

WHAT ACCOMPANIES POWER?

In Luke 9 Jesus called the twelve together and sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God. So that their words might be confirmed as “God’s words,” He gave them power to heal and power over the demons. This was not the “Great Commission” to go into all the world, but a limited mission in time and scope.

It is similar to the charge we have today as Christians – not to drop all, leave our lives, and become traveling evangelists, but to sacrifice “some” time and “some” effort in our own land, i.e. where we live. We also have been given power over the effects of Satan and the disease of sin. God’s word, the scripture, is this power and our authority. For this reason we might look at what accompanied this gift they were given. It might be something that likewise accompanies us in our charge.

First, we notice that when they were given power **they were also to proclaim** a message concerning the kingdom. They were not allowed to simply “live a life of example” that would “show” people that the kingdom was near. They were required to speak, to explain, to invite and proclaim.

Second, they were required to have faith, v. 3. Even if they had them, they were not allowed to use material resources or the help of friends. They were to see themselves as doing the Lord’s work and dependant upon Him for even their most common every day need. During this journey every meal received was to be seen as the Lord’s provision.

Third, they were to focus on their task, v. 4. They were not to be concerned about staying in better quarters, picking and choosing the best locations, or seeking to improve their lot. They were to be thankful for those who took them in and understand that it was all temporary anyway. Where they lodged was never to be considered of importance compared to what they preached and where they were to go next.

Fourth, and last, **they were to expect opposition**, v. 5. Men opposed their Master, why would they expect any less for themselves? Nevertheless, they were not to be concerned about vengeance, pride, or anything else. They were to shake the dust from their feet and move on to the next village. Their job was to offer a message, not force compliance.

What about us? As we go about our limited commission in our “villages” I wonder if the Lord expects any less from us. As opportunities to study and worship and obey are presented weekly, do we seriously consider our responsibilities? As hours go into preparing specific messages and lessons for the fall conference, will we be taking “our” charge to heart, i.e. to share the good news of the kingdom with others? I wonder even how many of us will make no plans at all...and thus will allow the Devil to present us opportunities to absent ourselves from our responsibility.

Will we ignore our charge to **proclaim**? To speak, explain, invite, and proclaim that there is a Savior who wishes all men to be saved. Will we ignore our call to **faith**? Will we sit down and try to figure all the angles, determine what God CAN do before it's done, and then limit our prayers to what we ourselves believe possible with our own hands. Will we lose our **focus**? Will we run after vacation trips, and winter homes, and grandchildren, and soccer games, and extra activities at school or work that INTERFERE with our devotion to God? Will **opposition** stop us? Are we so spoiled that an emotional bruise will make us bail off the wagon and stop the work? Is our faith so shallow that discouragement always lies so near the surface and is ready to break free?

Jesus was training His disciples, with blessing and expectation. By this record He is training us! Will we learn and accept and grow or will we fail Him? The choice is ours, yours and mine, to make. We've been given the power over the Devil and authority over sin. Now He's expecting us to meet our requirements.