

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 12



THE SPREAD OF THE KINGDOM

Scripture Texts: Luke 24:46-49; Mark 16:15-20; Matthew 24:14; Psalm 126:5-6; 2 Peter 3:9

The Kingdom of God is to be spread over the entire world by God's people teaching the Gospel to all people in the power of the Spirit.

The eleven disciples had now all the instruction and teaching Jesus was to give them on earth. This was not enough. They were told to wait. They did not understand it,

but they obeyed. More than knowledge is needed to successfully evangelize. This is the reason for the empty ministry of some. Knowledge and power must be rightly proportioned. We are all sent to carry the Gospel news.

MEMORY VERSE: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*
—**Matthew 24:24**

Foundation for True Mission Work

How could suffering and death be fit or proper for Christ? It suited His nature. It fitted with the great love He has for lost humanity. It pleased Him. Not that He desired the suffering, but He desired the fruit of it. It fulfilled the prophecy spoken of Him in **Isaiah 53**.

Luke 24:46-49 Basic essentials for the Gospel and all Gospel work are spoken in these Scriptures. (1) The substance of the Gospel is the fact that Jesus suffered, died, and rose again for man's sins. (2) The benefit of the Gospel is repentance and remission of sins to every believer. (3) The witnesses to the Gospel are those who have gained the experience and its benefits. (4) The duty of proclaiming the good news to others. Without the truth of these, there is no reason for missions. With it, there is no excuse for neglecting missions.

When Jesus said, **ye are witnesses**; He laid upon His disciples the obligation to spread the news. By these words, Jesus called His people of all ages to the spreading of the kingdom throughout the world.

I send the promise of my Father. Similar Scripture is in **Acts 1:4** and **Acts 2:33**. It is true that Jesus possessed the Holy Spirit at this time, but the Holy Spirit, or Comforter, could not come upon His people until Jesus returned to Heaven (**John 16:7**). The disciples were to wait (tarry) to enter into the work of witnessing until they were **endued with power from on high**. All their learning was not enough. They needed something more. This something more—this power—came upon them in the Person of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. This is the necessary power to make effective any work of evangelization.

Christ's Command and Promise

Mark 16:15-20 Between His Resurrection and ascension Jesus gave final instructions to His eleven disciples. **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.** No one is to be left out. **ALL the world . . . EVERY creature.** The eleven could not do it all. They were to start, others to follow, and we of today to carry on until all is done. This charge is laid upon the Church of God. The purpose is that people may believe and be saved, testifying to and sealing their commitment by baptism.

Jesus never sends His people alone. He goes with them in the form of the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 28:20**). If the Spirit is not in you, He is not with you. Therefore, don't go! With this command He promised power to cast out devils, speak with new tongues (languages), heal the sick, and immunity to snake and other poisons. These were to be had by faith in Jesus' name.

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Then Jesus ascended into Heaven where He sits **on the right hand of God**, the King ruling His kingdom. Because He rules, His promises are fulfilled. The **signs** or miracles followed the work of the disciples, as we read in Acts and the epistles. The promise still holds true.

Reward for Sowing

Matthew 24:14 This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world . . . to all nations, said Jesus. This accords with the prophecy in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (**Daniel 2:35, Daniel 2:44**). **The stone . . . became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.** The kingdom of God will be victorious and will **stand forever**. What part will you have in the victory?

Psalm 126:5-6 **They that sow in tears**—in sacrifice, hardship, opposition, or persecution. They **shall reap in joy**, the joy of being a part of winning souls to the Master. To do this, one must carry **precious seed**—the truth of the Gospel (**Luke 8:11**). No "social gospel," or human creed, or theory of developing the good in man, or mere alleviation of suffering will do. The building of hospitals and schools will not do it. It must be the living message of salvation through repentance by faith in Jesus' blood.

What Are Missionaries?

2 Peter 3:9 **The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish.** By this we can know we are in the will of God when answering the call of God to take the Gospel to any and all. God wills **that all should come to repentance**.

Missionary and *mission* are not Bible words. They come from a Latin word meaning "to send." A mission is a work to which one is sent. A missionary is one sent for a purpose. These meanings are in the Bible. Jesus does not just send a few. We are all sent. **Go ye** was to all to carry the good news. Jesus does not always send to distant places and to large numbers. Some will be missionaries in their own homes, to their neighbors, and some may be sent to the next town (**Acts 1:8**). Where is your mission?

JUST A THOUGHT

Three thoughts on conversation: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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