

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 7



READY FOR SERVICE

Scripture Texts: Matthew 10:1-8; Mark 16:15-20; Psalm 126:5-6; 1 Peter 4:10-11

When Jesus told the apostles that they would be His witnesses, He told them to spread the good news of salvation. This same commission is directed to every soldier of Christ today. The work of Jesus is the teaching of the kingdom throughout the world. No one has the power to go forth and witness until he has received power of the Holy Ghost (**Acts 1:8**).

God has entrusted part of His own life and qualities to His people. He comes in to work and live in human hearts. We must account to Him for our handling of this gift.

MEMORY VERSE: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*
– **Matthew 24:14**

Christ Gives Power to Witness

Matthew 10:1-8 Christ called His disciples. He chose twelve for special work. We are called out under the same conditions. All of God's work is special. He ordained them, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to witness for Him. He gave them power against unclean spirits. These spirits are demons and have greater power than humans. No human can withstand them without the power of God. And He gave them power to heal—neither can a human do this in his own power. All were common working men, **unlearned and ignorant** (**Acts 4:13**).

Go not into the way of the Gentiles . . . Samaritans . . . A temporary command for this trip. Paul afterward was to go to the Gentiles, adding that God commanded that **salvation** be taken **unto the ends of the earth** (**Acts 13:46-47**).

Preach . . . The kingdom of heaven is at hand—it was even then being set up. It was being set up in hearts—the **kingdom of God is within you** (**Luke 17:21**). **It is not of this world** (**John 18:36**), not a thing of nations, armies, or material things. It is **righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost** (**Romans 14:17**). What a message we have to deliver to the world! **Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils**—not only are these spiritual works, but also they can be seen with the natural eye.

Christ Commanded "Go"

Mark 16:15-20 Near the time of His ascension Jesus gave instruction to His disciples, and it is our instruction also, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**. No one is to be left out. They were to start, and we are to follow and carry on until all is finished. This charge is laid upon all the church.

It takes brave people to be trusted soldiers for Christ. Just anyone will not do. Witnessing begins at home, then to the neighbors, and finally to the whole world. We may, as Jesus did, receive the least honor from our own people.

Before we will be entrusted with the large, or the most important work, we must learn to be faithful in the smaller things God will ask us to do. Jesus always works with His people, never sends them alone. With this command He promised some signs that would follow them that believe. Beware of work being done where the signs go before, exalting man (healing campaigns). He promised power to cast out devils, speak with new tongues (languages), heal the sick, and immunity to snakebite and other poisons (accidentally received). These were to be had by faith in Jesus' name.

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Reward for Our Labor

Psalm 126:5-6 They that sow in tears—in sacrifice, hardship, opposition, or persecution—shall reap in joy, the joy of winning souls to the Master. To do this, one must carry precious seed, the truth of the Gospel. No "social gospel," or human creed, or theory of developing the good in man, or mere suffering will do. It must be the living message of salvation through Jesus' blood by faith and repentance.

In the memory verse for today Jesus states, **And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . unto all nations.** This is in accord with the prophecy in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (**Daniel 2:34-35, Daniel 2:44**), . . . **the stone . . . became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.** The Kingdom of God will be victorious and will stand forever. What part will we have in this victory?

To God Be the Glory

1 Peter 4:10-11 As we have received, so we are to minister. That is, whatever gift, ability, or opportunity God gives us is to be used. Our purpose in using is to serve others of the church or of the world. The end goal is to bring profit to the Lord. The gifts are grace. They are of the life of God—portions of His power, His ability, His nature, put into us. Made up of much forms—teaching, preaching, faith, healing, wisdom, discernment, governing ability, and many others. They are not limited to the nine Paul mentioned in **1 Corinthians 12**. Any tool for service God supplies and enables us to use is part of His manifold grace. We are caretakers of them. We must be good stewards.

We must exercise our gift with the ability that God gives. Look to Him, not ourselves, for ability. Lean on Him, ask His leading and help. Jesus said, ". . . without me ye can do nothing" (**John 15:5**). The end purpose is that God may be glorified. When we are used in service and others are benefitted, when God gets the glory, then the grace is working as planned. "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (**1 Corinthians 12:7**).

JUST A THOUGHT

What message do you carry? By what authority?

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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