

Reflection Sunday 18 October 2020

Luke 10. 1-9

When we think about Jesus' time of ministry, the years he spent moving between towns and villages, we perhaps imagine that he spent all that time working only with his disciples. They were, of course, his inner circle, his closest companions, his confidants and friends. But this passage from Luke's gospel reminds us that many more were called to be part of that great work of mission to spread the news of salvation and the building of God's kingdom.



Luke reminds us that at least 70 other workers were recruited as an advance party, to spread the word that Jesus was on his way. No doubt they highlighted times and places where Jesus was to teach, synagogues he was to visit and events he was to attend. They would help build a sense of anticipation and excitement. They were part of John's call to make straight the paths and to even the rough places, because the Messiah was on his way!

But of course, there was a deeper meaning underlying this preparation and looking forward. Being ready to meet Jesus, to hear his words and be willing to take his teaching to heart, required a thoughtful and prayerful response. Some would be eager just to be part of the holiday atmosphere, but more still, were looking for their long-awaited Saviour and Redeemer.

Jesus reminded his followers that the harvest was plentiful, that workers were urgently needed to gather it safely in; that there was no time to lose.

So, he cajoled them not to be distracted by the busyness of the world's affairs. He urged them not to be encumbered by the baggage of ordinary life. They were to leave it all behind and to concentrate only on the things that mattered. The spreading of the good news and the building of the kingdom were to be all important and all consuming.

He warned them of hostility and dangers. He told them they would be like lambs before wolves. But asked them to go out anyway – and they did!

The urgency of the work set aside the niceties of social convention. They should accept the hospitality offered them, but if they were not made welcome or warmly received, they were to move on, as time was short.

Their mission was to offer peace in Jesus' name, a peace which encompassed all the hope and love and joy of faith. Jesus equipped them with his message of truth. That was to be enough, said Jesus; that would be enough!



Perhaps we might reflect on this as we look forward to our APCM meetings this week, when we review the work we have done and look ahead to the future of our churches and the communities we serve. It could be an opportune time to pray for the grace to be an active part of the team of labourers for Jesus. It may be a good time to trust that Jesus will equip us with all that we need to do his work, and a time to ask his help to set aside all weighs us down. Then, we will be ready to go

out into the world with the good news that the Kingdom of God is very near.

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