

We are in this series called Getting Started. What we have been saying that this series is a field guide for what the Christian life is all about. Over these past few weeks, we have gone over what it looks like to be a Christ-follower. Two weeks ago Pastor Spence showed us what it looks like to abide. Then last week we saw what it looked like to love the spiritual family, and for the next few weeks, we are going to be looking at how to be on the mission of Christ in the city and the world. Today, my topic in the sermons series is called the Gospel for the Nations or another way to say it is international missions.

Now, as I grew up in the church I had some polarizing examples when it came to missions. First, when I was young, I thought that missions were for older black women in white dresses wearing white gloves selling chicken dinners for the building fund. Secondly, as I got older, I thought missions was for affluent youth groups. On Facebook, all I will see is photos of them with little African babies with big stomachs. Lastly, as I got more involved in the church, I misunderstood it be for the Christian elite.

Now, I share this not to make fun but to show you God had worked on me because I was judging his “mission” according to what I saw rather than what he has done.

Now, I am not sure who I am talking to today, but many of us have an unhealthy view of missions. Like me, some of us need a redeemed view of missions.

Therefore, that is my task for today is to help you see this beautiful and glorious mission that God put out in front us. In fact, Ed Stetzer says this way, *“It is not that God’s church has a mission but God’s mission has a church.* That is to reconcile the world to himself through Jesus Christ .

The church exists to serve, to be an expression, of God’s mission. Our purpose is not to see missions as some part of what we do, but who we are. When we fail to participate in God’s mission in the world, we fail to be the church.

Therefore, we the church, we are not saved not to sit but saved to be sent. So here is hope for our time today, I want you to walk away knowing that God has sent you.

TRANSITION: So I want you to listen in because God wants to speak to you today(PAUSE). With that, we are going to be in Luke 10:1-12.

This sermon has three parts: First, we going to see how we sent (five points), then we are to talk about why we are sent, and lastly we are going chat through what are we to do. Let’s read v.1.

HOW WE ARE SENT

POINT 1: WE ARE SENT BY JESUS FOR JESUS

1After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.

If you look at the text, there are two words I want you to look at, “Appointed” and “Sent them.” This might not seem like a big deal, but this a colossal reality for the disciples and for you. Luke did not write, Jesus appointed them not to sit but we appointed them to be sent. We are sent by Jesus for Jesus.

As we look back at the text, it says he appointed the 72 by two’s into every town and place he was “about” to go. The mission is set out in front the disciples and Jesus is calling them into his mission.

We need to grapple with the reality that you are ordained by King Jesus. When the spirit of God open your heart to see the wonders of Christ, that was also our commissioning into his mission. You are sent by Jesus for Jesus.

Then he gives them more instructions what it looks like to be a sent people. Let’s keep reading. Verse 2

POINT 2: WE ARE SENT TO BE LABORERS

2 And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Thus after he commissioned them, he presented the task. That is the harvest is plentiful, meaning there is much work to do, and the laborers are few, meaning there a few people to do it, and they must do it, and they are to pray for laborers. Therefore, this leads me to my next point; we are sent to be laborers.

Now at this time, there were very few that have heard and experience the work of Christ. Therefore, Jesus sent his people to labor. If you noticed, the people he sent were not the religious elite but ordinary people like you and I. If we look back in chapter 9 Jesus did not send a crowd of 5000, but he sent the faithful few.

I think some of us sees this text and think this for the serious Christians. But check this, most of us are laboring for our mission, but most of the time it’s ours rather than the Lord’s. For many of us, it is easy to look at our heroes and people that are doing radical things for Christ, and we call them laborers. But we fail to see the Scriptures for us that we are to be laborers. We are sent by Jesus for Jesus to be laborers.

Now, we are going to get into the activity of laborer later in the text but there one key instruction he gave to the disciples in this verse before they go. He tells them to “pray.”

Jesus says there is a vast amount of people to reach but I want you first to pray. This seems crazy and counterintuitive, right? Why would Jesus tell them about his massive mission and then tell them to pray? Because prayer causes dependence. Jesus knew that without the wisdom and strength of the spirit, the disciples would deem the mission impossible. In fact, no-one in their right mind would on their terms go to unfamiliar places and get uncomfortable unless it is God at work and it begins with prayer.

So my question for you is how is prayer life as it relates to the mission of God? God might be calling some of to go, or stay but have you prayed? You see God has a mission for his church and your prayer is key to see where you fit.

But we have to keep moving. Jesus gives them more instructions on their "sentness." Let's look verses 3-4.

POINT 3: WE ARE SENT WITH NOTHING YET WITH EVERYTHING

3 Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

4 Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road

As Jesus tells them to go, he gave them some specific instructions. He says that he is sending them like lambs in the midst of wolves. This metaphor is two-fold, one, Jesus is sending his people into a difficult task. Two, as they go the temptation is to want to coerce people into the Kingdom.

But check what he says next. He tells his disciples, take no money, take not a bed, take no food, take no clothes, greet no-one (Jews greetings were long during that).

Why did Jesus do this? Did he do this because we wanted them to be homeless? Are not to have a friend? Certainly not, rather he did it to make them humble and dependent on His provisions. To depend on him!

You see God, has entrusted us with a great message but what gets in the way of proclaiming is our temptation towards comfort, pride, and self-reliant.

It's an irony that God's faithfulness on lives can often cause us to forget his sovereign provision in his work. One way to avoid the trap it to get caught up in grace.

What does this mean for us? But we are sent by Jesus for Jesus to be laborers with nothing and yet with everything.

You see missions is not only about reaching the nations, but it about God reaching you. God uses our limitedness to show us his faithfulness. So whether God is calling you overseas or across the street, he is calling you. But have to realized you have everything you need in Christ. Once you see he is all you need, everything will start to be insignificant.

So my question is for you is what is gripping your heart more than Jesus right now? What are some hindrances that are keeping you from joining in on the mission of God?

Missions is about worship. What are you worshipping more than Jesus right now? Another way to say it, how are cherishing things over Jesus. Jesus says in Mathew 10:39 that whoever finds his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will save it.

Family, some of being held down the Christianized American dream and we don't even realized it.

You see we are sent with nothing but yet we have everything!

But we have to move on, let's see what he told them to do once they to where they are going. Let's Read v.5-9

POINT 4: WE ARE SENT TO STAY AND INVEST

5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. 9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

Then after Jesus got them praying, after He got them going; and after He put their hearts in the right place, He next gives them specific instructions for ministry. As we saw above, he said they are not to be distracted by material concerns rather they are to be dependent on Him. Thus, they are to entered into towns they were unfamiliar with and depended on the generosity of that community if accepted.

Then if accepted, they were called to heal the sick and announce the kingdom You see we are Sent to Stay and Invest.

According to v. 9 staying and investing meant healing the sick and preaching. The healing of the sick was essential because it showed that the kingdom of God has come with power and the power of their preaching is demonstrated through acts of mercy. And the content of their preaching is that, "*The kingdom of God has come near to you.*"

Therefore to say it another way to stay and invest is Gospel proclamation and demonstration. I want to camp here a bit; I think this where we have missed the mark in missions, we think missions is only in proclamation or demonstration. When the scriptures show it is both.

So questions that we need to ask is what does it mean for us to stay and invest?

Locally, we make disciples, serve the needs of city, plant churches for the sake of a Gospel renewal. How Mercy says it, we want to see "a Gospel awakening in Charlotte that is carried to the ends of the Earth." But check the end of the statement, to the ends of earth. That is why we go on short term trips so that we can expose many of you to what God is doing around the world. Maybe God is calling some of you in this room to go. 1 year, 2 years, or may forever. What we have to put that on the table.

But you can't go if you don't know what is going on. And we have trips ready for you. In fact, right now, there is a team in South Africa right now. We have trips from Ireland to Southeast Asia. If you want to go on short-term trip text "missions" to 980-229-4921. I am going to give you 10 seconds to do that.

But no matter where God is placing us we called to Stay and Invest. For those that you know God calling to stay in Charlotte. What are doing about investing in the needs of city?

But we have to move on, lastly, let's look at what Jesus calls to do with the message. Let's read Luke 10:10-12

POINT 5: WE ARE SENT TO SPEAK

10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' 12 I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Jesus told the disciples if the Gospel message is not welcomed, move on. If we genuinely preach the message of Christ, some will reject the message. Jesus tells them not to make it personal. But to shake off the dust off their sandals which is a sign of judgment for those rejecting the Gospel.

There is a lot to unpack here but what I want us to see is that we sent to speak.

We just saw that we are called Stay and Invest which was on the demonstration of the Gospel. But we sent to proclaim it as well.

You have to hear this, Jesus is not telling them to bail immediately. In fact, most of the time, when the Gospel is presented people typically reject it in various ways. But it takes constant laboring. How many are you the fruit of someone sharing the Gospel with six to seven times?

So the point is clear, we are sent to Speak. So again, whether God is calling you Charlotte or China. We have sent you to be proclaim his message that, the kingdom has come near. Now our charge in this is not to create listeners, the spirit of God does that but it to discover them, share the gospel with them and to disciple them.

WHY DO WE GO?

But before we close with some practical things we do we have address why we go. We don't go because there are 3.1 billion lost people in the world. We don't go because there are 7,079 unreached people groups. We don't go because it's our Christian duty. We go because we love the Glory of God.

Missions exist because God is great and worthy to be known and loved for his infinite excellence. The excellence of God is the ground of missions, and God-exalting worship is the goal of missions. God wants all people to worship him because he is great! But I think for many of us, we failed to see the infinite excellence of God because of our sin.

STORY: I remember when my wife and I went to Charleston this past winter. I have never been to Charleston, but everyone keeps telling me how glorious it was. But while

we there we could not experience Charleston to its fullest for two reasons. First, there was cold front there. Second, I got a stomach bug. Now all I was hearing from people was the greatness of Charleston, its food, its people, its culture, its scenery, its history and I couldn't enjoy it. The cold front and my stomach bug keep us from experiencing its true beauty. Due to that, I don't have the full, rich experience that everyone talks about.

You see we have something that gets in the way of us see God's glory and that is our sin. With that in mind, our sin is the reason why God's mission does not compel many of us. But check this, God did not leave you hanging, that is why he sent Jesus. Christ came to take our sin so that we can see how glorious God is. Christ died so for the Father's glory, check our John 17. He took our sin that promised eternal death, but God made us alive together in Christ so we can experience life. You see Christ saved us not to sit, but to be sent.

WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

Well, since we are all called to be sent and not to sit. I have compiled six things that you can do to get involved in missions

1. Love your God — This important. Mission is about worship. We love missions because mission is about God.
2. Love the Local Family — We go overseas to plant churches, yes, but if you are not a member of local church, it will be hard to be about church planting overseas. Loving the local church body is important in that endeavor.
3. Make Disciples — Act locally, think globally. Jesus model to us disciple-making that led to the evangelization of the nations. You can have a global impact by discipling someone. If you want be discipled, get into a community group and find someone to invest in you.
4. Pray for the Family — Go to the joshuaproject.net and begin to start praying for Unreached People Groups. UPG.
5. Support the Family — Because Jesus has sent his church, we are all called get involved financially. Mercy gives 17% of incoming offerings to local mission, domestic church planing and international mission. Why do we do that? Because the Gospel is worth it! Why is a two year church and giving that amount. We are modeling to you what it looks like to give. For some of us, the most practical thing for you is to get involved in the mission by giving.
6. Go to unreached Family — Go back to verse 2, Have you considered that you might be answer to the prayer of lack of laborers?