

Empowered and Sent

Matthew 10:1-2 Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

Disciples: Gk. **Mathetes**, One who learns, one who gets to know; fr. rt. **Mathma**- the study; the science

Jesus chose 12 students- 12 mathematicians, 12 scientists if you will- to carefully observe and practice His ways.

Here are the 12:

² Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.

Something changed with these followers between vs.1 and vs. 2. Did you catch it?

A little math...

Disciples (in v.1) + authority = apostles in vs. 2. Disciples follow and observe, but apostles are empowered and sent.

Gk: **Apostolos**- Lit. "He that is sent"; a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders

Jesus empowers and sends His church! All are not Apostles by calling, but we all work like Him by the power of His Spirit! "Little flock"- the first disciples/apostles were the beginnings of the church, and they modeled her future work generally. We cannot stay simple disciples if we are going to keep following Jesus- we are going to have to get a little "apostolic".

The Bible: how to practice this faith according to the early Apostles

Jesus was not simply their mentor, and Christianity is not primarily academic- Jesus makes transformed beings!

John 14:12 ¹² Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.

They would DO greater works because they would BE greater men. What should we expect as Jesus sends us?

Matthew 10:5-15 ⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: "Do not go in *the* way of *the* Gentiles, and do not enter *any* city of the Samaritans; ⁶ but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

We should expect to receive very clear instructions about who He is calling us to, where to go, and where not to!

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

We should expect to bring a clear message from God that announces His kingdom and invites people into it.

⁸ Heal *the* sick, raise *the* dead, cleanse *the* lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give. ⁹ Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, ¹⁰ or a bag for *your* journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support.

We should expect to walk in great faith, to perform compassionate works of power, and for God to meet every need!

¹¹ And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and stay at his house until you leave *that* city.

We should expect that God will have "worthy" people in every place, even where faith is not yet present.

¹² As you enter the house, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the house is worthy, give it your *blessing of* peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your *blessing of* peace.

We should expect to carry God's peace as a blessing. We give it or withhold it when necessary!

Proverbs 26:2 ² Like a sparrow in *its* flitting, like a swallow in *its* flying, so a curse without cause does not alight.

Curses need something to stick to, or they have no power. Blessings are also this way! Have we considered this?

¹⁴ Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁵ Truly 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.

We should expect to experience rejection, but rejection is not failure, and it not necessarily permanent! It is simply God bringing accountability and removing every excuse.

Where has God called you? To work your job, to raise kids, to give time in a nursing home, to have people in your home? Will we trust Him to work as we obey Him?