

The crises of our world rise in many languages. What does hope look like to the billions of people spread across the face of the earth? Luke introduces us to Jesus' intense interest in people needs. Today's text touches upon both physical and spiritual needs.

After this (Luke 10:1) encouraged us to look back at Luke 9:57-62. Here we see that some of those walking with Jesus promised to follow him. But they only meant to follow if following were convenient.

1 the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

2 He (Jesus) told them, "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 sent his people out to engage people with the gospel.

1. Pair Up

1 the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

The early Jewish people believed there were 72 gentile languages. Luke presented Jesus in the light of Moses who chose 70 elders to help lead (*Numbers 11*). Was Luke addressing Jesus as the New Testament Moses leading people out of the bondage of sin?

Jesus instructed the people to go *two by two* to strengthen and encourage workers following him.

Two are better than one...10 if one falls down, his friend can help him up. Ecclesiastes 4:9

1 ...to every town and place where he was about to go. These were not centers of devotion but places marked by pagan culture. Jesus sent his people into dark and difficult places to proclaim *the kingdom of God is near* (v.9). Jesus knew some would encounter rejection and face demons. When facing difficult people and ugly situations, our Lord wants us to share the presence, prayer support and partnership of one another.

2. Pray Submissively

2 He (Jesus) told them, "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 moved among people who were hungry for God. The Pharisees were buried in traditionalism. The Sadducees were searching for error. The Romans exercised their form of oppression. The pagans sought to appease their gods with sensuality and rituals. Where could one connect with the real God?

Jesus likened the situation of the people to a wheat harvest. When the heads of wheat are ripe, they must be harvested, or they will ruin. Harvesting was demanding yet rewarding work. Doing God's work in God's way is demanding and rewarding as well.

Ask the Lord...to send out workers—Jesus wanted his listeners to be willing laborers praying for more workers. He was not interested in spectators. Jesus wants people who will to submit to his call.

Are you praying for someone else to take your place in his work?

3. Practice Obedience

Go, I am sending you out like lambs among the wolves. (Luke 10:3)

Lambs do not overcome wolves except in God's plan. Many places where the harvest is ripe, the society is hostile. To go is to risk life and/or resources. Messengers of Jesus Christ often face rejection, persecution, tribulation and suffering. The invitation to commitment to Jesus is an invitation to die to self, take up the cross of Jesus and follow our Lord (*Luke 9:23*). Preparation for carrying the gospel into some parts of the world requires us to think deeply about what we believe. Do I dare share the Gospel with someone if I know it could cost him his life? The wolves we face wear the faces of "lostness." Are we willing to wear the face of the "*lamb of God*" (*John 1:29*) and face the wolves with the gospel of hope? People need the Lord. Jesus is calling each of us and all of us to join him in the field work. Not one of us can do everything that needs to be done. However, with each of us placing who we are and what we have in God's hands, we can be faithful co-laborers with our Savior and with one another. Will you share what you have in Christ with real people in today's world? How? When? Where?

