

SUMMARY AND REVIEW

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss last week's sermon.
2. Do you think it is a good use of resources to plant new churches in a city like Houston when there are thousands of churches already? Why or why not?

INTRO TO THE TEXT:

In the story from Matthew, we see Jesus sending the twelve apostles to many towns and villages to proclaim the "good news of the kingdom." Sent-ness is a core value of the church throughout history. In fact, Jesus's last words to his disciples were to go and *make* disciples of all nations. There would be no Christianity if the disciples and the generations that followed weren't sent out and obedient to that sending. As we reflect on this Sunday's service, we will come face to face with the reality of whether we are prepared to join the disciples in our call to be sent into the world.

READ Matthew 9:35-10:4

ANALYZE THE TEXT

1. What do we see about Jesus' character from this passage?
2. What do we learn about our needs as humans from this passage?
3. How would you define "sent-ness" using details from this Scripture?
4. What goes hand in hand with being sent?
5. When you read 10:1. What is this "authority" the disciples received? Do you think we possess that as believers today?

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

First, notice the apostles (*lit.* "sent ones") are given authority as the messengers of the Messiah commissioned to proclaim the good news. Yet, Jesus did not send them out without equipping (ie. forming, enabling, filling) them for what they would face (remember, the disciples have been following Jesus and watching him work for the past 8 chapters). The disciples received power to usher in the kingdom through miraculous works as they opposed the spiritual forces they encountered. The disciples were

authorized, called, and empowered. As believers, you and I are... Authorized. Called. Empowered

Second, notice that the disciples are not sufficient in and of themselves to complete this plan of "reaping the harvest" and sharing the gospel. Yes, they will be the first to do this task, but others **will have to follow** from generation to generation as long as people are born on this earth. As followers of Jesus, we are all apostles (aka sent ones) in one way or another. As the Father sent Jesus into the world to save it, so also Jesus sends his disciples into the world to save it by pointing the world to him (John 3:16; 17:18).

Here at FPC, Vision 2020 sets up the goal of 100 missionaries, church planters, or ministry leaders to be called, equipped, and sent into the ministry to which God has called them. As you discuss the "apply" section below, consider how you are called, as the first apostles were, and what areas of equipping you feel you still need in order to best live into that calling.

APPLY

1. Discuss the idea of being a "consumer church" vs. a "sent church." Where do you think FPC lands on the spectrum?
2. What about personally? Do you feel like currently you are more of a consumer of church activities or one who is actively going out into the community with the message of Christ?
3. How does this passage help us guard against the temptation of consumerism?
4. If we believe, as Christians, that we are all sent, what "plentiful harvest" has God placed near you where you could reap (love people who are far from God)? (This could be your workplace, gym, family, neighbors, etc.).
5. In response to #6, brainstorm with your group (and then begin actively praying) about how you can practically take small steps to begin loving your "harvest."

MEMORIZE Matt. 9:37-38