

# The First Missionary Tour

“[Jesus] called his twelve disciples . . . and . . . sent them to preach the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:1, 2).

“These disciples were to be heralds of the truth, to prepare the way for the coming of the Master. The burden of their message was a repetition of that of John the Baptist and of Christ Himself, ‘The kingdom of God is at hand.’”—*The Review and Herald*, March 23, 1897.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 349-358.

## 1. A Call to Repentance

- a. With what message did Christ send His twelve disciples after a period of training? Matthew 10:7.
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a. Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

## 1. A Call to Repentance

- b. What power did Christ give to them, and what was His admonition afterwards in view of their success? Mark 6:7; Luke 10:20. What benefits are there in sending out evangelists two by two?
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“Calling the twelve about Him, Jesus bade them go out two and two through the towns and villages. None were sent forth alone, but brother was associated with brother, friend with friend. Thus they could help and encourage each other, counseling and praying together, each one’s strength supplementing the other’s weakness. In the same manner He afterward sent forth the seventy. It was the Saviour’s purpose that the messengers of the gospel should be associated in this way. In our own time evangelistic work would be far more successful if this example were more closely followed.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 350.

b. Mark 6:7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

Luke 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

## 2. Helping the Needy

- a. During His ministry, how did Christ divide His time? Matthew 4:23, 24.
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“During His ministry Jesus devoted more time to healing the sick than to preaching. His miracles testified to the truth of His words, that He came not to destroy but to save.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 350.

a. Matthew 4:23-24 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

## 2. Helping the Needy

- b. What promise will be fulfilled toward those who, in the Spirit of Christ, help the needy and preach His message? Isaiah 58:8.
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“The followers of Christ are to labor as He did. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the suffering and afflicted. We are to minister to the despairing and inspire hope in the hopeless. And to us also the promise will be fulfilled, ‘Thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward’ (Isaiah 58:8). The love of Christ, manifested in unselfish ministry, will be more effective in reforming the evildoer than will the sword or the court of justice. These are necessary to strike terror to the lawbreaker, but the loving missionary can do more than this.”—Ibid., pp. 350, 351.

- b. Isaiah 58:8 Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rereward.

## 2. Helping the Needy

- c. Christian missionaries will not be involved today in pseudo-miraculous healings; but what can they do?
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“The missionary cannot only relieve physical maladies, but he can lead the sinner to the Great Physician, who can cleanse the soul from the leprosy of sin. Through His servants, God designs that the sick, the unfortunate, those possessed of evil spirits, shall hear His voice. Through His human agencies He desires to be a Comforter such as the world knows not.”—*Ibid.*, p. 351.

“Not only should those who believe the truth practice health reform but they should also teach it diligently to others; for it will be an agency through which the truth can be presented to the attention of unbelievers. They will reason that if we have such sound ideas in regard to health and temperance, there must be something in our religious belief that is worth investigation.”—*Evangelism*, p. 514.

### 3. Effective House-to-House Work

- a. What instruction did Christ give to His disciples in effective house-to-house work? Matthew 10:11–14; Luke 10:5.
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“In every place [the disciples] were to accept the hospitality of those who were worthy, those who would welcome them heartily as if entertaining Christ Himself. They were to enter the dwelling with the beautiful salutation, ‘Peace be to this house’ (Luke 10:5). That home would be blessed by their prayers, their songs of praise, and the opening of the Scriptures in the family circle.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 351, 352.

a. Matthew 10:11-14 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. 12 And when ye come into an house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.  
Luke 10:5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

### 3. Effective House-to-House Work

- b. In their first missionary tour, to whom were the disciples to go first? Matthew 10:5, 6. Why?
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“If [the disciples] had now preached the gospel to the Gentiles or the Samaritans, they would have lost their influence with the Jews. By exciting the prejudice of the Pharisees they would have involved themselves in controversy which would have discouraged them at the outset of their labors. Even the apostles were slow to understand that the gospel was to be carried to all nations. Until they themselves could grasp this truth they were not prepared to labor for the Gentiles. If the Jews would receive the gospel, God purposed to make them His messengers to the Gentiles.”—Ibid., p. 351.

- b. Matthew 10:5-6 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

### 3. Effective House-to-House Work

- c. When the 70 disciples were to enter people's homes, how did Jesus counsel them to show gratitude and respect for the hospitality of the householders? Luke 10:7-9. Why?
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"[Luke 10:1-3, 8, 9 quoted. The seventy disciples] were not to lose sight of [this] message, nor to enter into controversy over matters that were unessential, or that would close the door to the important truths Jesus had bid them teach."—*This Day With God*, p. 113.

- c. Luke 10:7-9 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. 8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: 9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

## 4. Sheep in the Midst of Wolves

a. What is the meaning of Christ's warning in Matthew 10:16?

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"The servants of Christ are not to act out the dictates of the natural heart. They need to have close communion with God, lest, under provocation, self rise up, and they pour forth a torrent of words that are unbecoming, that are not as dew or the still showers that refresh the withering plants. This is what Satan wants them to do; for these are his methods. . . . But God's servants are to be representatives of Him. He desires them to deal only in the currency of heaven, the truth that bears His own image and superscription. The power by which they are to overcome evil is the power of Christ. The glory of Christ is their strength. They are to fix their eyes upon His loveliness. Then they can present the gospel with divine tact and gentleness. And the spirit that is kept gentle under provocation will speak more effectively in favor of the truth than will any argument, however forcible.

"Those who are brought in controversy with the enemies of truth have to meet, not only men, but Satan and his agents. Let them remember the Saviour's words, 'Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves' (Luke 10:3). Let them rest in the love of God, and the spirit will be kept calm, even under personal abuse. The Lord will clothe them with a divine panoply. His Holy Spirit will influence the mind and heart, so that their voices shall not catch the notes of the baying of the wolves."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 353.

"Those who are under the influence of the Spirit of God will not be fanatical, but calm and steadfast, free from extravagance in thought, word, or deed. Amid the confusion of delusive doctrines, the Spirit of God will be a guide and a shield to those who have not resisted the evidences of truth, silencing every other voice but that which comes from Him who is the truth."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 289.

a. Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

## 4. Sheep in the Midst of Wolves

- b. What did Christ mean when, continuing His instructions to His disciples, He said, “Beware of men”? Matthew 10:17.
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“[The disciples] were not to put implicit confidence in those who knew not God, and open to them their counsels; for this would give Satan’s agents an advantage.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 354.

- b. Matthew 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

## 5. Confessing Christ

- a. Continuing His instruction, how did Christ stress the importance of confessing Him correctly before people? Matthew 10:32, 33.
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“You are to be My witnesses upon earth, channels through which My grace can flow for the healing of the world. So I will be your representative in heaven. The Father beholds not your faulty character, but He sees you as clothed in My perfection. I am the medium through which Heaven’s blessings shall come to you. And everyone who confesses Me by sharing My sacrifice for the lost shall be confessed as a sharer in the glory and joy of the redeemed.

“He who would confess Christ must have Christ abiding in him. He cannot communicate that which he has not received. The disciples might speak fluently on doctrines, they might repeat the words of Christ Himself; but unless they possessed Christlike meekness and love, they were not confessing Him. A spirit contrary to the spirit of Christ would deny Him, whatever the profession. Men may deny Christ by evilspeaking, by foolish talking, by words that are untruthful or unkind. They may deny Him by shunning life’s burdens, by the pursuit of sinful pleasure. They may deny Him by conforming to the world, by uncourteous behavior, by the love of their own opinions, by justifying self, by cherishing doubt, borrowing trouble, and dwelling in darkness. In all these ways they declare that Christ is not in them.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 357.

- a. Matthew 10:32-33 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

## 5. Confessing Christ

- b. What assurance may all who confess Christ faithfully claim?  
Revelation 3:5.
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b. Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the mission entrusted to the 70 disciples.
2. What can Christians do for the sick today?
3. Name some key elements in effective house-to-house evangelism.
4. How are we to understand the phrase “sheep in the midst of wolves”?
5. What are some ways by which we represent Christ correctly or incorrectly?