LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 10 (Part 1) :1-8

Jesus Sends Out the 12 (Part 1)

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

It says he called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles. First Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector, James son of Elphais and Thaddeus, Simon the zealot, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions. Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, preach this message. The kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received.

Freely give. Let's pray. Father, open our hearts to the ministry of your word today and speak wisdom and grace. We look to you. We open our hearts to you.

We rely upon you to enlighten us, to give us spiritual eyes, ears, hearts. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. As we begin this chapter, we're beginning kind of a new section because Jesus has been showing his authority to the people. And Matthew for the last few chapters has been very masterfully outlining for us this succession of events whereby the authority of Jesus has been duly established. Authority over nature, calming the wind and the waves.

Authority over spiritual beings, casting out demons from individuals. Authority over the infirmed and the crippled. Even authority over death itself. And he has established that authority. We've seen it again and again in the scripture here.

And now he does a rather interesting thing. Some may wonder of the wisdom of it. But then he shares that authority. He calls his closest men around him, his closest disciples, and it names them for us here. And it says he gave them authority, which is a crazy thing.

But what we're going to be seeing here over the next few weeks here in Matthew 10 is we're going to be talking about the instructions that Jesus gave his disciples. What we're going to see in those instructions are some insights into the calling that we have received as ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And did you hear me say we? I just want to kind of look around. I love to get people's facial expressions.

Because when I'm very purposefully using that word minister to describe us and specifically to describe you. You know, last week we we looked at a passage in Ephesians chapter four, which I want to repeat here for you this morning, but I'm going to do it in a different translation of the Bible. I happen to like this as it is given in the ESV. Some of you may have an ESV Bible in your lap. It's Ephesians 411.

And it says this. He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists. Look at this. The shepherds and teachers. Remember last week I told you that in the NIV that word is pastors, but it's the same Greek word for shepherd.

And so the ESV translates it shepherd, the shepherds and teachers. These are the leadership gifts in the church. Why? Why have they been given? To equip the saints for the work of ministry.

Now who are the saints? Well that's you. If you have a Roman Catholic background, you might have to work through some church tradition on that particular score because to you, saint is someone whom the church deems a saint based on certain qualifications. For one thing, they got to be dead. And then there's all these other things that have to happen in order for the church to say that person is a saint.

The Catholic church can do whatever they want to do, but that doesn't mean it's biblical. And to consider a saint according to the qualifications of Roman Catholicism, there's nothing in the Bible to corroborate that or whatever. A saint is simply a set apart one. And that's what the word saint means, one who is set apart. And what that means is when you came to Jesus Christ and you gave your heart to him, he set you apart for him, for his use, for his kingdom, for his light and so forth.

You were here in the world and he grabbed you and you came over here and he put you here where you are now in the kingdom of God, the kingdom of light and so forth. And so you are set apart for the kingdom of God. All that word set apart can be said, saint. So when we look again at this passage from Ephesians chapter four, it tells us that these leadership ministry giftings have been placed in the church to do what? To equip you, the body of Christ, to do the work of the ministry.

You are ministers of the gospel. How you like that? Neener, neener, neener. You know, here's, here's the deal. Do you, do you see what damage we've done in the traditions of the Christian church by calling people what I do, ministers?

Do you see how we've damaged the reality and truthfulness of God's word? Because when we looked at Ephesians chapter four here and we looked at those leadership gifts in the church, we see that one of them is a shepherd slash teacher or pastor teacher. That's what I am. That's what I do. But it doesn't say in the Bible that I'm a minister, that that's a title.

Ministry is not, or minister is not a title. It's a description of what that person does. They minister and the Bible says here that you are called to do the work of the ministry and my ministry is to equip you to do that work. Okay, now I minister to, I minister within the context of my calling, but again, my calling is to equip you to do the work of the ministry. Can I be completely transparent with you this morning and tell you that sometimes I get disappointed when I see an expectation upon me as a pastor to do something that you should be doing.

And that's not to say that there's anything wrong with coming to someone like myself or any other frankly leader in the church and saying, I'm not sure how to do this. I'd like some help or I'd like you to show me or whatever. But when people just have an expectation that it's my job to minister or to do this, these ministry things because, well, you know, he's the minister, so he does the ministry. Well then what do you do? See that's completely backwards.

My job again is to equip you to do the work of the ministry. So, you know, I've had people come to me in the past and say, you know, hey, Pastor Paul, you know, would you, my brother-in-law is close to receiving Christ, you know, we think he's really close to giving his heart to the Lord. Would you come and, you know, and bring him, help him to understand and just... What's wrong with you? That's your job.

My job is to equip you to do that job. Now, if you don't know and if you're like, you know what, I've never done that before and I really don't know how to do this, so fine, no problem. But this whole idea that the minister is supposed to do the ministry is not correct, biblically speaking. It's your job. And one of the things that I've often kind of rebelled at over the years is those ministerial functions that are called, that people call upon pastors to do, because I just, I don't like the whole concept.

I really don't. And once in a while, I'll get a call or something and they'll say, we're having this public thing down at the park and, you know, we'd like some of the ministers in town to come and, you know, do this and that, and would you come and give a benediction, you know? It's like, oh, just shoot me now. You know, that's very ministerial, but that's not what I'm called to do. Again, my function is to build you up through the teaching of God's word to do the work of the ministry.

You give the benediction, you know, and I'll sit back and enjoy it. You know, you get a group of people together and, you know, well, let's pray before we eat. You say the prayer, oh really? It's not that I mind praying, but what you're doing is you're putting an expectation on me that you're the minister, so why don't you minister the prayer. You pray, well I'm not comfortable praying in public.

Tough. Start. Start doing it. You know, there's no other way to get over something than to do it. You think I've always been comfortable doing what I do in public?

You know? Boy, I remember the first couple of times I spoke, my knees knocked so hard I thought I was going to, you know, drown out my voice. And you know, praying in public, yeah, that can be kind of scary, but you know what? You are ministers, and you are called to do the work of the ministry, so start doing the work of the ministry, and stop expecting, you know, and that's another thing. One of the downsides of raising up a staff over the 22 years that we've been here, and by the way, this Sunday, today, marks 22 years as a church.

Just thought I'd tell you. So anyway, but one of the things, yeah, yeah, God's good. One of the things that creating or having a staff does is it somehow in some people's minds reinforces that idea of those people do the work of the ministry, you know? And they're the ones we should just kind of depend on to do that work. Well, actually, the reason people come on staff is number one, there's more stuff now than I can personally handle, and the job that we're asking them to do is now bigger than a volunteer can handle.

They can no longer do tent making and take care of their families and do this volunteer job, so we create a position, and we hire them, you know, full time at the church. But that, again, don't let that reinforce any kind of weird church tradition that says these are the people that do the ministry because they're the ministers. We're just not going there, you know? I've just determined in my heart, this is going to be, I want Calvary Chapel, Ontario to be a church where the people understand they've been called to the ministry. You are in the ministry, whether you're sitting on your hands right now or actually involved in some aspect of ministry, that doesn't change the fact that you're called by God.

And it's his calling upon your life, and it comes in the form of authority. We see here again in verse one, look with me once again in verse one. He called his 12 disciples to him, it says, and what did he do? He gave them authority to do these various things, drive out evil spirits, heal diseases, sickness, so on and so on and so on. Here's what's interesting, guys.

This is one of the first characteristics, by the way, that I want to lay out for you today about those who are called into the ministry, which you are. And it's right here. Do you know that the word authority that is

given to us here in this passage in the Greek means power to act, okay? And this tells you something about God when he calls you into the ministry. He's not going to call you somewhere without giving you the power to act.

In other words, where God guides, he provides. He provides whatever you need to do that area of ministry, all right? So I really like this idea because it would be ridiculous to think that Jesus would call his disciples around him and say, all right, guys, here's what I want you to do. I want you to go out and I want you to cast out demons. I want you to heal sicknesses.

I want you to do this. I want you to do that. Leprosy, no big deal. You just, you know, I want you to cleanse them. And demonic possession, cast those demons out.

And all this, but I'm not going to give you any authority to do that or any power or ability. I just want you to go do it. Yeah, that would be crazy, wouldn't it? Because they wouldn't get anything accomplished. Because you and I were not called to function in the ministry in the power of our flesh.

We were called to function in the ministry, our ministry, in the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why when Jesus was appearing to his disciples in that 40-day period after his resurrection, remember it says over a period of 40 days, he appeared to them repeatedly. And it says in Acts 1 that on one single occasion, he said to his disciples, listen, I don't want you guys to run off half-cocked here and get started before something very special has happened. In just a few days, the Holy Spirit is going to come upon you. And for whatever reason, we're going to call this the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

And here's what Jesus said to them. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, right? What was that thing all about? Power. Power to act.

Power to do. So Jesus is saying to his disciples, and at that time there's a whole lot more than just 12, he says, hang on guys, because in just a little while, the Holy Spirit's going to come and he's going to empower you to act. And he's communicating in no uncertain terms. I have no intention of calling you into a ministry, whatever that may be, and telling you to rely upon yourself or your own ability. It is through the power of the Spirit that God calls us to do what we are called to do.

Now verses two through four simply kind of give us the names of the disciples. And then in verse five, he begins some further instruction, and we get some further insight. It says that these 12 Jesus sent out with the following instructions. First of all, he says, don't go out among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Did you notice he just kind of just laid it out there?

Guys, I want you just to stay within Jewish villages and towns, okay? Now I'll tell you why he said that. He said it because the kingdom message that they were going to go out and share was for Israel first. And Israel is the one who had been given as a nation the prophecies of the coming kingdom, the prophecies of the coming Messiah. And it was they who had the first opportunity to respond to that kingdom message and to the coming of their Messiah.

Later on, however, and we know this from reading in the book of Acts, the gospel would make its way into Samaritan villages, which were Jew slash Gentile crossbreeds, frankly. And then they would get further out into the Gentile areas. Now, for this particular time, Jesus is telling his disciples, I want you to limit your field of vision just to Jewish villages and towns. Okay, great. Boom.

Now I took what, 30, 45 seconds to explain to you why Jesus said that. And did you notice that Jesus didn't take time to explain it? He just said it. In fact, he kind of ended this by saying in verse six, go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. And he didn't explain why.

And sometimes that is a characteristic of those of us who are called and those of us, okay, I'm talking to all of us who are called into ministry. Sometimes he will give us a directive without an explanation, but he will call us to walk in obedience and to base that walk on faith and trust, even without an explanation. Now for the disciples later on, they would come to understand why it was first to the Jew and then to the Gentile, but Jesus didn't take time to explain right now. This isn't the time for explanation. It's the time for movement.

I'm giving you this authority. Now go to those who are of Israel, leave these other, uh, these others out for now. Why? I'm not telling just go walk in obedience, walk in faith. And that is something that we are called to do from time to time.

Verse seven, he goes on, he says, as you go preach this message that we talked about preaching last week, the kingdom of heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. And then look at this last line, because this is what we're going to focus on freely. Those who have received freely give, you know, Jesus had been showing his disciples over the course of the ministry up to this point, what it means to freely give. And I mean, giving in, in, in the economy of Jesus was something that went on and on and on up to the point of the cross where he freely gave so powerfully.

You know that the Bible says that Jesus didn't just die for the sins of those who would accept what he did on the cross. Do you know that? Do you know what it goes on to say? And not for our sins only, but

for the sins of the whole world, Jesus died even for those who wouldn't receive his free gift of salvation. He still paid their price.

They did not avail themselves of that price, but he still paid it. That's free. Boy, can you imagine doing something for somebody who has zero appreciation and never will appreciate what you are doing? Never will. That's freely giving.

I mean, that's freely giving it away. It's just, you know what? I have received freely. I am giving freely and and and it's not just and we're talking about Liberality here and that's what that's one of the characteristics of what you and I are called to is liberality in ministry We're to be we're to be generous with ourselves our time our gift But we're also Not just to be liberal with our gift We're not to use it to benefit ourselves in any way it's for others it's to be freely given Right some of you guys who've been around here a long time will remember Me telling a story about when when Sue and I felt led of the Lord for me to resign my position at a church up in Seattle and And then and then to do what we weren't sure what the Lord had for us next But it took a year for the Lord to kind of lay out his next assignment as it were and that next assignment was Calvary Chapel Ontario, but that year was way longer than we thought it was going to be and we weren't sure what we were going to do And I frankly I'm not that hireable. You know I Worked in radio, and that's about it And I went to the Christian radio station where I'd been I'd worked before and all they had was weekend work for me There weren't any full-time positions open so I just started kind of hanging out with some guy had met some guys in the church and Some of the guys gave me jobs one of them gave me a job helping paint houses Interior-wise Spraying you know I was awful I Mean don't get me up on a ladder and expect me to paint a straight line.

It just ain't gonna happen And one guy invited me to come and do upholstery work Don't give me a stapler At least not without a lot of band-aids or something it was just bad news So this just wasn't clicking you know and God wasn't giving us any particular insight into what he had next for us to do So we decided Sue and I that we just needed to be clever So we took all of the Bible studies that I had produced over the years that I'd been on staff at the church up there And we decided we were going to market them to churches in the Puget Sound area from literally from Everett Washington all the way down to Tacoma and I sent out tons of cards and letters followed them up with phone calls and And I I had a name for this ministry some of you remember it was called sound teaching ministries kind of a play on words from Puget Sound and and and It was the biggest fattest failure You've ever seen in your life, and I was really discouraged by that I mean I got I got like no response from anybody And it was just a very humbling sort of a thing but in my discouragement the Lord spoke to me at one particular point He said Paul. Did you think I gave you that gift to make money or? to be clever and find out your own way to Make your way in

the world I Have given you this freely now freely give This is not for you to create a business with You just give and you know that had such a powerful impact on me And in fact it has it has impacted a lot of our philosophies even around here at Calvary Chapel. We just You know Yeah so You've been given freely Freely give so Jesus is telling his disciples. They're doing all these go and do all these amazing things You know heal the sick raise the dead.

I mean good grief Cleansing leprosy. Can you imagine what a head trip that is when you're sent out to a town and you've got this authority this power to act and What what you are doing is? creating powerful Revolutionary miraculous Phenomena what you're doing? How cool is that? But wait I've given this to you freely freely.

This isn't for you. This isn't for you to get built up in people's eyes God didn't give you Whatever gift he's given you so that people would think better of you So that people would look at you and be impressed those of you that have a musical gift That wasn't so people would clamor around you and scream and ask for your autograph That was so Jesus would be glorified You know when God gifts you with something people can be impressed sometimes remember in the book of Acts Paul and Silas are on an island and and they're doing miracles and the people who had this pagan sort of a thinking process They thought they were gods they they started to sacrifice animals to these guys as gods now How much of a head trip would that be having people think that you're a god? Wow, maybe I'll stick around and play that one out and see where that one ends up sort of a thing You know, that's a real temptation So you see the gifts of God that have been given to us and some of them aren't miraculous, but they still might be impressive Again musical ability administrative capability, you know speaking ability The ability that someone has to create or design or or I mean there's incredible gifts that God has given to the body of Christ They aren't so that people will look at you and go There so that God so the people will look at what you've done and say isn't God amazing Freely you've been given now freely give it's not for you So whatever gift the Lord has given you give it freely So let's take a look in review of these characteristics that we've been Looking at here. We've only had time to really go through three other than the whole issue I talked to you about about you being a minister. Here are the characteristics We're looking at of those who are called to minister.

First of all, the power to act is his All right. Just remember that in the ministry God has not called you and put an expectation on you to do it in the power of your own strength secondly Obedience without details are often part of the calling and that requires Faith and trust to do what the Lord has called you to do and then thirdly you are to freely give What you have received meaning it's not for you It's not for your financial benefit, it's not for your popularity benefit It is for the glory of the Lord and you are to give liberally Spending yourself on behalf of others You You You