

Every Saint Sent

Preparatives

Introduction

The Text

¹ And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. ³ And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. ⁴ And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. ⁵ And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." ⁶ And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. (Luke 9:1–6)

Are You a Missionary Or an Impostor?

- A. The title, or **banner**, I'm going to hang over what I'm thinking will be **three messages** on this text is: **Every Saint Sent**.
- B. I am operating here on the basis of that **assertion** I put forward a few weeks ago: namely, that **every Christian** is, in the **broadest** sense of the term, a **missionary**.
1. Now, I say, "*in the **broadest** sense of the term*", because I know that there are **narrower**, more **technical**, ways to define this idea—you've got to go to a **foreign land**, cross a **sea**, maybe go to an **unreached** people group.
 - a. To do such things is **unspeakably wonderful** and **utterly necessary** in the grand cause of kingdom advance.
- C. So I'm not trying to **downplay** or **devalue** this narrower idea of a missionary at all. In fact, I'm actually trying to **plead** with us that we might take our **cues** from these kinds of missionaries and bring some of this **back to the "homeland"**, so to speak.
1. I think this sort of **radical, lay-your-yes-down-for-Jesus** lifestyle ought to be, not the **exception**, but the **norm**. The missionary lifestyle is the **normal Christian life**.
- D. In fact, since preaching on this a few weeks ago, I came across a quote by **Charles Spurgeon** on the matter and, though it's a bit in your face, I love it: "*Every Christian . . . is either a **missionary** or an **impostor***."
1. Do you hear what he's saying there? Either you are **on mission**, going hard for Jesus in the everyday of your life, or you have serious reason to question whether you are even a **Christian** at all. That turns the **heat** up a bit, doesn't it?

- a. To be a **Christian** is to be **sent out** on mission. Whether you cross **oceans** to reach the **nations** or you cross the **street** to reach your **neighbors**, you are Christ's missionary, a sent one of God! ***Every Saint Sent.***

The Missionary Spirit

- A. Let's linger on this here, even in the introduction, for a moment longer. Allow me to sharpen this point by asking a question: **Why do you have the Spirit, Christian?**
 1. We who have the Spirit of God would do well to notice why, in fact, Jesus says the Spirit is given to us in the first place.
- B. In one sense, there are **lots of reasons** why the Spirit is given:
 1. He **convicts** the world of sin.
 2. He opens our **eyes** to the glory of Jesus.
 3. He **regenerates** our hearts and awakens faith.
 4. He **comforts** us in our affliction.
 5. He gives us **words** to speak to others even when we're a bit scared.
 6. He **grieves** when we are in sin and graciously helps to break our hardening hearts.
 7. He fills our lives with **fruit**: love, peace, patience, kindness, joy, etc.
 8. He gives **gifts** that we might serve others more effectively for their good and God's honor.
 9. He **seals** us for the day of redemption.
- C. But running underneath all of this is one **fundamental concern**. Why is the Spirit poured out upon the church? To equip her for the mission of God . . . to reach, and bless, and save the families of the earth, the nations. The Spirit is fundamentally a missionary Spirit . . . sent to us because He is sending us to them.
 1. **John 20:21-22**, after His resurrection, Jesus appears to His disciples and says: *"²¹ 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.'²² And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'."*
 - a. Perhaps a **foreshadow** here of what would come on the day of Pentecost. But here's the point: Because He is sending us as missionaries to the world, we need the Spirit of God. He sends the Spirit to us because He is sending us to them.
 2. When we go to Jesus' discussion of **Pentecost** there in **Acts 1:8**, this again is made plain: *"[Y]ou will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*
 - a. What is the point of the Spirit? To make us powerful witnesses in our homeland and abroad. He sends the Spirit to us because He is sending us to them—whoever, wherever they are.
- D. And note: This missionary Spirit is not given merely to the **Apostles**. It becomes the **heritage** of the **entire church**—from the least to the greatest. On the day of Pentecost, Peter opens his mouth boldly and quotes **Joel 2:28-29**: *"¹⁷ [I]n the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my*

*Spirit on **all flesh**, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit . . .” (Acts 2:17–18).*

1. I don't care how **small**, how **insignificant** you feel. If you have **God's missionary Spirit**, you are **God's missionary!** *Every Saint Sent.*

Preparatives

- A. And it's my contention that **our text** here actually lays out a lot of what's involved in the **making of a missionary**.
- B. I said I anticipate **three messages** on this. But this morning we'll be limiting our attention to the first one and a half verses (**vv. 1-2a**) and we'll be dealing with what I would call the **Preparatives**—the preparations involved in the making of a missionary.
 1. And when we look closely at our text, we notice three: Missionaries are: (1) **Called**; (2) **Given**; and (to keep riffing on the introductory matter) (3) **Sent**.

The 12 and the 72

- A. Before we dive in, let me just say one last thing. The careful reader might already be a bit concerned that I'm taking this text, which clearly is dealing with the **twelve Apostles** in particular, and yet I'm applying it to the **church** in general.
 1. There is much I could say on this, but perhaps the simplest way to defend my interpretive move here is to point out that the **immediate context** in the book of Luke itself actually demands that we **broaden the scope** of this out to include much more than just the twelve.
 - a. For just one chapter later, Jesus, in almost **identical terms**, calls, gives to, and sends out not just the **twelve** but, now, **seventy-two** of His disciples (**10:1-12**).
- B. Brothers and sisters, the **implication** of this correlation is plain: Whatever He is doing here with these **twelve Apostles**, albeit in a preeminent sort of way, He also intends to do with every one of His **disciples** in one way or another.
 1. In other words: He intends to do this sort of thing with **you**!

(1) Called

A Turning Point

- A. As we turn from **ch. 8** in Luke's gospel to **ch. 9**, **two radically important things** emerge for the very first time, and they are **profoundly related**.
 1. On the one hand, it is in this chapter that Jesus first reveals to His disciples the **sobering reality** that the Christ will be **betrayed, suffer, and die** (**vv. 21-22**). He will not be around much longer.

2. On the other hand, it is in this chapter that the disciples get their first real **taste of ministry**. We read there at the beginning of [v. 1](#) that *“¹ [Jesus] called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.” “What I’ve been doing, preaching and healing . . . now it’s your turn!”*
- B. And you see how these two things are **related**, right? *“I’m not going to be here much longer. So I’m raising you up to keep this mission moving forward.”*
1. What a **profound connection**. All that Jesus was on the earth, we the church are now to be! That’s why we’re called the **“body of Christ” (1 Cor 12:27)** after all.
 - a. We are the **physical manifestation** of His presence in the world. We are His **smile**, we are His **voice**, we are His **hands**, we are His **feet**. And we carry on **His mission**, because we have **His Spirit!**

A Sleight of Hand

- A. It’s amazing when you think about it. Up to this point in Luke’s gospel **all eyes** have been upon Jesus. At times, I assume, we’ve almost **forgotten** these twelve were even there. But they have been. And that is a most critical point.
- B. I don’t know much about **magic** and magicians, but I do know that they will often have you looking over **here** while something even more significant is happening over **there**.
1. And I suppose what Jesus has been doing is kind of like that. All our attention has been on the **crowds** and the **individuals** Jesus has been ministering to—the **leper**, the **paralytic**, the man with a **withered hand**, the **Centurion’s servant**, the **widow’s son**, the **prostitute**, the **demoniac**, the woman with a **flow of blood**, **Jairus’ daughter**. All of these stories have captured our attention, and rightfully so.
 - a. But, while all of this is going on over here, we might have missed something perhaps even more significant going on over there: namely, **discipleship**. He’s called these men to Himself so that they might **follow** behind Him, **watch**, **learn**, and slowly, become more and more **like** Him.
- C. This is perhaps one of the most awesome things a human being could ever conceive—that as we watch Jesus **heal** the sick, **eat** with tax collectors, **cast** out demons, **embrace** the unclean, **rebuke** the self-righteous, and ultimately lay down His life in love at the **cross**, we are not only seeing how utterly **set apart**, **holy**, **distinct** Jesus is from the world, we are also seeing what He is determined to **make us** by His Spirit.
1. We are witnessing the very **mission** we too are being **sent out** on by Him. *“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21).*
- D. This means, therefore, that before you can be **God’s missionary** you must be **Christ’s disciple**—**called** into intimate communion with Him.

1. You must experience His **grace, kindness, and tender care**. You must **follow** behind Him, **watch** Him, **learn** from Him. So that when He sends you out, you actually look **like** Him. That's the point of the **eight chapters** that came before this moment.

(2) Given

Endowments of the Spirit

- A. We read that “[Jesus] called the twelve together and **gave** them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases” (v. 1).
 1. One commentator writes that Jesus here “transfers the **endowments of the Spirit** that [He] received at his **baptism** to the disciples” (PNTC).
 - a. You recall that it was at Jesus’ baptism that “the Holy Spirit **descended** on Him” (Luke 3:22) and **filled** Him (Luke 4:1), and that after facing the **devil** in the desert He “returned in the **power of the Spirit** to Galilee” (Luke 4:14).
 - i. And now it’s this power and authority in the Spirit that Jesus **gives** to His disciples.
- B. The idea, then, is that the making of a missionary involves not only being **called** into close communion with Jesus so that you can learn to be like Him, it also requires that you be **given** something of His power.
 1. If you don’t go out with His Spirit and His power, you will spend **buckets of sweat** but see none of the **harvest**.

The Threat of Autonomy

- A. One of the things that marks our culture and really the fallen human race in general is **autonomy**, right? **Self-reliance**. “I can make this **happen**. And if for some reason I can’t make it happen right now, just get me the **right book**, the **right budget**, the **right tools**, and I’ll be good. I certainly don’t need to sit around **waiting for God**. I can make this happen.”
 1. Am I the only one who’s spent way too long surfing the mac **app store** looking for that one app that will magically cure all my **productivity woes**? “If I just find the right app, my whole life will fall into **line**, all my **tasks** will get done, I’ll never be **late** again. Just get me the app, I can do this.”
- B. And when we bring this autonomous, self-reliance stuff into the **church**, and the church’s mission, the effects are devastating. You just can’t **replace the Holy Spirit** with your own **willpower**, or **technology**, or church-growth **strategy**.
 1. **Human beings** cannot **manufacture** what only **God** can **produce**.

C. Paul gets it. That's why he says: "⁶ *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.*" (1 Cor 3:6).

1. If God isn't in this thing, it goes nowhere. Such success has to be **given** to us in Him.

The Place of Prayer

A. One text I love on this is coming later in [Luke 10:2](#). Jesus looks at the seventy-two and He says "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore . . .*" What? "**Get out there! What are you doing sitting on your hands when the needs are so great?! Go!**"

1. That's not what He says. Not first, at least: "*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.*"

- a. You don't just **roll up your sleeves** and **run** out into the harvest. You beg God to send and empower whom He wills. It is only after this that Jesus finally in [v. 3](#) says: "Go . . .; behold, I am sending you . . ."

B. So here's really the question then: Are we waiting on God, **praying earnestly** to the Lord of the harvest? In between our seeing of the **need** and our **going**, are we **praying**—for His power, His authority, His Spirit?

C. It occurs to me that such a thing is both **humbling** and **encouraging**.

1. It is **humbling** because we can't do it. You want to reach people for Jesus, but you can't just make it happen. It doesn't hinge on your **arguments**, your **IQ**, your **maturity**. God doesn't need us.
2. But it is **encouraging** because He **doesn't expect** the power to come from us. Some of us just feel so **weak**, so **broken**, like God would never use us. But don't you see? That doesn't disqualify you here. We all are weak. We all are broken. We all don't have what it takes. We all start to **shake** when we think about sharing Jesus with a coworker or something.
 - a. But He **loves us anyways** in Christ, and He gives us His own power and authority, so that when we go out and see fruit it's Him who is praised for the **glory of His grace**, not me.

(3) Sent

Praying Them in Or Praying Us out?

A. So a missionary is first **called** into close communion with Christ, **given** some of His power and authority, and, only then, can we talk about the missionary as ready to be **sent**: "¹ *[Jesus] called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,* ² *and he sent them out . . .*" ([vv. 1-2a](#)).

- B. The Lord really convicted me recently. I found myself praying quite regularly that God would **bring people** to Mercy Hill. That He would bring in the *lost*, the *wayward*, the *broken*, the *elect* of God.
1. But as I was praying this same prayer one day, suddenly it occurred to me: **Nowhere in the NT**, as far as I'm aware, do you find people praying for the lost to **come to them**: "*We'll hold the service and pray that they come.*"
 - a. No! The prayer always turns in precisely the **opposite direction**. "*Lord, send us to them! Give us boldness so we can go out to them!*"
- C. Now I'm not saying I don't want to be concerned with **visitors** or sensitive in our services to those who are **seeking**. I certainly do!
1. I'm just saying that the whole **momentum** in the book of **Acts** is going in the other direction—the church is going **out**. The church is **seeking** and **saving** the lost, not sitting around **waiting** for the lost to find them.
 - a. The only thing they are **waiting** for is the **Spirit** as we saw in **Acts 1:8**, but once the Spirit falls, then they are quite **powerfully** and **immediately sent out**.
- D. And all of this, of course, is because we ourselves have been **found by Jesus**, who Himself was **sent out** by the Father to **seek** and **save** us. We have **His Spirit** and we carry on **His mission**.
1. The **found find**. The **caught catch**. The **harvested harvest**. The **saved save**. The **sought after are sent out**. That's the movement that God intends to initiate in the church!

A Sent Church

- A. And, again, this sending out of God does not merely apply to a **few** in the church who we deem missionaries and send out. It applies to us **all**!
1. Reflecting on the Great Commission in **Matt 28**, Jack Miller writes: "*What we are calling for is a rethinking of the Great Commission, to read it so as to see that it is defining the church in most radical terms. The missionary mandate [or Great Commission] is not simply an imperative requiring the church to send missionaries into the harvest field. It certainly is that. But **the entire church is a 'sent church'**, a commissioned body that is itself involved in the harvesting task*" (pp. 52-53).
 - a. You, me, **every saint . . . sent**.

Conclusion

- A. Let me close now by reading those words of **Spurgeon** again, only now in fuller context. Let his words **search** you, bring you to **repentance, faith, joy, mission** in Christ: "*[H]e who really has [a] high estimate of Jesus will think much of him, and as the thoughts are sure to run over at the mouth, he will talk much of him. Do we so? If Jesus is precious to you, you will not be able to keep your good news to yourself; you will be whispering it into your child's ear; you will be telling it to your husband;*

you will be earnestly imparting it to your friend; . . . your heart will speak, and your eyes will flash as you talk of his sweet love.

Every Christian here is either a missionary or an impostor. . . . You either try to spread abroad the kingdom of Christ, or else you do not love him at all. It cannot be that there is a high appreciation of Jesus and a totally silent tongue about him. . . . If you know Christ, you are as one that has found honey; you will call others to taste of it; you art like the lepers who found the food which the Syrians had cast away: you will go to Samaria and tell the hungry crowd that you have found Jesus, and are anxious that they should find him too.

Be wise in your generation, and speak of him in fitting ways and at fitting times, and so in every place proclaim the fact that Jesus is most precious to your soul.”