

1. Jesus Calls and Sends His Church as One

- a. He summoned them as one - "the Twelve"
 - i. Unified, though different, they were given one mission, one authority, one calling
- b. The calling to carry on the ministry of Christ Jesus is not an individual calling, a one-person mandate, but rather a corporate mission, a family's purpose
 - i. We are to *work* together
 - ii. We are to *encourage* each other
 1. Mark notes that they were sent out two-by-two
 - iii. We are to *admonish* each other / hold each other accountable
 - iv. We are to *covenant together* for the glory of God through the exaltation of Christ Jesus as the Divine Savior-King
 1. This means that you do not live for yourself, or entrust yourself to your own heart, but rather to the Church according to the Word of Christ Jesus
 2. "Membership" is not the participation of the country club or the team fan club, but the "Covenant" promise of a family member to the family, organically connected and inseparable from the Head (Colossians 1:18; 2:19)
 - v. We are to *devote ourselves* to each other (Acts 2) just as we devote ourselves to the Word, to Worship, and to Prayer

2. When Jesus Sends the Church Out He Grants Her His Authority

- a. The major point here is that the power and authority that the Church maintains to carry on the ministry of Jesus does not reside within the Church herself, but is sourced in the power and authority of Jesus
 - i. Thus, we cannot become arrogant or self-dependent
 - ii. Prayer and weakness and self-forgetfulness is central
 1. Mark 9:29 - "this kind [of demon] cannot come out by anything but prayer."
 - iii. The particular authority that Jesus granted was related to His ministry of kingdom arrival - casting out demons and healing diseases showed the promises of Isaiah being fulfilled
 1. Isa 61:1-3
- b. over all demons
 - i. to bring spiritual wholeness through the victorious freedom of the King
 - ii. The power/authority is connected with the sending - spiritual authority over demons is connected with the preaching of the kingdom
 - iii. This does not mean that the Church goes looking for demons, but rather when the preaching of the kingdom results in confrontation with spiritual forces, we should not fear for they have no authority
 1. We have great reason not to fear, even in the presence of such an enemy
 2. Instead, we have emissary authority of the King over them
- c. to restore sickness/disease
 - i. power and authority over sickness is connected with "healing" of physical and emotional woes
 1. The healing of illnesses at this time was to give evidence of the kingdom's arrival and the authority of Jesus as the promised Messiah
 2. Note that though authority over *all* demons is given, there is not an indication that *all* diseases were to be cured
 - ii. The purpose of being sent out was not to heal every woe, but to announce the kingdom by object lesson: physical restoration shows hope of spiritual restoration through the King (eventually resurrection will provide a deeper hope)
 1. Epaphroditus was sick unto death and his recovery was explained by Paul as God's mercy upon not only Epaphroditus, but upon Paul as well (Phil 2:26-7)
 2. Thus, even these faithful "sent ones" became ill to the point of death (2 Tim 4:20), and some Christians became ill and "slept" (died, 1 Cor 11:30)

3. Jesus Sends His Church Out to Proclaim Wholeness in the Kingdom of God

- a. The power and authority that Jesus gave were in conjunction with the purpose for which he sent them out
 - i. To proclaim the Kingdom was to overthrow the demonic forces and the “prince of the power of the air” – Satan
 - ii. To heal was to “bind up the broken-hearted” and bring about the restoration of what sin had set forth to undo in the Garden of Eden
- b. to proclaim the kingdom of God
 - i. publicly announce that the kingdom of God has arrived
 - ii. What is the Kingdom of God?
 1. All authority belongs in the first place to God and His gracious self-donation to us. (Stephen Um)
 - a. As intimacy increases in a relationship to the enjoyment of the individuals in the relationship, the level of independence between them will inevitably decrease.
 - b. Love makes one joyfully dependent naturally – thus to enter the Kingdom of God is to place oneself, willingly, joyfully, whole-heartedly, under the lordship of God out of love to Him, trust in Him as the One who did not reign as a heavenly despot from a distance but entered in as the Suffering Servant to swallow our woes to death and to carry us all the way home.
 2. God, as uncreated Creator, the only infinite one, does reign over all that He has created
 - a. Psalm 24:1; 93:1; Heb 12:2; Rev 7:15
 - b. This sovereignty of God over Creation is epitomized in the world structure which He created – the image of God upon Man was the image of rulership over Creation

“God’s own sovereign rule was epitomized in the probationary world which set the bounds of human freedom within the kingdom (Gen. 2:15–17). The blessedness of kingdom existence consisted in both the relationship of man to God and the relationship of man to creation. Nature was submissive to man’s dominion and fruitful in providing his needs.” (Graham Goldsworthy, *The Kingdom of God and the Old Testament*)
 - c. In this kingdom, human “freedom” was limited by his purpose as the image of God to rule over creation under the authority of God – “do not eat from the tree”
 3. Yet, this submission to God was rejected by Mankind, thus the Kingdom of God, though already present, is progressively being expressed and realized through the various stages of God’s breaking-in through redemptive history within the context of a fallen and cursed world due to the mutiny of God’s Image-Bearer
 - a. From the promise to Eve to the coming of King Jesus, from His death and resurrection and ascension to His return to exercise His right to reign over all the earth
 - b. Thus, Jesus is the focal point of God’s Kingdom, His redemptive plan to both judge His rebellious creations (Acts 17:31) and redeem a people from among them for His own gracious purpose.
 - c. He redeems them through the work of Jesus, the King, and the Holy Spirit of God to regenerate them, atone for their mutiny, restore their lives from death, pour out his Spirit for their joy and cause them to walk rightly, to secure their lives in the presence of God by the power of God for all eternity in the presence of His fullness with great joy.

- iii. All that this kingdom *means* was now present and would come to pass because the King had arrived to reign with authority
 - a. Salvation from sin and its just reward, eternal death
 - b. Victory over our spiritual enemy, Satan
 - c. Judgment/Mercy
 - d. Security from all that would truly harm us
 - e. Blessing to give us all that we truly need to be fully and truly human
- c. to "heal" - used in Isaiah 6:10; 61:1 (heal the broken-hearted)
 - i. used in Luke 6:18-19; 7:7; 8:47 of healing illness and weaknesses, but always a greater healing and restoration than mere physicality (although it was at least that!)
 - ii. This healing ministry shows that they were to serve people in all of their needs, not *merely* bring a message or condemn a town
 - 1. Healings would show that Jesus has divine authority and His kingdom would bring about the reversal of the curse of sin
 - 2. Thus, it is promised in Revelation, "Behold, I make all things new." (Rev 21:5)
 - iii. To help people in the needs that they already recognize is a ministry of the church because it was a ministry of Jesus

4. Jesus Sends His Church Out Dependent Upon Him

- a. He limited their self-dependence for SERVICE
 - i. Take nothing for your travels
 - 1. no staff, bag, bread, money, or extra shirt
 - a. Are the gospel writers inconsistent?
 - i. Mark says that Jesus allowed one staff, but Luke seems to show that Jesus said to take no staff
 - ii. Mark reveals Jesus allowing sandals, but Matthew seems to say that Jesus says to go without sandals
 - 2. The basic command is to travel light and not trust in extra provisions
 - a. In Matthew, Jesus says not to "carry" sandals – this only makes sense with an extra pair
 - b. In the context, then, Luke's recording of "no staff" would imply a backup staff, which they are not to "carry" or "take up"
 - 3. The disciples were not to rely upon themselves or store up provisions for tomorrow, but to entrust themselves to the Father (like the Son) for tomorrow
 - ii. They had to humble themselves to be needy and not collectors
 - 1. Like manna for every day - they must trust the Lord to provide for tomorrow
- b. He limited their self-protection for PROVISION
 - i. They were not to concern themselves with bettering their conditions, but were to stay on task for the kingdom of God
 - ii. Don't look for better accommodations
 - 1. Stay at the first house that welcomes you
 - 2. Humility and service is still the norm
 - iii. Don't go drumming up support
 - 1. philosophers and religious teachers of the day typically went from house to house to find more and greater support
 - 2. political fundraising would be the idea
 - 3. no "bag" - the bag was typically the purse in which this support would be carried
 - iv. Like the Exodus, they were not to complain for what the Lord provided for today or long for the "riches of Egypt"
 - 1. There are some strong allusions to the Exodus in this passage – no extra sandals (in the Exodus the sandals of the Israelites didn't wear out for 40 years of wilderness wanderings) – no manna collecting for tomorrow, etc.
 - 2. Trust the Lord and He will bring you from slavery to the blessed land

- c. It is important to note that these *particular* commands were given to the 12 for a specific period of time and are not universal, for Jesus reverses this in Luke 22:35-36, but the principles of dependence are universal

5. Jesus Sends His Church Out With a Severe Message

- a. If they do not welcome you, pronounce the warning of God's judgment for their rejection
 - i. shaking dust off of the feet was a sign of rejection, of shaking off the "uncleanness" of such rejection
 - 1. To shake the dust off of one's feet was a common Jewish response to leaving a pagan town, because of its uncleanness
 - 2. Thus, to do this to a Jewish town was to pronounce their uncleanness and impending judgment by God, just like a pagan Gentile town!
 - 3. Matt 10:15 – "It will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah in that day than for that town."
 - ii. In effect, it was to pronounce those dull of hearing as unclean, unfit, and unwelcoming of Jesus Himself and thus of God
- b. This command shows us not to be cowards, though we are to serve the people humbly, we are not to avoid the hard message of the gospel of repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ
 - i. Some of us are all about proclaiming the kingdom, but don't reach out to meet the felt needs of the world around us because it costs us emotional strength and makes us uncomfortable
 - ii. Some of us are all about meeting the felt needs around us, but don't proclaim the kingdom because it offends people's sense of independence and brings about rejection
 - iii. Jesus' two-fold command coupled with the warning show us that we are to always proclaim the kingdom as the hope of every person's true need for security, joy, acceptance, wholeness, and we are to serve the felt needs of the world and never to avoid the hard truth of humble, repentant, submissive faith alone as the entrance to the kingdom

We are called to testify to the risen and reigning Savior-King together, not alone. We are to depend upon the Lord for grace today and tomorrow, not building a kingdom of our own that will provide for tomorrow, but rather investing in eternity as we proclaim together the hope of the One who has come to bring peace with God and peace with each other and peace with Creation under His rule. We proclaim Him, crucified, risen, and reigning, bringing salve to the sick, healing to the broken-hearted, and the command to turn from trusting in anything else and to humbly entrust themselves to the God who has donated Himself for our wholeness, restoring what was broken by our sin that we might know Him, glorify Him, and enjoy Him forever.