

A note from Kathy

At first the reading of this chapter may cause some to worry, but if you stay the course, this chapter will deliver you from that fear. We have discussed this before; the life of a believer was never promised to be smooth sailing and prosperity. What we are promised is mercy, grace, and a hope for the future. Now we must decide if a relationship with Jesus is what we want. It is free for all, but it was never without cost.

Observation

1. The first thing we see in this chapter is the list of all 12 apostles. Write their names below. If you are like most, you do not have these names memorized. That is a shame. These men were chosen by Jesus to spread the gospel.

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2. Jesus made it very clear where they were to focus their ministry. Who did he send them to and what were they to say? What were they to do? (Verses 5-8)
 - a. Go to
 - b. Say
 - c. Do
3. Jesus reminded them that they were not to charge anyone for their time, teaching, or healing. What they had, they had received free of charge. Why do you believe this was so important?
4. As the apostles were preparing to go, Jesus gave them a list of things that they need not worry about taking. What were those things? Why? What would they learn from this?
5. Where were they to stay while traveling?
6. In verse 16, Jesus named 4 animals. What were they and what did they represent?
7. Jesus commanded them to "Be on guard." What was he warning them about?
8. Even if they were arrested, how were they to handle their questioning?

9. Jesus came into the world knowing he would be misunderstood, ridiculed, and persecuted, yet he came anyway. What should his followers expect?
10. Verse 28 is a bedrock truth. If we get this planted firmly in our heart, what will it eliminate? This is how Paul and Silas could sing at midnight after all they had been through that day (beaten with rods and chained in the inner prison - Acts 16).
11. Believers can take comfort in the fact that our heavenly Father is in control of the timing and the events at all times. Look at verses 29-31. What does it say here about God's providential control?
12. Jesus had not come to bring peace upon the earth. That is why so many were confused. The religious leaders had taught that the Messiah would come and deliver them. Messiah did come; he was there to deliver them from their sin, not from the Roman government. Jesus was a dividing point then, and he still is today. In what way does Jesus divide?
13. What are the requirements to be a follower of Christ? Look at verses 37-39.
14. Verses 41-42 speak to all who have any part in ministry. There are no small or insignificant acts done that go unnoticed by God. Our heavenly Father keeps track. What do these verses promise?

Application

1. This chapter is a commissioning of the 12 apostles who are about to go out in Jesus' name. Previously they had watched Jesus, but now it would be them preaching, teaching, and healing. Can you imagine the thoughts they were thinking? Do you think their emotions went up and down? They had never done anything like this before. They were just average men who believed and followed Jesus, and now he was about to use them in a mighty way. How might God use an average person today if they served him with unqualified allegiance?
2. Has God called you and given you a message to share? Write it out. It need not be a long sermon. Their message was short and to the point. "The kingdom of heaven is near."

3. Jesus warned the apostles that he was sending them out as sheep among the wolves. Do followers of Christ face this type of thing today?
4. He told them to be as wise as snakes and as innocent as doves. Would you say that is an accurate description in your dealings with others?
5. The apostles went out with the authority of Jesus Christ. He told them of the trials that would come, but he reminded them of the treasure they had been given. They went out and shared the good news with those they came in contact with, and began a ministry that is still rippling out to us today. God blessed these men and the message they shared. What will he do for us if we will share the gift we have been given?
6. Some saw the fruit of their labors but some did not. Yet we see the amazing world changing fruit of their faith and service. Read up on the lives of the apostles and other great pillars of the faith for encouragement.