

Sending Shepherds to the Sheep

I will give you shepherds according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding – Jeremiah 3:15

[Matthew 9:35-10:15] Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray therefore that the Lord of the harvest will send out laborers into his harvest.”

He called to himself his twelve disciples, began to send them out two by two, and gave them *power and* authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every sickness. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these. The first, Simon, who is called Peter; Andrew, his brother; James the son of Zebedee; John, his brother; Philip; Bartholomew; Thomas; Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus; Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

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Jesus sent these twelve out, *to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick*, and commanded them, saying, “Don’t go among the Gentiles, and don’t enter into any city of the Samaritans. Rather, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!’ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers*, and cast out demons. Freely you received, so freely give. Don’t take any gold, nor silver, nor brass in your money belts. Take no bag for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes (wear sandals), nor staff: for the laborer is worthy of his food. Into whatever city or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy; and stay there until you go on. As you enter into the household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come on it, but if it isn’t worthy, let your peace return to you. Whoever doesn’t receive you, nor hear your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake off the dust from your feet *for a testimony against them*. Most certainly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. [Mark 6:7-13, Luke 9:1-6]

1. Compare Jesus’ actions with the commands he gives the Twelve. How do they differ?
2. What prompted Jesus to send laborers into the harvest? How are you being sent out?
3. Lord of the Harvest, please send laborers into your harvest starting with me; today I’ll...

