



## The Training of the Twelve

Sunday, March 5 / 23 --- Matthew 10:1 – 15 (Mk. 6:7 – 13; Lk. 9:1 – 11)

*And He called to Him His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction... these twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel'. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*

*Matthew 10:1, 5 – 7*

*Up until this moment, Jesus' disciples have been passengers in the car, and He's been doing the driving... He's made all the decisions... Now He is telling them to go off and do it themselves. These instructions were very specific, for a particular situation. But Matthew has recorded them in detail, presumably because he thinks they remain relevant to the church even after Jesus' death and resurrection. How might they apply to the mission of our church today?*

*N. T. Wright*

### Sermon Outline:

1. The Men: The Twelve Apostles (10:1 – 4)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. The Ministry: The Lost Sheep of Israel (10:1, 5 – 8)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. The Message: The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand (10:7)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. The Means: Freely you have Received; Freely Give (10:8 – 15)



## **Discussion Questions:**

One of the most extensive works written on the subject of Jesus' training of the twelve disciples was written in 1871 by a man named A. B. Bruce. It is called *The Training of the Twelve*.

He writes the following about the disciples' first mission trip alone without Jesus:

*The twelve, at the period of their first trial mission, were not fit to preach the gospel, or to do good works, either among Samaritans or Gentiles. Their hearts were too narrow, their prejudices too strong. There was too much of the Jew, too little of the Christian, in their character... in all probability they would have been drawn into disputes on the religious differences between Samaritans and Jews... They did not as yet (even) understand, in the least degree, the doctrine of the cross... They were instructed to (simply) announce the kingdom of heaven was at hand.*

A.B. Bruce, *The Training of the Twelve* (p. 101f)

- How do you think the twelve apostles would have felt as Jesus sent them out?
- Have you ever had an experience that felt similar when God asked you to do something risky?
- Why didn't Jesus ask them to do a cross-cultural mission trip like He did later? (cf. Mt. 28:19)
- What advantages / disadvantages do we have in ministry, when compared with the twelve?
- Why did Jesus feel the twelve needed a quiet resting place with Him after the trip? (Mk. 6:31)

## **Application:**

*What is a good response to this Scripture we have studied? Certainly, we must pray for direction in our efforts to share Christ with others (Mt. 9:38), but we must go as well, at some point. Just as Jesus sent the twelve out, He sends us. Who is He sending you to?*