the verses preceding our text..Jesus had spoken on the discipleship
- no doubt these men knew suffering...had lived through it...

Jesus begins by saying to them → The Harvest IS GREAT! (Plentiful!)

- when we talk about a harvest....it is something that you need to visualize...

Jesus was saying look around you there is a harvest

- if they were to go without this understanding without this vision
- not believing despondent they won't get very far with it would they?

Everywhere they were to go to preach they needed to go with this expectation

- we need to go knowing....go with this truth...
- God's word will not return void!!
- William Carey → Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God

Today brothers and sisters spiritually it is the same for us as well.

- We need to understand that God has his own
- Ephesians one is very clear - God has his own.

And this is true in every generation

→ when the church is obedient....God will use her as a light (city on a hill)

2) The workers are few -- pray Lord of the harvest will send forth reapers

When there're a lot of people who think like you it feels good.

-- we like that -it is comfortable

--it's easy to go with the flow

Now Jesus was here preparing to 70 for the reality that it was not going to be comfortable.

--There were very few workers

--and you might think will 70 isn't all that bad.

--But compared to what they were about to undertake, they needed to understand this truth.

Christ was calling them to reach many many people (comparitavely)

--They were going to go to 2 by 2.

--They needed to realize it wasn't going to be easy - alone.

Often times the Christian can feel alone.

--why aren't there more? Why are we the only ones? Why are not more people interested in helping?

--It can be discouraging.

But we need to understand that this is the way that God has chosen to work.

--This is nothing new

--this is the way it has been from the beginning in the time of the early church

What is the remedy? PRAY the Lord of the harvest would send forth reapers...

--this is God's harvest, and he knows what He is doing...

In Matthew 28... Jesus says → "I am with you always even to the end of the age."

--today, tomorrow, the next day

--God is faithful.

And when we go out feeling vulnerable and needy...

--We need to go on our knees - dependent on the Lord

--And this is a prayer, not just for others to go, but for ourselves.

3) Go.. as lambs among wolves...

Now children... lambs and wolves are not exactly good friends right?

--before the fall, before sin entered the world, this would not have been a problem..

--But now wolves like lambs a lot, but for all the wrong reasons.

EG/ Coyotes

The reality was they were being sent into a very hostile environment.

--This was not going to be a picnic, this was not going to be easy

--There would be many who would be in sharp disagreement with them..

--they would oppose them, hate them, even try to kill them

This is the reality of being a Christian world that is not our own...

--Strangers in a strange land

--This world is to have a very foreign feel.

--What we believe in preach is very, very different.

John 15 says, "*Because you are not of this world therefore the world hates you if they've persecuted me they will persecute you.*"

In the life of Christ, in the life of his disciples, this is what we see..

--they fully expected suffering and death...

--And that is what they received...

So in other words Jesus is saying **expect death.**

--not exactly a very popular message is it?

-- But they needed to understand this before they went out so that it won't come as a surprise.

And his believers today this is the same for us.

--It shouldn't surprise us when people don't agree with us

--When they reject what we say, when they dislike us for being a Christian.

--We go as sheep amongst wolves.

4) The fourth thing --They went reliant on the Lord in every way. (Look with me at these verses again)

- 1) VS 4 - financially they had to depend on the lord
- 2) VS 5-7 - they had to depend upon the Lord that he would open doors for them → LITERALLY
- 3) VS 8 & 9 --Had to preach to those whom God had prepared.
- 4) VS 10-12 - They had to warn of the coming judgment.

So what can we learn from this? Clearly this was a special time.

--To prepare for the preaching of Christ.

--Their preaching had to be short into the point. They were not to people.

--So clearly there are differences, for the time in which we live today.

4 Things we can Learn (in missions)

- 1) God has to provide for us as a church as we seek to reach the nations.
--God will provide the physical means to do so.
- 2) God has to open doors of ministry - We need to pray that He will
--EG/ Paul's request to the churches
--pray that God would send us the people that He has prepared.
- 3) To invest in those whom God has called.
--to spend time with those who truly desire to know more.
--not to throw pearl before swine.
- 4) To WARN - that there is a coming day of judgement.
--this is not a take it or leave it message
--the consequences of rejecting the gospel are real
-- a Christless eternity.
(yes with much love - with tears of compassion)

So this is what the 72 did. (we don't know how long they went) What we do know is how they returned.

READ VS 17

--clearly they were excited - Even the demons obeyed them!

--I'm sure we would respond in the same way.

What is so surprising is Jesus' response → READ vs 20

--the most important thing is that your names are written.

--that is interesting isn't it.

The outward manifestations of the work of the Spirit are not the most important.

--it God's work of grace in saving sinners from their sin.

--it is the power of the Gospel!!

--when God works HIS saving grace—that is reason for rejoicing.

Luke 10: 15 "there is great joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

When we think of missions - the calling that JC has given to us, this is what we need to remember.

--"Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners"

--that is his promise and that is what he will do.

As the church of Jesus Christ let's be thankful for the calling we have been given.

--Lets reach out to the those around us with the good news of the gospel.

We go knowing...

- 1) That the workers are few
- 2) We go as sheep amongst wolves
- 3) We go relying in the Lord.
- 4) We go KNOWING that there is a harvest.

God has His own so let us be busy in that harvest, and rejoice in the His work of salvation!