

May Mission Month



Over the next five weeks we will explore the story of the sending out of the 72 disciples as recorded in Luke Chapter 10.

This will be a time for you, your small group and church to dig deep into this chapter and tease out what it says to us about Jesus, his mission and ultimately our mission to people across the street and across the globe.

Up until the end of Luke 8, the disciples have been *following* Jesus; they have been *with* Jesus, *watching* Jesus, almost like spectators of His mission. But now they are invited to step out of the grandstand and onto the playing field. They are called to be participators in Jesus' mission. A process that began in chapter 9 with the sending of the 12 disciples is now continued with the sending of the 72. The theme of *sending* will become a great theme of Luke's book. The mission that began focusing on the lost sheep of Israel will be extended to all nations.

How to use this resource



Use as a small group study. Read the passage and discuss the questions together. As a group, choose to support a Global Interaction cross-cultural worker or project as part of your giving to mission.



If you are not part of a small group, use the passages and questions to guide your daily time with God. Meditate on the Bible verses, journal your responses to the discussion questions and challenge yourself to learn more about the people around you and overseas who need to hear the message of Jesus.



For pastors or leaders, visit the May Mission Month page www.globalinteraction.org.au/mmm. Here you will find detailed sermon notes, children's activities, video clips plus extra resources that will help you involve your congregation and small group throughout May Mission Month.

Time to get our hands dirty

“THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL, BUT THE LABOURERS ARE FEW. THEREFORE PRAY EARNESTLY TO THE LORD OF THE HARVEST TO SEND OUT LABOURERS INTO HIS HARVEST.”

INTRODUCTION

As Jesus commissions His followers to take the Kingdom of God to the towns and villages in the region He begins by explaining what is ahead of them. They are few, but who need to hear this message are many. Their role is an important part in bringing about the Kingdom of God. They are people sent by Jesus himself.

READ

LUKE 10:1-3

*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, “**The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.** Go your way; behold I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.”*

In these few verses we see that:

- > Jesus sends believers into their wider community to witness to the Kingdom of God.
- > There is a desperate need for people to commit to being a worker in the ‘harvest’.
- > God wants us to pray for people to take up the task of working for the Kingdom.
- > Those already working in the harvest are in a vulnerable position.

DISCUSS/REFLECT

1. How does this moment of ‘sending out’ either challenge or confirm your view of mission?
2. In what areas of your community are you a ‘labourer’?
3. Set an alarm on your watch/phone for 10:02 (as in Luke 10:02) each day and pray Jesus’ prayer. As we pray for workers we must be aware that we might just be the answer to our own prayers.

Travel Lightly

INTRODUCTION

Jesus didn't just say go. He also gave His disciples instructions for their mission trip to the people of Israel. Jesus' time was limited and the purposes of God were culminating in His suffering, crucifixion and resurrection.

The people of Israel needed to hear Jesus' message of peace and stop trying to build God's kingdom in their own way through violence and revolution. These instructions give us valuable insight for the way we can do mission today.

READ

LUKE 10:1-7

After this 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. He 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. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

At first glance, this doesn't quite sound like a very sensible or effective mission strategy (greet no one? Really?), but if we look a little closer we see that:

- > When Jesus sends workers out into the harvest field He gives them all that they require.
- > Being a harvester requires us to carry little and not hold onto our 'things' too tightly.
- > There is much to distract the disciples and us from the mission that God has given.
- > There is an urgency to this mission, and we need to keep our eye on the main game.

DISCUSS/REFLECT

1. How are you trusting that Jesus has equipped you in this mission right now?
2. What might you be holding onto too tightly? What do you need to let go of in order to walk more lightly as a pilgrim of Jesus?
3. Is there anything distracting you from being in the harvest field right now? What can you do to change that?
4. When did you have to complete something urgently, what did you have to do? How would your sharing of the message of Jesus through your words and actions change if you see it as urgent?

Person of Peace

INTRODUCTION

Jesus gives the 72 advice about how to build relationships and share His message with the people they would meet in the towns and villages. When the disciples were invited into the homes of people, their intention was to bring peace to that place. If that peace was accepted then the peace would rest upon that person and home. If this wasn't the case, the disciples were to move on to the next place.

READ

LUKE 10:5-8

"Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And if a person of peace is there, your peace will rest upon them. But if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the labourer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you."

From these few verses we get a sense of how we are to approach others as we carry out the mission of Jesus:

- > It is important for us to approach our mission with grace and peace.
- > Relationships with people take time and require discernment (the disciples stayed in people's homes, they ate together).
- > As God's workers we are to be culturally flexible. Notice that Jesus told the disciples to eat whatever was put in front of them. The disciples weren't to let food, personal preferences and cultural differences to get in the way of sharing Jesus' message.

DISCUSS/REFLECT

1. When you are involved in ministry to your neighbours or through your church, how might you demonstrate an intention of peace?
2. Are you building deep relationships with people in your community?
3. How are you serving the communities you are part of? In what ways can you build relationships through serving, helping others or sharing a meal?
4. Share a story about a 'person of peace' you have met – some who responded to you in love or openness.

The Kingdom of God is Near

INTRODUCTION

The clear focus in today's verses are that Jesus is the presence of God's saving activity among people. Jesus is the Good News of salvation and restoration to the world. The 72 were to journey with a passion to see the gift of Jesus, His peace and His kingdom be embraced by all people. They were to believe that God's greatest gift is a life transforming relationship with Jesus and they were to take that message to people who had not heard. It is a holistic mission – sharing the Good News in what they say and how they act.

READ

LUKE 10:9-11

“Heal the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’ I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.”

These verses at first glance are quite confronting and yet they shed light on the difficulties of God's mission:

- > Our lives, both our actions and our words, are to demonstrate the message of Jesus.
- > There are times when moving on from relationships seems to be required if the mission of God is to be fulfilled.
- > God will judge those who reject him. But Jesus has already said the harvest is plentiful, we are to be part of God's solution.
- > People will accept or reject the Good News. Whether they respond positively or negatively is not ours to judge, it is for God.

DISCUSS/REFLECT

1. How do you think we can discern if we have a relationship we need to move on from in order for the mission of God to be fulfilled?
2. What part is God calling you to play in your local setting so that others may have the opportunity to enter the Kingdom of God?
3. What do you know about least-reached people groups (check out globalinteraction.org.au for more info)? What part will you play in helping these people hear the message of Jesus? Pray, give, go?

Being a part of the solution, not the problem

📌 INTRODUCTION

We know the problem: not enough workers for the harvest. But God's already decided on the solution: US. We, followers of Jesus, are the ones who have been sent by Jesus to share His Good News to the people of the world. We continue to be God's messengers. We are His workers in His harvest field, seeking to share the Good News with the people who need to hear it. We are here to be part of what God is doing in the world. This salvation is wide and deep.

📖 READ

LUKE 10

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go your way; behold I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the labourer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town."

💬 DISCUSS/REFLECT

1. Jesus expects His followers to share the message of the kingdom to the towns they go to and the people they meet. When was the last time you shared about your faith with someone else? What is stopping you from sharing something of your faith in the coming weeks?
2. The kingdom of God is near. How can you bring the kingdom of God to people in your community? Talk in specifics, what would this tangibly look like?
3. Who will you ask to hold you accountable and follow you up if your words/actions do not share the message of Jesus authentically?