

## Sermon Outline

### **“Sent By Jesus,” Matthew: Life and Words of Jesus, Part 31 – Matthew 10:1-15 – Joshua Harris – March 10, 2013**

#### **Introduction**

1. Matthew 10 is Jesus’ second major discourse. Matthew is very carefully structured around five major discourses or teachings of Jesus. In between these teachings are “narrative” or story portions that complement and unpack Jesus’ teaching by showing us Jesus in action. For example, after Jesus’ authoritative teaching (chapters 5-7) about the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven, chapters 8-9 demonstrated Jesus’ Kingdom authority in stories of healing, casting out demons, calming a storm and raising the dead.
2. That narrative section is concluded and we return to another discourse. Here the focus of Jesus’ teaching is on the *mission of the Kingdom*. Jesus is sending out his 12 disciples. As he does, he gives them instruction on what they are to say and do and how they are to respond to opposition.
  - a. The word Latin root of our English word “mission” means “send.” In this passage, we see Jesus sending out his disciples with a specific assignment. Some of what he says is specific and unique to their culture. But much of it applies to every disciple of Jesus in every generation.

#### **Jesus Is on a Mission**

1. Before we can understand our part, it’s important to see that Jesus is on a mission. Jesus was *sent* by God. We see this clearly in the first chapters of Matthew’s gospel. Jesus is the Son of God sent by God the Father to fulfill God’s promises of being a blessing to all the nations (Gen. 12). Jesus is the promised King (2 Sam. 7; Is. 9) who is announcing the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. He is the healer, deliverer, and teacher who announces with authority what life under God’s rule looks like.
2. While on earth, Jesus went through all the cities and villages, teaching and healing every disease and affliction and “*proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom*” (Matt. 4:35; 9:35), which is the good news that God’s rule has come to earth in the person and work of Jesus. Like the lion Aslan in C.S. Lewis’ *Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe*, Jesus was “on the move”. Through his life, teaching and miracles, through his obedience to the Father’s will, through his death and resurrection – Jesus was on a mission to break the power of Satan over this world and set the captives free.

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### **Jesus Includes us in His Mission**

1. In Matthew 9:36, Jesus saw the harassed and helpless crowds and had compassion on them. Jesus compared these people in need of his salvation to a harvest – ripe and ready to hear the good news. But Jesus said that even though the harvest is plentiful the laborers are few. He commands us to pray that God will send out more workers to gather in the harvest.
  - a. Theologian Richard France points out that right after Jesus tells his disciples to pray for laborers, he sends them out as laborers. And that’s how it should work. As we pray for the harvest, God aligns our hearts with his mission and he uses us to accomplish his purpose.
  - b. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus communicated the same idea with different imagery. When he called his first disciples, he said, *“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”* Jesus’ mission is to save men and women and give them eternal life. He enlists us to continue this mission, to be fishers of men who call others to know, trust and obey Jesus.
  - c. In Matthew 28 Jesus describes this same work as “making disciples.” He tells his disciples to go into all the world and make disciples – teaching them to obey all that Jesus had commanded.
2. Harvesting a field. Fishing for men. Making disciples. It’s all describing the same thing: men and women joining Jesus in his mission to spread the good news of his reign coming to the world. The men who first followed Jesus were not the richest or best educated. They were not the famous or powerful. Jesus used ordinary people in his extraordinary mission. He uses people like us. He calls us to himself and then he sends us out.

### **Jesus Defines the Methodology of the Mission**

1. When Jesus sent out the twelve, he gave them instructions about where they should go, who their audience was, what they were to announce and how they were to provide for themselves. It’s important to recognize that some of what Jesus instructed is unique to these particular men and this specific moment. This was a limited expedition.
  - a. At this time in the unfolding of God’s plan, they were to focus on reaching the Jewish people. Later Jesus expanded the mission to include the non-Jews and the whole world (Matt. 28:19-20).

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- b. In this outreach, Jesus instructed them not to take extra provisions of a tunic and a staff. In Luke 22:36, Jesus lifts this restriction and tells them that after his death they should take necessary supplies. It seems that in this outreach, Jesus' focus is to train them to trust him.
2. But even though this particular work was unique there are important principles that apply to mission today. One of the primary observations is to see how radically different the methodology of Jesus is from that of the world. The values of the kingdom of heaven are radically different than the world's kingdom.
    - a. In the world, power is used to coerce and subjugate. But in the kingdom of heaven, the power of God is used to liberate people from bondage. Jesus sends his disciples to the *"lost sheep of Israel"* (v.6) and tells them to serve – to *"heal the sick, cleanse lepers and cast out demons"* (vs. 8).
    - b. In the world, money is king. But in the kingdom of heaven, disciples share the message of the gospel with others for free just as they received it for free. *"You received without paying; give without pay"* (vs. 8).
    - c. In the world, the audience is always right. If the audience doesn't like our message, we change it. We take out the unpopular parts and do whatever it takes to win our audience. But that's not the way of Jesus. We don't change the message to win people over. We speak the truth regardless if it is received or rejected.
  3. Jesus wants us to see the huge harvest field around us. He wants us to see the crowds who are helpless and harassed. He wants us to keep pressing out into the harvest no matter what we face or where this journey takes us.

## Conclusion

1. The heart of the passage is this: *To be with Jesus is to be with him in his mission.* Jesus' closest companions, his most loyal disciples – the people Jesus calls to himself – are the ones that he "sends out."
2. If we love Jesus and want to be close to him, we will necessarily be part of his work, part of his mission. There is no "non-mission" option when it comes to being a disciple. The harvest is plentiful and Jesus is calling all of us to be laborers and proclaimers of the good news. Let's be with Jesus in his mission.

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### **Fellowship Starters**

1. Take time as a Care Group to read Matthew 10:1-15.
2. Josh shared that Jesus wants us to see the harvest field that is all around us. Do you see your family, neighborhood, school and/or your workplace as a harvest field for the gospel?
3. What practical steps can you take to serve, love and share the good news with those in your relational network?
4. Josh said that harvesting a field, fishing for men and making disciples describe the same thing: men and women joining Jesus in this mission to spread the good news. Do you see yourself in this way? Why or why not?
5. What often hinders you from sharing Jesus with unbelievers? How can you grow in overcoming these hindrances?
6. Josh said, "To be with Jesus is to be with him on mission." Does this describe you? How can you continue to grow "to be with him on mission"?