

# Matthew 10:1-7. He Sends Out His Twelve Apostles.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

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*Jesus sends out his twelve apostles to preach the kingdom of heaven to the Jews, emphasizing the importance of accepting God's offers of pardon and the significance of the promise 'To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word'.*

**Scripture:** Ecclesiastes 4:9, Isaiah 66:2, Matthew 9:38 - 10:1, Mark 6:7, Mark 16:15, 2 Corinthians 6:2, 2 Peter 3:9

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Evangelism"

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## Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches about Jesus sending out the twelve disciples to preach the word, emphasizing the importance of having fellow laborers in Christ's vineyard for support and companionship. Despite the anxiety of leaving Jesus' side, the disciples were empowered by their ever-present Lord to perform miracles and deliver a new message. Jesus instructed them to preach to the Jews first, as they were beloved for the fathers' sakes, and to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, urging people to seize the opportunity for salvation before it's too late.

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## Transcript

The Lord Jesus had exhorted his disciples to pray that God would send laborers into his harvest. He had scarcely given the command before he answered the prayer by appointing these twelve disciples to preach the word. He sent them forth by two and two, that they might have a counselor, a companion, and a friend upon the journey. It is well not to enter upon difficult undertakings alone. We are creatures that need sympathy. Fellow-laborers in Christ's vineyard have often found great comfort in each other, and become mutually endeared. None but Christians know the love that binds those together who work, with a single heart, in the same spot for the same Master.

It must have been a time of great anxiety to the twelve when they were called to leave their gracious Master's side, and enter without him upon the labors of the ministry. Hitherto they had been sheltered beneath his wing; but now they were to encounter the enemy alone; yet not alone, for though invisible, they would still be watched over by their ever-present Lord. Jesus endowed them with a measure of the same powers that he possessed himself; for having a new message to deliver, it was necessary that they should confirm it by wonderful works. Yet sometimes they could not exercise these powers from want of faith. We do not know whether they ever raised the dead until after Jesus was ascended on high.

Before they set out, their Master gave them some counsels. How deeply these counsels ought to interest us! they are full of the wisdom of God, and show us his mind and will.

Jesus first told the disciples to whom to go--to the Jews only, not to the Gentiles, or to the Samaritans, (who were a mixed people, descended from Jews and Gentiles,) but to the Jews. What was his reason for this command? Did He not afterwards desire his apostles to preach the gospel to every creature? It appears that he chose to give the first call to the Jews; because they were beloved for the fathers' sakes. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had been the sheep of his fold. Their sinful children had wandered from that fold; therefore the Savior viewed them as lost sheep. Our God is very slow to give up those whom he has once favored. It is not until after repeated provocations, and the most obstinate negligence, that he forsakes them. Has he granted us, as He once did the Jews, many spiritual privileges? Then he will not lightly leave us. He will dig about the fig-tree before he cuts it down; he will trim the lamp again and again before he puts it out in obscure darkness. But O! terrible will be his wrath when once it is aroused; for he will then execute strict justice upon those who have rejected abundant mercy.

Jesus directed his disciples, not only to whom to preach, but also WHAT to preach. They were to say, as he had said, and as John the Baptist had said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." These words contained a solemn warning; they signified that the opportunity of entering the kingdom was afforded, and might soon be over. A door was opened, the promise of pardon and of grace was offered, and all might enter in by this door to escape the judgment due to their sins; but it would at length be closed, and then, woe to those who had lost the precious opportunity. It is still true, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand; an opportunity of obtaining life is afforded to us--"Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation." Ministers proclaim with uplifted voice, and sometimes with tears which they cannot restrain, the unbounded mercy of our God. They entreat us to accept his offers of pardon through the blood of Christ. Some listen to their entreaties, fall down before the Son of God, and call upon him to save them. Have we thus humbled ourselves, and pleaded for mercy? Here is a gracious promise for our encouragement. God has said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word." (Is. 66:2.)

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