

LIFE CHURCH SERMON SCRIPTURES FOR FEBRUARY 17, 2013

“Harvesting: You Will Be My Witnesses” Part II

Matthew 9:35-10:15 (NIV)

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

“Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

Matthew 9:1-7

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, “**Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.**”

At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, “This fellow is blaspheming!”

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? **Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.**” So he said to the paralyzed man, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” Then the man got up and went home.

Acts 1:1-9

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, **he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive.** He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but **wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**”

Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**”

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Group Activity: Select 1 or 2

1. Share with your group how the Father has revealed himself in your life recently or how he has done a work of transformation in your heart
2. Consider people you have relationships with that do not know the love of Jesus. Have you ever wanted to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with them but just didn't know how?

Share with your group who these people are and why your heart is drawn towards them.

Spend time in your group praying for them and asking the Father to help you know how to approach them.

Life Church Mission Statement

To teach people

- to enjoy knowing Jesus without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame,
- to follow him together as his family,
- to function together as his body,
- and to work together to expand his kingdom.