

• *Seventy-two workers appointed*

• *Some unique things but much applies today*

1. Our task in this world involves outreach

• *Christians are not are to be static and motionless in their outlook on life*

2. Jesus gives us some practical help in knowing how to extend His reign

• *Dangerous work – travelling light – trusting God – respectful approach...*

3. Jesus defines the nature of their work

As Jesus travels towards Jerusalem, He appoints seventy-two co-workers to go ahead of Him (or perhaps seventy; the manuscripts vary). They will announce Jesus' message and His coming visit to them.

There are some things that are unique about the sending out of the seventy-two workers; later on some of His instructions would be changed^{□1}. Yet there is also much that we can learn about our own calling as Jesus' disciples today.

1. **Our task in this world involves outreach.** This is perhaps the main lesson we should learn from this section of Luke. Christians are not are to be static and motionless in their outlook on life. Not every Christian is called to be a traveller in the way in which these disciples were, and some may be called to stay in the same country and town all of their lives. Yet every Christian is called to have an outward-looking attitude and to be involved in some way in following the pattern of sharing the powerful kingdom of God with the entire world. Jesus was never stationary. He moved around Israel. As soon as possible He called twelve to extend the message of the kingdom. Now He sends out seventy-two. Soon He will be speaking of reaching the entire world^{□1}. The entire sweep of Luke–Acts is a story of the steady expansion of the influence and activities of God's rule in this world. God does not intend the extension to stop until ' . . . these last days'^{□2} come to an end and Jesus comes to introduce a new phase in the story of His people. Although not everything in this narrative can be simply transferred to the modern Christian, yet some of it can, and the call to enterprise and zeal in extending God's reign and rule applies to every Christian.

2. **Jesus gives us some practical help in knowing how to extend His reign.** The disciples are to go out as thirty-six pairs of workers^{□1}. Isolation in such a work would be risky. They are to pray for the number of workers to increase. The task is a very big one and as they go they are to pray for helpers in the work^{□2}. They are to realise that the work will at times be dangerous. They are like lambs among wolves^{□3}.

They are to travel light. They carry no cash, no spare equipment or provisions. They must trust God for everything. It is only a brief mission. Soon Jesus will be giving them fresh instructions^{□1 □2}. They are not to waste time giving formal courtesies to people they meet. They are to be polite obviously, but must not waste time on lesser things^{□3}.

They are to act with respect, but with a sense of authority. When they arrive at any area they begin by calling upon God to give His peace to that place^{□1}, but if they are unwelcome, the offer of God's peace will be withdrawn^{□2}. They will make one place their base^{□3}, and enjoy its hospitality for their short stay^{□4}.

3. **Jesus defines the nature of their work.** They will pray for the sick and announce God's kingdom^{□1}. It is not a complicated matter. They are not to be learned scholars or highly organised directors of great projects. They simply announce that Jesus is God's Messiah and the possibility of experiencing Him as their king is right there for any who receives their message. If they are not welcomed in any particular town

□1 22:35-38

□1 Acts 1:8

□2 Hebrews 1:1

□1 10:1

□2 10:2

□3 10:3

□1 22:35

□2 Acts 1:8

□3 10:4

□1 10:5-6a

□2 10n:6b

□3 10:7

□4 10:8

□1 10:9

• *Announce by word and deed that Jesus is God's Messiah*

• *The possibility of experiencing Him as their king is right there for any who receives the message*

or village they must leave^{□2}. The basic message they take with them is that of God's kingdom. We have noticed before the centrality of 'the kingdom' in Jesus' ministry. God is willing to come into our lives and into our society and act as King among us. In Luke chapters 9–11 the kingdom of God is mentioned another eleven times (9:2,11,27,60,62; 10:9, 11; 11:2, 17, 18, 20).¹

It is to be preached^{□1} and spoken about^{□2}. Its power is displayed visibly in the outpouring of the Spirit and the fall of Jerusalem (assuming 9:27 is to be taken this way). The casting out of demons is a sign of its presence^{□3}. The royal power of God requires obedience and self-surrender if its blessings are to be experienced. Only those who persist in serving God are 'worthy' of the experience of God's power^{□4}. In the ministry of Jesus and His apostles the kingdom 'draws near'^{□5} and 'comes upon'^{□6} those to whom they minister. The kingdom is to grow. Disciples pray for its coming^{□7}.

□2 10:10-11

□1 9:2&60
□2 9:11

□3 11:20

□4 9:62
□5 10:9&11
□6 11:20
□7 11:2

4. To experience the ministry of two of the seventy-two disciples is to be challenged with a great and serious responsibility

4. To experience the ministry of two of the seventy-two disciples is to be challenged with a great and serious responsibility. Jesus is with the pairs of disciples so that to come under their ministry is to have contact with Jesus Himself. Any town that rejects the pair of Jesus' co-workers will be in a position of intensified condemnation, and in a worst plight than wicked Sodom which was destroyed by God's fiery judgement from heaven^{□1}.

□1 10:12

Picking up the last point from verse 12, Luke 10:13–15 speaks of the terrible danger the Galilean cities are in because they had ample opportunity to learn from Jesus. The Galilean towns of Corazin and Bethsaida may not have been as wicked as the disgustingly evil town of Sodom, but then Sodom never had the privilege of having Jesus and His disciples minister to them. The Galilean towns have had great privileges, but this in itself brings them into a position of heightened responsibility.

• *To reject the message is to reject Jesus himself*

Jesus Himself is represented by the seventy workers^{□1}, so much so that to reject them is to reject Jesus Himself. To hear Jesus' Word and experience Jesus' power, in the ministry of one of Jesus' disciples, is to be confronted with Jesus Himself.

□1 10:16

Note

1. We leave aside Luke 11:17, 18 which does not refer to God's kingdom.



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