

JESUS TRAINS HIS DISCIPLES FOR FUTURE GOSPEL MINISTRY

Matthew 9:35-10:42

Key Verse: 10:5

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

When we review what we have studied thus far, Jesus messianic ministry is heartbreaking and we feel divine mercy. Jesus messianic ministry is a gospel ministry to us. But the time of Jesus earthly messianic ministry was only three years. His messianic ministry time was greatly limited. So Jesus worked harder. Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the [kingdom of God](#) and healing every disease and sickness. But in three years it is impossible to heal the people of the whole world, because those who are sick and diseased are more than the healthy people. It is amazing that Jesus went through all the towns and villages teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. Indeed Jesus messianic ministry was divine mercy and divine compassion and divine love for all sinful mankind. In this passage Jesus trains his disciples for future gospel ministry.

First, the harvest is plentiful. At that time, the chosen people Israel were downtrodden by the Romans. And they were poor and helpless. Jesus was not discouraged, but he proclaimed the kingdom of God and healed the sick. Therefore we can say that Jesus earthly messianic ministry is summarized with two words: preaching the kingdom of God and healing the sick. Here we learn that Jesus wanted to save people from their sins and also he wanted to heal all sick and diseased people. Jesus was followed by huge crowds of people. After working hard, Jesus must have been tired. But when he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Do you have this kind of feeling toward a huge number of sick people? But Jesus knew that they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Here Jesus not only had compassion on the sick but also saw the root problem: that is, they were helpless because they had no shepherds. David said, The Lord is my Shepherd. So he had no problem. To Jesus eyes, so many people had no shepherds, so they were helpless. So Jesus said in verse 37, The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. It was a time of utter despair. It was a time of harassment and helplessness to the people under the yoke of the Roman Empire.

But Jesus did not think so. To Jesus, the crowds of sick people were like a plentiful harvest which would make them abundant and rich. The problem was that the workers are very few. He could not get many workers all at once. So he asked his disciples to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. What an incomparably poetic expression in expressing his shepherd heart for the people. In UBF we have 1,400 missionaries in 78 countries. We may think we have enough workers for the harvest. But this is wrong. We must ask God to send us many more workers to participate in the harvest of our Lord [Jesus Christ](#).

In this part, it is very meaningful when Jesus said, sheep without a

shepherd...The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Can you see the world like this? Or do you just say, The world is crazy. I m crazy, too.

Second, Jesus trains his [twelve disciples](#) to be future workers. Jesus really wanted to continue his messianic ministry until the world changed. So he began to train his twelve disciples. Look at verse . "He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness." Matthew introduces the disciples names in verses 2-4. Let s read verses 2-4.

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. They were largely men from the proletariat class. But they had learning minds and obedient hearts, better than anybody in the world. And Jesus also gave them instructions as they went out for fieldwork training. There are several instructions.

Instruction one: Jesus said, Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel (6) It means start the work from small things. It is easy for anybody to try to do big things and despair. But Jesus wanted them to start from the lost sheep of Israel.

Instruction two: preach the kingdom of heaven and heal whoever you meet (7,8). Look at verse 7. As you go, preach this message: The kingdom of heaven is near. First and last of all, Jesus wanted his disciples to preach the message of the kingdom of God. Here we learn that when we teach the Bible one to one, if we have no deep desire to plant the kingdom of God in sheep s hearts, we are not really teaching the Bible. There must be the kingdom of God in our hearts when we preach the gospel. Our life must be focused on the kingdom of God, not the White House where President Clinton lives. At the same time, we must heal the sick. The deep spiritual meaning of healing the sick is to practice divine mercy to the needy and helpless.

Instruction three: drive out demons. Sometimes something happens while we are preaching or teaching the Bible. Something happens. Our relationships so frequently break up. We don t want to see our sheep when they are crooked and rebellious. But we should not see them horizontally. We must see them from God s point of view. Especially we must see the devil in their hearts. We must try to fight with the devil in their hearts. The other day one shepherd was greatly betrayed by his lovely sheep. He could not understand, so he was discouraged and tortured himself. Later, he realized that it was not a matter of human relationship but the work of the devil. When he prayed that God would deal with the devil, his sheep soon got better. When the sheep was with the devil, he was like the devil. When he was with Jesus, he looked like a heavenly prince. It is very important to cast out the devil as Jesus instructed. How can we cast out the devil? We must depend on God and pray and give people one word of God. Then as soon as the devil hears the word of God, he runs away like a 100-meter track runner. Let s read verse 8 together. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Instruction four: depend on God only. Look at verse 9. "Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in our belts..." When we carry out gospel ministry, soon we confront a financial problem. So many of our coworkers, even in UBF, put one foot in the world and put the other foot in the work of God. So their ministry has remained under ten attendants at the Sunday worship service for the last ten years. How can we depend on God only, even about financial matters? It is a matter of faith. Our UBF founder was a regular church pastor. But he took care of several students and then the number grew to 400 very soon. Then he resigned the pastor's position and kept on helping students. At first he and his family suffered because of no food. But soon God solved the financial problem. This servant of God has never worried about the financial problem since those first five years of suffering at the initial stage of pioneering. It is unbelievable. But those who have faith can believe. Some of our American forefathers shared five kernels of corn at each meal. Their situation was made worse by the attack of American Indians. But they depended on God absolutely. Now America has become the richest country in the world.

Instruction five: let your peace rest on them. Whenever the disciples went into the towns and villages, they had to search for some worthy person there so that they might stay at his house until they left. At that time, to serve one or two meals was to do a great favor. So the disciples had to be careful in speaking to people. To do so, the disciples must have the peace of God in their hearts. It means they must believe God and his Son Jesus Christ as their Savior and receive peace from God. This peace is not worldly peace which lasts not more than five minutes. In other words, the disciples must boldly speak the gospel message so that others may believe the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and experience the peace of God and the joy of heaven and have a living hope of the kingdom of God. The disciples were not to be daunted by a house owner just because he gave them something to eat.

If people did not welcome the gospel of the kingdom, the disciples were to shake the dust off their feet when they left that home or town, believing that God's condemnation will be greater and more unbearable for that town than for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment. When he sent out his disciples, Jesus felt he was sending them like sheep among wolves. But Jesus wanted them to have absolute faith.

Instruction six: believe the work of the Holy Spirit. Look at verses 17-20. Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. The disciples of Jesus must depend on the work of the Holy Spirit, and then in any situation they can overcome public persecutions and unbearable hardships. In this time of amorality and violence, to become a disciple of Jesus seems to be indeed stupid and running a losing business. In addition, much persecution is always waiting for us. But we must believe the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our Counselor and Comforter and the Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and courage to win the victory with the gospel of Jesus whatever situation

we are in.

Instruction seven: stand firm to the end (21-23). The disciples needed to know that all men would hate them because of Jesus. Jesus teaching is the kingdom of God. Jesus teaching also includes to live a holy life, as God is holy. Jesus teaching challenges immoral and violent people. Jesus teaching warns ungodly people that they will be condemned. So they unconditionally hate the disciples of Jesus. Yesterday, one may have been a good brother. But tomorrow he becomes a bitter enemy when he hears about Jesus, for he realizes that he is being warned about his corrupted and violent life. The father of one of our members hates a servant of God unconditionally and spent a lot of money to persecute him, not because the servant of God does not look handsome or did something wrong, but because the servant of God seemed to publicize his public sinner's life to the whole world. Therefore we must be wise and know how to talk to such people and how to escape from them and how to avoid them. Look at verses 22-23. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. This concludes Jesus' instructions to his disciples before sending them out on this short training mission.

Third, the disciples must be like Jesus. Look at verses 24-25a. A student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the student to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. Jesus is the Son of God who has the power and glory of God. But evil people criticized Jesus by calling him Beelzebub. So they will criticize his disciples. Therefore we must be like Jesus, not like worldly people. Worldly people are always deceiving and being deceived. And they hide in the darkness, doing many evil things. But their wrongdoing will be revealed to the world. Therefore the disciples must not be afraid of those who kill the body; they must fear the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Our life span is in the hand of God (28). So we don't have to be afraid.

Fourth, Jesus came to bring a sword. The people of the world do not acknowledge the name of God. With their mouths they say they are Christians. So many worldly people are 100% Christians and at the same time, according to the situation, 100% non-Christians. When they want to prove themselves to be reliable persons, they say they are Christians. But when they intentionally do evil things, they say, I don't know Jesus. It is because they believe that God is love and that he does not condemn anybody. But verse 34 says, Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. God is love. But the sword of God is flashing in the souls of evil men. Therefore we must love Jesus more than our father and mother. Anyone who loves his son or daughter more than Jesus is not worthy of Jesus.

Today we learn that we must master the basic principles of discipleship of Jesus Christ. It is to have faith in God and give our lives for the glory of God. May God establish you as one of the honorable disciples of Jesus Christ.

