

Read: Matthew 9:35-10:8

God Sends Helpers to Proclaim His Love

Matthew 10:1

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Have you ever had a classroom job? Maybe you were the calendar person who wrote the day and date on the marker board each morning, or maybe it was your job to get everybody's milk from the milk cooler at snack time. Maybe it was your job to stack the chairs on the tables at the end of the day so that the floors could be cleaned or to be "line leader" when the class headed outside for recess.

Could your teachers have done all those jobs themselves? Sure. They could have written on a marker board or stacked up chairs. So why did they ask for helpers? Well, maybe it was to give them a few less jobs to have to do—teachers have a lot of work! But maybe they also realized that you would gain something from helping. You would learn responsibility and ownership of something valuable—your education. You would get to be a part of something important—making your classroom run smoothly.

Jesus found helpers for himself during his life on this earth, too. You know them as "the disciples." Peter, James, John, Andrew, Thomas, and all the rest. Could Jesus have done all the work of sharing the good news of God's love by himself? Sure. (After all, he DID calm storms, change water into wine, and raise people from the dead without help.) If Jesus didn't need help, why did he send the disciples to share the Word?

It is true that he had a lot of work to do—and a short period of time to do it. There were a lot of people who needed to hear the good news! Jesus knew that the disciples would gain something helping. Jesus' helpers learned the responsibility of something valuable. They got to be a part of something really important—telling others the good news about the Savior!

Jesus still sends out his helpers to share the good news of his love today. Every time a pastor shares God's Word with the people at his church, he gets to be one of Jesus' helpers. Every time a teacher shares a Bible story with the children in her class, she gets to be one of Jesus' helpers. Every time you invite someone to church or tell a friend that Jesus loves them, you are a helper. Being a helper is not something anyone earns. It's a special job that Jesus gives us because he is kind and merciful. We can always be thankful that Jesus uses us to bring the good news to others.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- There were 12 disciples listed in the reading. How many can you name?
- Do you think that you could be a pastor or a teacher in a Lutheran school as your job? Why or why not?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What things would make being a pastor or teacher hard? What things would bring joy? (If you're unsure, maybe you could ask a pastor or teacher!)
- How can you serve as Jesus' helper, sharing the good news, even if you are not a pastor or teacher?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Identify three reasons it is a blessing for Jesus to use different people with different backgrounds to share his good news with others.
- Agree or Disagree: Pastors and teachers have more opportunities to share their faith than lay church members. Explain your answer.

Closing Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for sending us and others to tell about you. Give us strength for this job and joy in this work. Amen.

Hymn: CW 576:1 – Spread, Oh, Spread the Mighty Word

Spread, oh, spread the mighty Word;
Spread the kingdom of the Lord
Ev'rywhere his breath has giv'n
Life to beings meant for heav'n.