

### Jesus Told the Twelve to Go by Faith

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn what Jesus told His disciples to do and what to avoid as He sent them out to preach the message of the kingdom of God. Jesus also gave them some other instructions before actually sending them out. Those other instructions will be the focus of this topic.

One of the most important lessons Jesus wants every Christian to learn is to walk by faith. Matthew 10:9-10 says, “Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts, nor bag for *your* journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.” Here, we see how Jesus taught the twelve to begin to learn to walk by faith. First, Jesus told the disciples to take no money with them as He sent them out on this first ministry trip. They were not to take any gold coins because then they would have had plenty of money. In fact, Jesus said that they were not even to take any silver coins for their trip as that would have provided anything that they needed. Then, Jesus told them not to take any copper coins with them. Copper is worth much less than gold or silver. However, Jesus did not want the disciples to take any money with them so that they would learn to trust Him to supply what was needed.

Second, Jesus told them not to take a bag or any extra clothing on this first ministry trip. A bag was a leather sack that travelers would use to carry their food for their travel. Here, we see that Jesus told them not to take a bag of food with them. In addition, they were not to take any extra clothes. A tunic was an undergarment or a coat. In John 19:23, we read, “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.” In this verse, we see that the word refers to the coat that Jesus wore. This meant that the disciples had to depend on God to supply an extra coat if one was needed as they traveled from city to city. Jesus said the same thing about taking an extra pair of sandals. Jesus told the disciples not even to take an extra staff with them.

Then, Jesus explained why the disciples were not to take any of these things with them. Jesus said that a workman is worthy of his food. Jesus explained that it is fitting for God to supply food through people as they served the Lord on this ministry trip. However, Jesus was also preparing His disciples for the future. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” This was the most important lesson that Jesus wanted His disciples to learn on this ministry trip. Paul gave a wonderful promise to the Philippians about the way that the Lord will supply as we put Him first in our service. Philippians 4:19 says, “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” God knows the necessities that we will need as we go through life. That is why 1 Timothy 6:6-8 says, “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” God will supply our basic needs.

Jesus went on to tell the disciples what to do at each city when they arrived at that city. Matthew 10:11-13 says, “Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.” Here, we see the first thing that the disciples were to do when they arrived at a city or a town. The word translated “inquire” means *to ask or to search*. Herod used this word when he told the wise men, in Matthew 2:8, “And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found *Him*, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.’” In this verse, the word is translated “search”. This meant that, in some cities, it might take a little longer to find a person that was worthy.

In verse 11, we have the same word that was translated “worthy” in verse 10. There we saw that the word means *fitting*. The word can also mean *something of value*; when used of a person, it speaks of a person that is respected. In Luke 7:4-5, we read, “And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, ‘for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.’” In this verse, we see that the word is translated “deserving”. The Jews were talking about a Roman centurion who was highly respected by the Jews because of his love for them. Jesus told the disciples on this first ministry trip to ask and find out who was respected and then stay with that person while they were in that city. Staying at the home of a respected person would cause the people of that city to be more open to hear the message the disciples would be sharing.

The disciples were also told what to do at the first household that they contacted as they came into the city. They were to give a greeting of peace to that household. Peter gives us a picture of what a greeting of peace is like, in Acts 10:27-29, where we read, “And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. Then he said to them, ‘You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?’” Peter spent some time talking with Cornelius before he even entered into the house. At the home of a stranger, this first conversation would determine whether that household was open to learn about the kingdom of God.

We see that the disciples were to take a short time to get acquainted with people. During this time of getting acquainted, they were to offer peace to that household. Jesus said that the household would show that they were open if they responded with respect and wanted to learn more about the kingdom of God. Jesus said that some households would respond with respect, while others would not. In Luke 7:4-5, that we read above, the Jews described the Roman centurion as deserving because he had shown his love for the people of Capernaum. This showed them an attitude of respect by the centurion.

Jesus said that if a household showed respect, peace would come on that household. In contrast, if that household did not show respect, then, Jesus told the disciples that their peace would return to them, instead of being on the household that rejected them. In this way, followers of Jesus could

experience peace even when they were rejected by some households. Jesus also told the disciples what to do if they did not find a worthy household in a city. Matthew 10:14-15 says, “And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”

In this statement, Jesus warned the disciples that they might not be received in some cities. There would be those cities that refused to listen to the message about the kingdom of God. The night before His crucifixion, Jesus explained to the disciples, in John 15:20, “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.” Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that those who rejected them did so because they rejected both Jesus and the Father. Jesus wanted the disciples not to take it personally when they were rejected because of their message.

Jesus told the disciples what to do when one of the cities of the Jews rejected them. Jesus said that they were to shake off the dust from their feet. Acts 13:50-51 says, “But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.” Here, we see that the Jews stirred up the people of Antioch of Pisidia and convinced the leaders of the city to expel Paul and Barnabas from their region. Paul and Barnabas followed the instructions that Jesus had given and shook off the dust of their feet as a testimony against the Jews in that city. The Jews had the Old Testament that spoke of the promised Messiah. The Jews knew what the Old Testament said but Jesus warned that some would reject Him. They were to be treated as they treated the Gentiles for their unbelief.

Jesus then gave a warning about the judgment of those cities which rejected the message of the kingdom of God. Jesus said that it would be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. Genesis 19:24-25 says, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.” Here, we see the earthly judgment of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, Jesus said here that the Jewish cities that rejected the disciples would receive a greater eternal judgment than the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Jews had a much greater privilege than Sodom and Gomorrah because they had the Old Testament, which prophesied the coming of Jesus, and still some cities rejected Him.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children realize that there will also be people who will reject them when they share the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus. However, they do not need to take such rejection personally as long as they have spoken the truth in love. As Jesus explained to the disciples, those who reject Jesus, and the Father, will also reject them. In contrast, those who respond positively to the message of the Gospel will also respond positively to them. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand how to handle rejection.

