

Stage IV. The Great Galilean Ministry

H . Jesus Equips the Twelve Before the 3rd Tour of Galilee

Part 2: The Principles of Support, and the People's Response

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #104

Base Text: MT 10.9-15 (Parallel Texts: MK 6.8-11; LK 9.3-5)

9 *"I command you not to take ^Manything for your journey except for a staff; no bread, nor ^{MT}gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts-- 10 no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or extra staff, for the worker is worth his support."*

11 *"Whatever town or village you enter, search therefor some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you."*

14 *If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, when you leave that home or town, shake the dust off your feet. 15 Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town."*

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *the words of Jesus are italicized in red*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

| | CONTEXT DIGEST |
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| Location | Probably Capernaum, in Galilee |
| Timeline | Oct. (Month 21, just before the 3 rd Tour) |
| Jesus' Life Context | Stage IV: The Great Galilean Ministry |
| | H. Jesus Equips the Twelve Before the 3 rd Tour of Galilee |
| Title | Part 2: The Principles of Support, and the People's Response |

COMMENT:

In today's reading Jesus introduced two more foundational principles of ministry that continued to apply to them, and all believers until Jesus' final return. We need to give them our careful attention.

The first principle is found in verse ten: ***"The worker is worthy of his support."*** The twelve were full time followers of Jesus already. They were living communally from a common "purse," or fund, which Judas Iscariot managed (JN 12.6). Several female disciples contributed liberally to this fund and also prepared the meals, which was no small logistical task for a group of about twenty to thirty people who were constantly on the move (LK 8.1-3).

None of the disciples had a source of support other than Jesus and the common purse they shared. They were used to "living by faith." Jesus had taught them in the "Teaching on the Mount" to pray daily and trust their Father for "daily bread." All of their needs had been met by Jesus since they began to follow him, including their physical/material support. Their prayers were being answered.

Now Jesus directed the apostles to continue to trust God for their support when they were separated from access to the common purse. It was God who provided for them--not the contents of their common fund. So they were

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not to take any extra resources to rely upon. Jesus wanted them to trust that the Father would continue to provide for their needs every day as they concentrated on ministering in his name. The Lord firmly believed that full time gospel workers are worthy of being supported, so they can concentrate on proclaiming the gospel.

This directive to the apostles laid out the enduring principle that God will support those who proclaim the gospel full time, so his people should consider them worthy of their support as well. However, Jesus did not spell out the specifics of how that support should be handled in every situation. In other times and places Jesus directed apostles, evangelists, church workers, and churches to support those who proclaim the gospel in different ways. Methods varied, but the principle of workers being worthy of support remained.

On the third tour of Galilee in particular, the apostles were commanded to limit their ministry to the Jewish people of Galilee. This meant there was a built in cultural support system for travelers they could utilize. Jewish people had been instructed by God under the law to take strangers and fellow Jews into their homes and feed them when they appeared at the city gates. Jesus told the apostles to rely upon God's provision through this practice, and receive the hospitality and support of the people they were ministering to.

The second foundational principle of ministry Jesus established in this passage is that the people who hear the gospel are responsible for their response to it. Jesus knew this was going to be his last tour of Galilee. For the majority of people in the towns and villages, this would be their third and final opportunity to hear Jesus' message. If a town rejected the apostle's witness he therefore instructed them to shake the dust of the town off their feet when they left, as a warning sign to them. Just as those townspeople had rejected the gospel, Jesus' messengers were warning the people that the King would one day reject them, if they did not repent.

When Jesus himself arrived in that town it would be their last opportunity to receive him. They were responsible for their response. God's patience is intended to give people every chance to respond to his mercy and grace, but every life will end with judgement before Jesus' throne. Each person is individually responsible to God for their personal decision to either repent and believe the gospel, or to reject it.

APPLICATION:

Financial support for those who proclaim the gospel full time, and the seriousness of the responsibility of those who hear the message are two issues that go hand in hand.

If we do not support and send the workers, people will not have a chance to hear the message. Everyone needs to hear the message until they have had a genuine opportunity to respond to it. This requires that we support gospel workers who bring the message.

At the same time, there is a final chance for every person who rejects the gospel to hear it. That is a serious thing. People need to be warned that they are running out of opportunities to receive grace when they reject Jesus' message.

How much of a priority do you make of supporting those who proclaim the gospel full time, especially missionaries?

How about your commitment to sharing the gospel message yourself as Jesus' witness? How can you do more in these areas?