

Matt Ch 10 Vs 1-4

Lets turn in our bibles this morning to Matt. Ch 10. If you remember right, last time we were together we just finished up the portion of his gospel that Matt designates to the demonstrating of the power of Jesus over every conceivable area imaginable; things on the natural, things in the supernatural sickness, blindness, incurable disease, even life and death itself. And we seen in Vs.35 of ch 9 the 3 primary things that the ministry of Jesus consisted of: teaching, preaching, and healing every sickness and disease among the people. The healings confirming the authority of His teaching and preaching.

Chapter 9 closes with Jesus looking on the multitudes with *compassion*. With a deep inward yearning, why? Because they were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. No one to give them direction, no one to protect them from danger. You might say He had a deep unquenchable burden, not so much for the physical well being of the people (though He was concerned them in that way don't get me wrong) but His primary burden, the thing that "moved" Him with compassion was His concern for the spiritual well being of the people. Sheep with out shepherds are easily picked off and torn apart by the wolves. And that's exactly what satan is out to do. The bible says he came to rob, kill, and destroy. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:8 "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*" And it moved Jesus to see all these people falling prey to the enemy.

One time I was out at the mall there in the food court, (I don't remember exactly why) but I was just sitting there watching people go about their daily lives, and suddenly it hit me like a ton of bricks; and I began to be overwhelmed as I looked on all the people just weary and scattered. And the sobering reality of eternity began to move me and I remember welling up as I was just sitting there wondering about the eternal destiny of all those people. And it didn't just seem like an over crowded mall anymore, but it was a place full of individual people of whom I was either going to spend all eternity with in worship and adoration of God. Or I would brush near them in the here and now and then they would depart into everlasting torment in eternal separation from God, and what was I doing about it? The vast majority of people don't know Jesus Christ, and as a result they're empty and hurting, and with out hope.

I often think the same way when I'm sitting at a stoplight and watching cars go by. And I think "I wonder how many people that just passed by are my brothers or sisters and how many people that if they were to die in that car today would plunge hopelessly into eternity never to receive a 2nd chance." The bible says in Heb 9:27 "*it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,*"

Jesus, aware of the reality of that looked upon the people and was moved with compassion. Why? Because He went to the furthest extent possible to make away for you to escape the penalty of your sin. He bore the penalty of our sin upon Himself so that we wouldn't have to yet, so many people choose to bear the weight of their own sin, suffering eternal ramifications because they refuse to come to Jesus Christ So Jesus said in Vs.37-38 (read)

When the harvest is ripe and there's no one to reap it, the result is that much of the harvest is lost. And that's exactly the case today, so many people in need of salvation and so few people laboring in the fields and so people are being lost. So what does Jesus tell us to do? Pray. And now that Jesus has got them praying, what happens next is interesting.

Vs1

So out of the many disciples who were following Him, Jesus now hand picks 12 of them; or as it says literally, He called them. And the Greek word for called here in this 1st Vs speaks of a divine call. In other words it wasn't like Jesus was like "hey Peter, Andrew, James, John come here for a minute. This speaks of divine call by which Jesus specifically singled these 12 particular guys out for a specific purpose.

The same is true concerning you this morning; if you know Jesus Christ He has singled you out and placed a call on your life for a specific purpose. That you might testify of His love and grace to the glory of the Father. God has a plan for each one of our lives and if we'll respond to His call, He'll use us in ways we never thought possible.

Luke's gospel tells us that before Jesus selected these guys He spent all night in prayer. (Luke 6:12) No decision that you make is insignificant as far as God is concerned and there is no move that we should make that we haven't 1st prayed over, job promotions, ministry endeavors, whether or not we actually have the means to go into debt over that new vehicle or that new house. Maybe God has other plans for our resources; then again maybe He doesn't, that's why it's so necessary that we seek Him 1st. Prov 3:5-6 "*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*" Not in only the major decisions in life but in all of our ways.

Jesus spent the night in prayer, and then He called His disciples to Him. Why 12? I'm not 100% certain, most people think it had something to do with the fact that there were 12 tribes of Israel and that this was pointing to the renewal of the people of God, and just as God established the old covenant through the 12 patriarchs, or the 12 sons of Israel, even so He chose these 12 men in the establishing of the new covenant through Jesus Christ, I personally have no problem with that.

We also want to notice out of this vs. that Jesus gave them power. In the 28th ch. of Matts' gospel we read where Jesus said that He had been given all authority, both in heaven and on earth. So here we see Him imparting His authority to His disciples so that they might be empowered to fulfill that to which He had called them. The point being that God will never place a call on your life, but that He doesn't give you the power and the ability to fulfill it. If God calls you to a particular task, He's going to equip you accordingly. and If your not equipped in a certain area that your trying to work in or be apart of, then God hasn't called you to that. Just cease doing what you're doing until God directs you a certain direction. Notice what it was that He gave them the authority to do. (He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and disease)

So just as we've seen Jesus demonstrate His authority over the demonic, over sickness, and over disease in ch 8-9 now He's transferring that same authority over to them so that they might be accurate witnesses of who He is and that the kingdom of God is in fact at hand. These signs confirming their words.

Vs2-4

Now before we get into who these guys were we want to note the progression that we see take place from Vs 1 to Vs 2. In Vs 1 we see Matts choice of words to describe these 12 guys is "disciples." The Greek word translated in vs1 as disciples, is the word (mathetes) and simply put it means *learner*. The vines Greek dictionary puts it like this; DISCIPLE - one who follows one's teaching. A "disciple" was not only a pupil, but an adherent; hence they are spoken of as imitators of their teacher. (From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)

So we see in vs1 Jesus giving them the authority to be accurate imitators of their teacher. and We know the disciples have been hanging out, sitting at the feet of Jesus learning His ways, listening to His teachings (on the sermon on the Mt. and so forth.) But here in vs2 we see Matt refer to them as "apostles." The word apostle means literally "one sent forth", or a delegate, or messenger. The apostles were basically the leaders amongst the disciples. They didn't out rank them spiritually but they were the ones Jesus hand picked to be the overseers basically and He gave them the authority to confirm that call on their lives. But back to the point, the word apostle means one sent forth, a disciple is a learner. The point I'm trying to make in all this is that we see them 1st as disciples, then as apostles, and out of that we can safely gather that before you can be sent from God, or by God, you have to be learned of God.

You see how can I accurately represent you to someone else if I don't know you. If I'm not aware of how you think or how you would respond in certain circumstances, odds are you wouldn't send me to be your ambassador, or someone who would represent you to someone else.

Remember when Paul was writing to the Philippian church concerning Timothy and he said *“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. 22But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.”* Phil 2:19-24 You see Paul didn't want to send just anybody, because not everyone would deal with things exactly like he would. But Timothy had hung out with him and had been discipled by him and so he was comfortable using Timothy to minister to the Phillipian church on his behalf as his personal representative.

That's what's happening here, these guys have been hanging out with Jesus, being discipled by Him, getting to know Him in a personal and intimate way. And now Jesus is comfortable in sending them before Him in as personal representatives. If you want to be sent forth by Jesus, and be used by Him; if you want to be Jesus Christ personal representative, you have to get to know Him. You need to spend time learning of Him and getting to know His heart so that you might accurately reflect Him. Then He'll place a call on your life, equip you for that purpose and send you forth or use you for that which He's called you.

Maybe your thinking “man it'd be nice to be used by Jesus or to be His personal representative but I'm not exactly cut out for that; I mean I'm not as spiritual as these guys were.” Lets take just a minute to consider who these guys were that Jesus called to be His personal representatives.

1st There was Simon who was also called Peter, now anytime we have a listing of the apostles Peter is always mentioned 1st and Judas is always mentioned last. Judas being the one who betrayed Jesus, and Peter seemed to be more or less the leader amongst the leaders. But Peter also (if you remember right) was the one who seemed to have had a foot shaped mouth. He was always saying the wrong things at the wrong times. Maybe you can relate to that, I know I can. and Maybe you have the best of intentions but you have a tendency to speak 1st and think later. That's the person that Peter stands to represent. Remember when Simon made the confession of Jesus as the Christ that's when Jesus changed his name to Peter which means “rock” so he went from Simon to Rocky, because the Lord was going to take this guy who was a bit unstable and transform him into a solid, reliable individual.

Next there was Andrew Peters' bro. Who was Andrew you ask? I have no idea; he's always tagged as Peters' bro. and He doesn't seem to play an overly significant role as far as doing something so magnanimous that he stands out as far as the rest. Instead he seems to be stuck in Peters' shadow. Maybe that's you, you feel insignificant never really made a huge impact as far as the kingdom is concerned, (as far as you know.) What do you mean Jeff?

We learn in Johns' gospel that Jesus met Andrew before He met Peter, in fact it says that Andrew "brought" Peter to Jesus. I suggest to you that Andrew made a huge impact as far as the kingdom is concerned. and How are you to know that you just may be the one (though it might not be you personally) but you might be the one whom the Lord employees to bring to Him the Simon Peter of today. Peter is the one who would one day stand up and share the gospel and in one shot about 3,000 people would give their hearts to Christ (acts 2:41).

Did Andrew make a difference? I think so. Very few people have probably heard of a man by the name of Mordecai Ham; yet it was through the ministry that the Lord entrusted to him through which Billy Graham was converted. Was Mordecai significant? You better believe it.

Then we have James and John the sons of Zebedee. Now here's a quick fact concerning James that not to many people are aware of. His name isn't really James. As a matter of fact none of guys in the NT translated James were named James. The name in the Greek should've actually been translated Jacob. But in 1611 when the K.J.V. of the bible was published in England the translators, in order to gain favor with the king switched the name Jacob in the NT to James on every single occasion. (James isn't a Hebrew name) The only time you'll see the name Jacob in the NT is when it's in direct reference to the OT Patriarch. Other than that you'll see it rendered James.

So James or Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his bro. If you remember right these guys were dubbed the sons of thunder, more than likely because of their volatile tempers. These were the guys who wanted to call fire down from heaven and destroy the Samaritan village. (Leave Matt and turn quickly to Luke ch 9 vs51-56)

Vs54

I wonder if in their zeal to impress Jesus by asking Him if they should call fire down from heaven if Jesus didn't turn and give them that look of man you guys are blowing life and then they quickly tried to justify themselves under the guise of Elijah. They were all upset and said, (repeat "Lord...") and when they saw the countenance on the face of Jesus they were like, you know; like Elijah did..

And you know that Jesus is thinking man are you guys ever going to get it. Don't you remember just awhile back sitting on the side of the Mt. Listening to Me? Remember when I said, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?"*

What part of that didn't you guys get? Remember when I cleansed the leper and healed the gentiles servant and delivered the demon possessed men? You guys have seen Me do all kinds of miraculous wonderful things for people, when have I ever turned anyone away or wiped anyone out? Is that the example you've been shown?
So

(read vs55-56)

In other words you guys didn't that violent notion God. James and John, the sons of thunder. Maybe you can identify, and yet God would wind up using John to write 1 of the Gospel accounts, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and the book of revelation, and he would become more or less known as the disciple of love. James became the 2nd NT martyr (acts 12:2)

Next in line we have Philip and Bartholomew who was also known as Nathaniel. Philip was the one who was rebuked because even though he'd been so long with Jesus, he still didn't seem to really get it. Remember when Jesus was encouraging the disciples in John 14 when He was preparing them for His death and He said *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, ³I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ⁴And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁵And where I go you know, and the way you know."* ⁶Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁷Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." ⁸Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." ⁹Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves"

So Philip had his flaws, Nathaniel was the skeptic who asked “can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Which just so happens to be where Jesus was from.

Throw Thomas in the mix who would forever be dubbed as the doubter because he may as well of been a typical missourian; he had to see it to believe it.

Remember when Jesus appeared to the disciples after the resurrection and Thomas wasn't around, so it says, *the other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."* Many of us no doubt can identify at times with doubt.

The list goes on, next up Matt the rip off artist, a former tax collector who would've been looked on as a sale out to the Jews. The next 2, James the son of Alphaeus and Lebbaeous we know nothing about, maybe they were shy and just kind of hung out in the background just being a steady witness. If that's you Jesus can use you too.

Finally we have Simon the cananaean and Judas the traitor. Simon the cananaean was also called Simon the zealot (cananite is an improper translation) The zealots were an extreme patriotic group who hated the thought of anyone ruling over them. These guys were the ones who would rather die than be subject to foreign rule and they wouldn't shrink to watch their family members die either in their struggle for freedom. They were an extremely radical group; you might say the nationalists of nationalists. So if by any other means, or in any other company than that of Jesus Simon the zealot would've met Matt the fellow countryman who sold out to the roman Gov. (which was ruling over Israel at this time) for his own personal gain and made his living leeching off of his own people; Simon would've put a knife to his throat plain and simple. Yet in Christ there is common ground and 2 people who would otherwise hate each other can be brought together and learn to love one another.

Last of all there is Judas, a traitor, need I say more.

My point in exposing all these guys for who they were is to show you that we all qualify to be the personal representatives of Jesus Christ if we're willing to get to know Him. Someone who's always saying the wrong things, a couple of guys with hot tempers, a skeptic, a doubter, a tax collector despised of his fellow Jews, a political radicalist and rebel and a traitor. Sound like a team of Spiritual elitist to you, fresh out of seminary? Yet minus Judas God would use these ordinary guys to turn the world upside down (or should I say right side up) for Jesus Christ

I don't know about you but that gives me hope, because it shows me that God can use me to. God's ways aren't our ways and His choices aren't our choices. The bible says that man looks to the outside, but God looks at the heart. These guys wouldn't have been my 1st round draft.

There's another reason God chose the likes of these guys turn to 1st Cor ch1 and we'll close with this thought. Vs26-31 When God chooses ordinary incapable people in the eyes of the world, when He does a work He alone gets the glory and no flesh gets the glory. Mans inadequacies are Gods opportunities, He's not looking for capability, He's looking for availability. We all qualify to be used by God, and if you're willing He is able and it starts by simply opening up to Him, and receiving Him into your heart and learning of Him.