
Golden Text: “And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease” (Matthew 10:1).

I. INTRODUCTION. In nineteenth-century and early twentieth century America, it was common for a young man to spend several years studying with the pastor of a church and then to step into a full-time leadership role. Although the work of Jesus stirred great public interest, it was not the Father’s plan for His Son to do all of the ministry. Twelve men were designated to learn from Jesus and then duplicate His compassion and care as they carried forth His message. While they were not the most talented or the most popular men, they were handpicked by the Messiah and called into His personal service. This week’s lesson highlights the induction of twelve men into the finest church internship of all time—three years with Jesus.
II. BACKGROUND FOR THE LESSON. Following the healing of the paralytic man (see Matthew 9:1-8), Jesus departed from that house and found Matthew collecting taxes and told him to “follow me” which Matthew did. Jesus then had dinner at Matthew’s house along with other tax collectors, sinners and His twelve disciples (see Matthew 9:9-10). The Pharisees who had been watching Jesus saw this and asked His disciples why did Jesus eat with tax collectors and sinners (see Matthew 9:11)? Of course Jesus heard this and replied to them saying that healthy people don’t need a doctor, but the sick do. He went on to tell them that He came to call sinners to repentance and not the righteous (see Matthew 9:12-13). Then Jesus gave the parable of the cloth and the wine bottles (see Matthew 9:16-17), healed Jairus’ daughter (see Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41), and a woman who was diseased for twelve years with a blood issue (see Matthew 9:18-26). When Jesus left Jairus’ house, He healed two blind men and also cast out a demon from a demon-possessed man (see Matthew 9:30-33). At this the Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons through Satan, but this didn’t stop Him from going to other villages teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all kinds of sickness and diseases (see Matthew 9:34-35). Chapter 9 closes with Jesus having compassion on the large multitude that followed Him because they were weary and scattered like sheep without a shepherd. Then He told His disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest will send laborers into His harvest (see Matthew 9:36-38). Our lesson begins with chapter 10.
III. THE TWELVE DISCIPLES GET A NEW CALLING (Matthew 10:1-4)

A. Jesus gives the Twelve Disciples apostolic authority (Matthew 10:1). Our first verse says “And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.” Jesus knew that after He returned to heaven, His disciples would have to carry on His work on earth. To prepare them for that great challenge, Jesus gave them on-the-job training. So this verse says “And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples.” This statement seems to imply that Jesus had only “twelve disciples,” but that’s not the case. The term “disciples” means learners or followers. A number of people were called Jesus’ disciples because they followed Him for a time and learned from Him. But many of them eventually turned away (see John 6:59-68). Jesus had many followers or “disciples” and according to Luke 6:13, prior to His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus chose twelve from His many followers or disciples. The Gospels tell us that Jesus chose these twelve men at the beginning of His ministry (see Matthew 4:18-19; Mark 1:16-20; John 1:35-51) for future ministry as apostles as we shall see in the next verse. The fact that He “called unto him his twelve disciples” indicates that at this special moment, Jesus called them out from among the many others who were following Him to stand before Him. As they stood before Him, Jesus commissioned them first by giving “them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.” Jesus
gave them the power to perform many of the same kinds of miracles that He did. Supernatural power was given to “the twelve disciples” so they could cast out “unclean spirits” or demons, and to “heal” all kinds of “sicknesses” and “diseases.” Only God could grant such power because only He possesses such power and authority. Just as Jesus’ miracles demonstrated to people that He was indeed the Son of God, the miracles that the disciples would perform would be evidence that they were truly representing God. **Note:** The disciples were not highly educated men, so they certainly had little reason to rely on their own abilities to carry out God’s work. But what they did have was a call from the Son of God Himself. His calling and enabling were enough. As we shall see in the following verses Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus Christ was also sent out among the twelve. Apparently he was also given the same authority to cast out demons and heal the sick just as the other apostles were. He accompanied the Lord Jesus and the eleven true apostles, saw all the miracles, and heard all the teachings of Jesus. But in the end, he ignored all of that and fell prey to Satan’s influence, because his heart was not completely right with God (see Matthew 7:21-23).

**B. The ministry of the Apostles (Matthew 10:2-4).**

1. (vs. 2). This verse says “Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother...” Here, Matthew begins
to give us a list of the names of the disciples who after Jesus empowered them, were called “apostles” which means “sent ones” or as in this case “ones sent forth by Jesus.” **Note: In Scripture, the term “apostle” included the twelve (see Acts 1:26) listed here as well as Paul (see Romans 1:1, 5; I Corinthians 1:1; I Timothy 1:1; 2:7) who was an apostle sent especially to minister to the Gentiles (see Romans 11:13; II Corinthians 12:11-12; Galatians 1:11-12). After the death of Judas Iscariot, Matthias was later added to replace him (see Acts 1:15-26). Others identified as apostles in the New Testament were Barnabas (see Acts 14:14), Andronicus and Junias (see Romans 16:7). The office of “apostle” was limited to the days of the early Christian church (see I Corinthians 12:28-3; Ephesians 2:19-20) and included only those who had seen Jesus after His resurrection (see I Corinthians 9:1; 15:3-9). Since there are no believers alive today who have seen Jesus since He arose from the dead, the New Testament office of apostle no longer exists, but there are those today who claim to have been sent by Jesus to a specific ministry and call themselves apostles. But in a very real sense, all of us who are saved have been sent by Jesus to minister throughout the earth (see Matthew 28:18-20). However, in accordance with the Scriptures, to be a New Testament apostle a person had to have seen Jesus before and after His resurrection (see Acts 1:21-26; I Corinthians 9:1). The first apostle named is “Simon, who is called Peter.” It appears that “Simon Peter” was probably considered to be the leader among the apostles (see Acts 2:12-14) since he is listed first in each of the lists in the New Testament (see Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16). There is
no evidence that he was superior to the other disciples nor did he claim to be. “Peter, and Andrew his brother” were the first disciples of Jesus. According to John 1:40-42, “Andrew” brought “Peter” to Jesus. “James” and “John” were also brothers and sons of “Zebedee.” Just as Jesus gave “Simon” the nickname “Peter,” He also nicknamed “James” and “John” Boanerges, which means, the sons of thunder (see Mark 3:17). Along with “Peter” they were in Jesus’ inner circle of disciples (see Matthews 17:1; Mark 5:37; 9:2; 14:33; Luke 9:28). Later, “James” was killed by King Herod Agrippa (see Acts 12:1-2). “John” who was the disciple who Jesus loved was isolated on the isle of Patmos some years later. He wrote the Gospel of John, the three epistles of John, and the Revelation (see Revelation 1:9).

2. (vs. 3). Continuing the list of Apostles, this verse says “Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus...” Next mentioned on this list of apostles was “Philip, and Bartholomew.” This “Philip” brought Nathaniel to Jesus (see John 1:44-51), and is mentioned several times in the Gospel of John, generally in a favorable light (see John 1:45; 12:21; 14:8). “Bartholomew” was probably the man called Nathaniel in John 1:46 who was brought to Jesus by “Philip.” Next listed were “Thomas, and Matthew the publican.” The disciple “Thomas” is noted for his doubtful skepticism about the risen Christ (see John 20:24-29). However, we should not be hard on him because he only wanted the same evidence that Jesus gave to the other disciples (see John 20:19-20). “Matthew” is identified here
as “the publican” or tax collector. He gave up his job to follow Jesus (see Mathew 9:9; Luke 5:27-28). “Matthew” is also known as Levi the son of Alphaeus (see Mark 2:14). Next listed is “James the son of Alphaeus.” Beyond being listed among the apostles, there is very little known about him. But since “James” is also said to be “the son of Alphaeus,” he and “Matthew” may have been brothers, but we have no proof of that. “Matthew” is also the author of the Gospel of Matthew. Next in the list is “Lebbaeus, whose surname (or nick-name) was Thaddaeus.” He is probably the one called “Judas, the brother of James” in Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13. If this is the case, then both he and “James” were sons of “Alphaeus.”

3. (vs. 4). This verse goes on to include “Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.” The next name on the list of apostles is “Simon the Canaanite.” In Luke 6:15, he is called Simon the Zealot. The Zealots was a party that opposed the Romans and was especially careful to observe the Mosaic Law. If “Simon the Canaanite” was truly a member of this group, that would make him the opposite of Matthew, who worked for the Roman government as a tax collector. The last one named was “Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.” Of course “Judas Iscariot” is best known as the disciple who betrayed Jesus (see Matthew 26:13-15, 25; 27:3). We also know that he was highly trusted by the other disciples because he was the treasurer of the group (see John 12:3-6).

Note: It’s interesting that these twelve men are listed in two’s or couples. Jesus sent them forth two by two (see Mark 6:7), probably because according to
Scripture, two are better than one (see Proverbs 4:9-12). They would be helpful to each other, and the more useful together to Christ and other souls. What one of them may forget, the other would remember, and “out of the mouth of two witnesses every word would be established” (see Matthew 18:16; II Corinthians 13:1). Three pairs of them were brothers: Peter and Andrew, James and John, and the other James and Lebbaeus. This should remind us that friendship and fellowship ought to be kept up among relatives. It is an excellent thing when brothers by nature are also brethren by grace, and those two bonds strengthen each other.

IV. THE TWELVE DISCIPLES GET A NEW MISSION (Matthew 10:5-8)

A. The temporary arena for the ministry (Matthew 10:5-6).

1. (vs. 5). This verse says “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not...” As Jesus sent the apostles out, He gave them all the same set of instructions. He first “commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles.” In other words, the “twelve” apostles were not to go into any region where “Gentiles” or non-Jews lived. “Gentiles” were not to formally receive the gospel until after
Israel rejected it (see Acts 13:45-47). Jesus also instructed the “twelve” not to go “into any city of the Samaritans.” The “Samaritans” lived in the region of Samaria. They were not full-blooded Jews. They were a mixed race of Jews and other peoples, and they were also involved in false worship. **Note:** When the Assyrians invaded the northern kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C., they took many Jews out of Samaria and brought people in from Babylon, Cutha and other places who intermarried with the remaining Jews in Samaria (see II Kings 17:24-34). Since Samaria was between the Jewish regions of Judea and Galilee, it would be difficult for the apostles to avoid going into the way of the Samaritans. But Jesus didn’t command them not to go into the way or region of the “Samaritans,” He commanded them not to go “into any city of the Samaritans.” Jesus put this restraint upon them only for this first mission; later He appointed them to go into the entire world and “teach all nations” (see Matthew 28:18-20). Not long after this, Jesus also sent out seventy other disciples on a similar mission (see Luke 10:1-12).

2. (vs. 6). This verse says “But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Instead of going into Gentile territory, Jesus commanded His apostles to “go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” This limited the apostles’ ministry to Galilee, the northern region of Palestine or Israel. This seems like a strange command from Jesus since He would eventually command His followers to go into the whole world with His message. It may appear that Jesus cared about the Jews’ salvation more than He did non-Jews, but that was not the case (see John 3:16). It was
never the Lord’s intent to leave out non-Jews, for as Paul declared in Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (see also Acts 3:25-26; 13:45-46). The disciples were commissioned to reach their spiritually needy countrymen first. **Note:** We must understand that Jesus’ commission to the Twelve in this lesson is not our commission. The instructions He gave was for them and only for them at that time. There can be no mistaking it; at first the Twelve were to go only “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” or their fellow Jews. Yet, just before Jesus ascended to the Father, He gave the same group, minus Judas, the great commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” (see Matthew 28:10). This change in the Savior’s instructions was due to the fact that between the time He commissioned the Twelve Apostles and the giving of the great commission, Israel, as a nation rejected Christ’s offer of the Davidic kingdom. This rejection began early in Jesus’ ministry and reached a high point in Matthew chapter 12. There, the Lord was called Beelzebub, the prince of demons (see Matthew 12:24). Of course the rejection of Jesus and His kingdom reached its climax at Calvary. The religious leaders didn’t even want Him to be called the “King of the Jews” (see John 19:19). They insisted that Pilate should have written on the inscription over the cross the words “He said, I am King of the Jews” (see John 19:21).

**B. The content of the message of the Twelve**
(Matthew 10:7). This verse says “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” What John the Baptist did (see Matthew 3:2), and Jesus had been doing (see Matthew 4:17), the Twelve were now told to continue doing. That is as they traveled they were to “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” In other words, the “kingdom of heaven” had arrived with the ministry of Jesus Christ. The disciples didn’t invent their message; they declared what they were directed to say by our Lord. They didn’t choose where to go, but went where they were sent. Complete obedience! Note: Regarding the term “kingdom of heaven,” it is only used in Matthew’s Gospel. In general, it refers to the rule of the God of heaven over the earth. The “kingdom of heaven” and the “kingdom of God” are similar in many respects and they are sometimes used synonymously or interchangeably. However, sometimes in Matthew’s gospel, the “kingdom of heaven” is contrasted with the “kingdom of God” as in the parables Jesus gave where the “kingdom of heaven” includes men and women on earth, and not angels or other creatures. The “kingdom of heaven” includes both the saved and the lost as shown by the wheat (the saved) and the tares (the lost) where the tares are cast out of the kingdom (see Matthew 13:24-30). The “kingdom of heaven” is also compared to a net containing both good and bad fish which are later separated (see Matthew 13:47). The gospel writers use the term “kingdom of God” to designate the sphere of salvation that can only be entered into by the new birth (see John 3:5-7). It includes only the saved. When the term “kingdom of
God” is contrasted with the “kingdom of heaven,” the “kingdom of God” includes those who have truly confessed Jesus Christ whereas the “kingdom of heaven” includes both those who have confessed Jesus Christ as well as those who have only professed Him which can be real of false (see Matthew 25:1, 11-12). In addition, when the “kingdom of heaven” is used to distinguish it from the “kingdom of God,” the “kingdom of heaven” refers to the church age while Jesus is absent. In essence, when the two terms are used to distinguish one from the other, the “kingdom of heaven” includes both saved men and women here on earth. The “kingdom of heaven” when spoken of as different from the “kingdom of God” will be complete at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. But the “kingdom of God” will not be complete until Jesus Christ, “having put all enemies under His feet,” including the last enemy, death, “delivers the kingdom to God, even the Father” (see I Corinthians 15:24-28). Christ did triumph over death at His resurrection (see I Corinthians 15:54-55), but death, “the last enemy” is not actually destroyed until the end of the millennium. The kingdom of God is not a geographical location, but is a spiritual realm where God rules and where we share in His eternal life. We join that kingdom when we trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The kingdom of God will never end, but will continue forever into the eternal state.

C. Jesus gives the Apostles power over disease (Matthew 10:8). This verse says “Heal the sick, cleanse
the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.” In addition to proclaiming the kingdom message, the Twelve were to perform miraculous works. Jesus had already given them these powers to relieve the suffering of many people (see Matthew 10:1) so now they are told to use those powers in the work of the Lord. Jesus sent these men out with the delegated authority to “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils (demons).” We are not told if any of the Twelve raised the dead on this tour, but what we do know is that they had the power to do it. The book of Acts indicates that these apostles continued to have these powers even after Jesus’ resurrection (see Acts 3:1-8; 5:12-16; 9:32-42). Regarding these special abilities that Jesus gave to His disciples, He said to them “freely ye have received, freely give.” Jesus had given this power “freely” to His disciples so they were to share it “freely.” The power to perform these miracles didn’t cost them anything, so they were not to charge others when they demonstrated those powers. No doubt, Simon the sorcerer would not have offered money for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, if he had not hoped to get money by using those gifts (see Acts 8:5-25). The Twelve were not to expect to be compensated for their work. This instruction didn’t mean that the disciples were not to be supported, nor have their needs met while they were in the ministry. Jesus Himself told the Twelve later in this text that “the workman is worthy of his meat” (see Matthew 10:10) and in Luke’s account He said “the labourer is worthy of his hire” (see Luke 10:7). The Bible teaches that both ministers and missionaries should be supported financially (see I Corinthians 9:9-14; Galatians 6:6; I Timothy 5:17-28), but no one should serve the Lord simply to make money (see I Peter 5:1-3; Jude 1:11).
V. THE TWELVE DISCIPLES RECEIVE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS (Matthew 10:9-15)

A. The Apostles are to travel unhindered (Matthew 10:9-10).

1. (vs. 9). Jesus continued to say, “Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses…” This verse appears to indicate that this particular preaching ministry was not to last long. As a result, Jesus told them not to take “gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses…” However, this does not mean that today’s missionaries are expected to travel to foreign countries without financial support for their mission work. If anyone thinks that missionaries who seek financial support are lacking in faith, they ought to try it themselves and see how far they get! God will provide, but He may not do it miraculously. More often than not, He uses others. My former pastor, Rev. G.B. Marigna would often explain mission work as those who go, those who let go, and those who help go. As believer’s we should fall into one or more of those categories. We can be the ones who go, or the ones who let others go (send them out), or the ones who help others go (we help financially). It is all mission work.

2. (vs. 10). This verse goes on to say “Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.” As they traveled, Jesus also told them not to take “scrip for
your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves.” The term “scrip” refers to a pouch or bag for carrying necessary provisions when travelling. “Coats” refers to the tunic, the inner garment worn under the outer garment. It was a long piece of cloth folded in half with holes for the arms and head. Jesus’ tunic at the crucifixion was from one piece of cloth since it had no seams (see John 19:23). Other terms for tunic like “coat” (KJV) and “shirt” (NIV) are used in different English translations of the Bible. Of course, the word “shoes” refers to the sandals they wore. They were not to take extra sandals. The pair they had on would be sufficient. The same thing would apply to “staves” or “walking sticks,” also called “staffs.” Travelers used these for climbing hills as well as fighting off wild animals they might encounter. If they already had a staff, Jesus was not telling them not to take it. Instead, they were not to spend time getting one if they didn’t have one. This seems to be the intent of Jesus’ instructions. As noted earlier, not having these items indicated that their mission would be a brief one, although we are not told how long it was. But the lesson Jesus wanted to teach His disciples was to trust Him for their every need. Lessons in faith would build them up in faith. Since they were called by the Lord and empowered by Him, they would have all their needs supplied by Him. It was Jesus’ work that they were in and they were to do it by His power with His provision. As further encouragement to trust Him, Jesus then told His disciples that “the workman is worthy of his meat.” In other words, Jesus was telling them that those you help should feed and care for you. They were not to expect to be fed by miracles, as Elijah was (see I Kings 17:1-6): but they were to depend on God to move on
the hearts of those to whom they witnessed to be kind to them and provide for them.

B. Responding to worthy and unworthy hospitality (Matthew 10:11-14).

1. (vs. 11). This verse says “And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.” Jesus sent these men abroad without instructing them which cities to go to. We are not told how they decided where to go. The Lord only said “And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy.” They would go to places they didn’t know, unexpected, probably not knowing anyone and not known by anyone in those cities or towns. Either before, or more likely after they preached to the people in a “city or town” the disciples were to find out who “is worthy” or who would show them hospitality and receive them gladly. Once they found a place to stay, Jesus said “and there abide till ye go thence.” In the home of those they found worthy, the disciples were commanded to continue with them which implies that they were only to stay a short time at each town. They didn’t need to change their lodging, but whatever house God’s providence brought them to at first, that was where they were to continue until they left that “city or town.” Remember, Jesus sent them out two by two (see Mark 6:7), so all Twelve disciples didn’t stay in the same houses or towns at the same time.

2. (vs. 12). This verse says “And when ye come into an house, salute it.” As soon as the disciples found a
house or family that offered them hospitality, they were to enter it and “salute it.” The word “salute” means “to greet.” The term “house” should be understood as “family” (see Matthew 12:25; John 4:53). The disciples were not to demand anything of the household or make them feel inferior or obligated to them. Respect was to be shown to the family that entertained them. In saluting the “house,” the disciples were to bless it, asking for God’s peace to be upon those living there. This was a common practice in ancient times (see Luke 1:39-40; Romans 16:10-11).

3. (vs. 13). This verse says “And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.” If the family living in the house is found “worthy” by welcoming the apostles and their message, the apostles were to pronounce their blessing of “peace” that is, a blessing of well-being and prosperity and the favor of God. But if it is “not worthy,” the disciples were to take back their blessing of “peace.”

4. (vs. 14). This verse says “And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.” In addition to removing their peace from any home that was inhospitable to them, Jesus told the apostles that whoever does not welcome you, nor listen to your message, as you leave “that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.” The act of shaking the dust off one’s feet was symbolic for showing contempt to that place and breaking all ties with them. **Note:** The gospel of Jesus Christ will not tarry long with those who refuse to hear
it. Upon their departure, the disciples must shake off the dust from their feet. God saw the wickedness of those who turn away from the gospel as so abominable that it even polluted the ground the disciples walked on. As a result, the dust from that home or city must be shaken off like something filthy. The apostles were not to have any fellowship or communion with them; not so much as carrying away the dust of their city with them. This symbolized a denunciation of God’s wrath against that place, signifying that they were as vile as dust, and that God would shake them off. The dust of the apostles’ feet, which they left behind them, would be a witness against that inhospitable home or city, and be evidence that the gospel had been preached to them and refused (see Mark 6:11; Acts 13:45-51; 18:1-6).

C. The promise of certain judgment (Matthew 10:15). Our final verse says “Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.” Finally, Jesus told His disciples that “Verily” or truly, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.” The cities of “Sodom and Gomorrha” were destroyed by God because of the extreme wickedness of its occupants (see Genesis 19:1-29). Here Jesus said that “in the day of judgment,” punishment of “Sodom and Gomorrha” would be “more tolerable” or more bearable for them than for that home or city that rejected the good news that His disciples brought. By comparison, the inhabitants of “Sodom and Gomorrha” had far less light and knowledge than did the people to whom
the disciples took their message. However, both groups must be and will be judged by God. **Note:** There is a day of judgment coming, when all those who refused the gospel will certainly be called into account for it. Those who refused to hear the doctrine that would save them will be forced to hear their final sentence. There will be different degrees of punishment in that day. All the pains of hell will be intolerable, but some will be worse than others. Some sinners sink deeper into hell than others, and are beaten with more stripes (see Luke 12:47-48). The condemnation of those who reject the gospel will in that day be more severe and heavier than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Wow! Sodom is said to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire (see Jude 1:7). The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were exceedingly wicked (see Genesis 13:13), and added to their iniquity was that they received not the angels that were sent to them, but abused them (see Genesis 19:4-5), and didn’t listen to their words. And yet it will be “more tolerable” for them than for those who don’t receive Christ’s ministers and refuse to hearken to their words. God’s wrath against them will be more damning.

**VI. Conclusion.** Jesus called His disciples from all walks of life. He included people as diverse as fishermen and tax collectors. He set an example of ministry by eating with sinners to the consternation of His critics. He then sent His disciples out two by two to announce the kingdom to Israel.
Although Jesus no longer calls and sends apostles as He did while He was alive, He still calls people to discipleship today. Just before He went back to heaven, Jesus gave authority to all believers to spread the good news of the gospel (see Matthew 28:18-20). The challenge for all of us is to respond to Jesus’ call and follow Him on paths of self-sacrifice and service.

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