

# Making the Four E's Easy Series: I Am Sending You (Mt. 10:16-17)

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By  
Andy Davis

## At A Glance:

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*These sermon study notes are designed to be a tool used after listening to the sermon. This resource is a guide to help deepen understanding regarding the Scriptures and ideas presented in the sermon. Those who use these study notes are encouraged to look up, read through, and think about Scripture references in this guide. There is more information in these notes than what is presented in the sermon. These study notes are designed to be used as an independent study tool to help the formation of Biblical convictions, character, and conduct.*

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# I Am Sending You

## I. Introduction

### A. Illustration: Ordination Class

1. This past week, I had the opportunity to teach a portion of an ordination class for those who are currently working on getting ordained with The Christian and Missionary Alliance. This experience reminded me of several important lessons when it comes to serving Jesus.
2. The whole process from start to finish was littered with difficulties. Each time I had time to prepare for this class, other urgent tasks seemed to come up at the exact time I set aside to work on my presentation. Although I had plenty of advanced notice, the time leading up to the class evaporated as I continually got pulled away. Eventually, I finished preparing a few days before the class.
3. The week prior to the date of the class was very busy, so I could not review and rehearse what I would be teaching as much as I would have liked. This becomes even more important I'm not as familiar with the content. I was much more nervous for this teaching opportunity than most others because it was on an unfamiliar topic that I hadn't ever taught before.
4. When I started to get set up in the classroom, my computer wasn't connecting to the TV and it took the church's tech person time to get to the classroom to help. This meant I had to go through the initial part of my presentation without my PowerPoint, which made presenting my material much more difficult, as what I was saying was dependent on the PowerPoint.
5. I was teaching during lunchtime, and I knew I had only so much time to teach and allow so much time for questions. I got started late, so I was attempting to adapt my presentation on the fly so I could still be on time after starting late.
6. All these factors led to a very disjointed and poorly executed presentation. I was very embarrassed and disappointed with myself. I hadn't failed that bad in ministry for a long time. Unfortunately, when teaching or preaching, doing something poorly is very public and observable by everyone.

B. As we turn our attention toward the last stage of the discipleship process, we must realize that people should not be pushed toward it too quickly. Mistakes can happen. Just because a person's heart is in the right place doesn't mean they will be successful or effective in serving Jesus. Just because we are doing something for Jesus doesn't mean that it will be blessed or fruitful. We are going to learn our service for Jesus must be done in Jesus' way.

C. In Matthew 10:16-17, Jesus is going to help us understand how to serve Him and inform our expectations of what serving Jesus is like. There is more to working effectively for God's kingdom than simply being a disciple who is attached to Jesus. If we are going to live an eternally satisfying and meaningful life, we need to understand how the last stage of discipleship works. We will be focusing on the fourth and final E: Engage. Healthy disciples who reach spiritual maturity are expected to invest in the spiritual lives of others.

## II. Explanation

- A. Individuals who have moved through the first three stages of discipleship and are living a mature Christian lifestyle are ready to have a spiritual impact on others. They are prepared to be successful in the final stage of discipleship. This final developmental condition available to those who are spiritually mature is the fourth E: Engage.
- B. The fourth and final step of discipleship with Jesus can be summarized in this statement made by Jesus:
 

<sup>16</sup> Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be as wary as serpents, and as innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> But be on guard against people, for they will hand you over to *the* courts and flog you in their synagogues; (Mt. 10:16-17)
- C. Here is last statement made by Jesus regarding the discipleship process He took His followers through (“I am sending you out”, v. 16).<sup>1</sup> Jesus tells His disciples that He is sending them away towards a designated goal or purpose.<sup>2</sup> The disciples will no longer be in direct and continuous contact with Jesus. They have been taught and equipped by Jesus to a sufficient level, so their next step is to launch out on their own to act on and share what they have experienced with Jesus.
- D. After being trained by Jesus, the disciples launched out on their own, in pairs, to extend the influence and impact of Jesus. The first time the disciples went out, it was a short-term temporary mission. Eventually, the disciples returned to Jesus to debrief and learn from their ministry experience. Later, after the resurrection, the disciples were sent out permanently. Jesus incrementally and progressively helped the disciples learn to serve Him and do kingdom work on their own. The disciples started under supervision with a partner and developed to work independently on their own after they had gained some experience.
- E. Jesus knows the reality of the situation the disciples are facing in ministry and kingdom activity, so He gives a vivid visual of the nature of the work the disciples will be doing (“as sheep in the midst of wolves”, v. 16).<sup>3</sup> The spiritual dynamics that will influence how the work of the disciples is experienced is one of spiritual opposition and danger. Jesus warns the disciples that people will use the power they have available to them to oppose and even harm them (Mt. 10:17-23). Even family members might become dangerous. Jesus desires the disciples who are serving Him to endure all these hardships until the end.
- F. Since the spiritual dynamics and situation are the way Jesus described, He gives them some specific advice on how to carry out their service to Jesus. Those who carry out the work of Jesus must be wise by exercising good judgment and common sense in practical matters (“so be as wary as serpents,” v. 16).<sup>4</sup> Down to earth, usable wisdom is the general means of doing the work of God in the world. Work done for Jesus in a foolish or thoughtless way is not pleasing to Him. Jesus even told a parable about using good judgment as we impact others for Him (Lk.

<sup>1</sup> Mathew 10:5-8, 28:18-20, Mark 3:13-15, 6:7-9, Luke 9:1-5

<sup>2</sup> Logos Bible Study 10 Exegetical Guide on Matthew 10:16 “sending”, Luke 10:1-3

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 10:24-25

<sup>4</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Matthew 10:16 “wary”

16:1-13). Servants of Jesus need to be thoughtful, intelligent, and strategic in their activity for God.

- G. Disciples should also be pure, which means to be in a state of ritual and moral cleanliness, free of guilt and sin (“and as innocent as doves”, v. 16).<sup>5</sup> To be innocent is to be ignorant and inexperienced with evil while we prove ourselves to be morally blameless (Rn. 16:19, Phil. 2:15). This moral innocence will set disciples apart from those who do not know God. The depth of moral goodness Jesus desires for His disciples is so extensive that it is impossible to achieve by ourselves. Jesus must help us to become the type of person He wants us to be. Moral goodness positions us to be able to approach God in harmony—ritual or ceremonial cleanness.
- H. Not only are disciples supposed to be a specific type of person as they execute their service to Jesus, but they must also adopt an attitude and perspective toward others. Be cautious and on alert for the purpose of protecting ourselves (“But be on guard against people”, v. 17).<sup>6</sup> The idea of a good and loving attitude being naively trusting of everyone we encounter does not come from Jesus. We should not pretend that all the people we interact with will do the right thing or treat us properly. Jesus tells us to expect the opposite! Disciples shouldn’t be paranoid and fearful, but we should understand how God’s description of human nature influences how people behave. Those who serve Jesus should be prepared for persecution and suffering for the sake of Jesus and the gospel (“for they will hand you over to the courts...”, v. 17).<sup>7</sup>
- I. Jesus explained this stage of discipleship this way:
  - <sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace *be* to you; just as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (Jn. 20:21-22)
- J. Disciples operate in a state of peace that is a blessing or favor from God (“Peace be to you”, v. 21).<sup>8</sup> Despite the challenging work and the hostile environment in which that work is done, disciples serve Jesus in a settled and enduring state of calm. So prevalent is this character quality that disciples bring it with them everywhere they go while serving Jesus and carrying out His mission (Mt. 10:12-13, Lk. 10:5-7). Jesus shared His peace with His servants in a unique way that can’t be experienced anywhere else (Jn. 14:27, 16:33). Since Jesus provides us with peace, we can go through life without having troubled hearts.
- K. A disciples’ life of service to Jesus follows the pattern and example of Jesus’ life of service to the Father (“just as the Father has sent Me, I also send you”, v. 21). This is a profound description of this stage of the discipleship process that makes a significant impact. Much direction and explanations are found in these few words. Jesus was sent for specific purposes.<sup>9</sup> Jesus was sent with a message.<sup>10</sup> Jesus was sent with a knowledge of the Father.<sup>11</sup> Jesus was sent to do

<sup>5</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Matthew 10:16 “wary”

<sup>6</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Matthew 10:16 “be on guard”

<sup>7</sup> Mark 8:35

<sup>8</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on John 20:21

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 15:24, Luke 4:18, 4:43

<sup>10</sup> John 7:16, 8:26, 12:49, 14:24, 17:8

<sup>11</sup> John 7:29

the will of the Father instead of His own.<sup>12</sup> Jesus was sent to make decisions that were the same as the Father.<sup>13</sup> Jesus was sent with continual dependence on the Father.<sup>14</sup> Jesus was sent with the Father's permanent presence.<sup>15</sup> Jesus was sent to please the Father.<sup>16</sup> Jesus was sent to do the works of the Father.<sup>17</sup> Jesus was sent and sanctified.<sup>18</sup> Jesus was sent to glorify the Father.<sup>19</sup> In each of these ways, we are sent into the world by Jesus to do the same.

- L. A necessary requirement for carrying out the work of God in a fruitful way is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit ("Receive the Holy Spirit", v. 22). It is impossible to serve Jesus effectively in our own abilities. Jesus provides people with the Holy Spirit so He can send them out on His behalf. The disciples were told to wait in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Holy Spirit (Ac. 1:4). Once the resources they needed were provided by God, then they could go out and productively serve Jesus by carrying out His mission (Ac. 1:8). The disciples were to share what they had witnessed and experienced in Jesus. The disciples' mission was to tell others about Jesus and make disciples of those who responded positively to Jesus.
- M. We can gain a deeper understanding of this stage of discipleship by learning what Jesus said about people who were sent out to serve God. This understanding will help us know how we are expected to act in this stage of discipleship personally, and help us know how to develop other disciples when they reach this point in the Christian life. Do a study of the teachings of Jesus by finding every place in the gospels where Jesus talks about people being sent to carry out a task for God. There are several examples found in His parables about the kingdom. Through these stories, Jesus explains in detail what it looks like for us to be sent to do the work of God. We can learn what it looks like to do the work of God in this stage of discipleship right from Jesus.
- N. To help you do this, here is a list of texts in which Jesus talks about what it means to be sent: Matthew 20:1-16, 21:28-32, 21:33-44 (Mark 12:1-11, Luke 20:9-18), 22:1-14, 25:14-30, Luke 14:16-24, 19:11-27, and John 4:7-38. Look up each text. Observe it carefully. Take note of who is sent to serve God. What type of person are they, and what qualities do they have? What are the tasks they are giving their attention to? How do they go about carrying out their tasks? What instructions are they given? In what ways are they commended or corrected? Spending time studying and learning from these passages is worthwhile.

### III. Example

- A. As Jesus explained the Engage stage of discipleship to the disciples, He also walked them through it in practical ways. We can witness Jesus spiritually caring for the disciples as they participate in this season of the Christian life. Jesus showed by example how He wanted the disciples to interact with others and the type of service being offered to God the Father. Jesus

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<sup>12</sup> John 4:34, 5:30, 6:38

<sup>13</sup> John 8:16

<sup>14</sup> John 6:57

<sup>15</sup> John 8:29

<sup>16</sup> John 8:29

<sup>17</sup> John 9:4, 17:4

<sup>18</sup> John 10:36

<sup>19</sup> John 7:18

encouraged the disciples to learn how to follow His example and effectively do what He had shown them to do. As the disciples took steps of obedience to learn how to do what Jesus did, Jesus instructed the disciples toward greater effectiveness.

B. Here is an example of Jesus making disciples in the Equip stage:

<sup>36</sup> Seeing the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.” (Mt. 9:36-38)<sup>20</sup>

- C. This example starts with Jesus participating in this phase of disciple making (“Seeing the crowds”, v. 36). Those who are actively serving God the Father with a desire and intentional actions to have a positive spiritual impact on others pay attention to the people around them. Kingdom work is primarily focused on the spiritual need and development of people. Jesus observed those around Him and He responded. What did Jesus observe in the lives of other people? Their spiritual condition (“they were distressed and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd”, v. 36). Other people have spiritual needs, and they were living with the negative effects of the neglect of those spiritual needs. Those who aren’t spiritually healthy experience life as burdensome, stressful, difficult. They feel discouraged, hopeless, and fearful as a result. Jesus saw that He was surrounded by people who were living their lives without any spiritual direction, guidance, assistance, or oversight. No one was influencing or leading these people spiritually.
- D. This awareness of other people’s spiritual needs stirs up certain emotions within Jesus (“He felt compassion for them”, v. 36). Jesus was affected deeply in His inner being and moved to feel sympathy and compassion.<sup>21</sup> Jesus’ love, care, and concern for others motivated Him to intervene and act rather than sit idly by.<sup>22</sup> Seeing the need, Jesus taught the word of God to those who needed to hear it (Mk. 6:34).<sup>23</sup> Like Jesus, disciples who have compassion on others care for them by meeting their genuine needs (Lk. 10:37, Col. 3:12). Jesus is full of compassion and mercy (Jas. 5:11). Our hearts should be moved with a desire to help them and take intentional steps to help meet their needs as we are able.
- E. There is a great amount of spiritual need and few people who invest their lives in spiritually caring for others (“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few”, v. 37). Jesus takes this reality as an undeniable fact that doesn’t need any demonstration or proof. This important truth appears to have been communicated by Jesus on different occasions repeatedly (Lk. 10:2, Jn. 4:35-36).<sup>24</sup> Paul made the same observation (Phil. 2:20-23). Jesus wants disciples who are

<sup>20</sup> Luke 10:2-3

<sup>21</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Matthew 9:36 “He felt compassion”

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 14:14, 15:32, 20:34, Mark 6:34, Lk. 7:13

<sup>23</sup> While the compassion of Jesus motivated Him to also heal people, miraculously feed them, and even raise a person from the dead. These are not abilities we have. Disciples can learn to meet other peoples’ spiritual needs in a similar way to Jesus but in non-miraculous ways.

<sup>24</sup> The other option is that Jesus only made this statement once but for writing purposes Matthew and Luke put the same statement in different situations where the truth was relevant to their point. However, it is more likely that Jesus made the same statement multiple times as He did with other statements.

genuinely concerned for other people's welfare who advance the message of Jesus in their lives. The number of workers is small, and the spiritual work to be done is large.

- F. One of the ways Jesus encourages disciples to adopt His attitude and desires for others is to pray for more people who are equipped to care for the needs of others ("plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers", v. 38). Individuals who share the compassionate heart of Jesus to care for the spiritual needs of others will regularly pray for more kingdom workers to be sent into the world so more lives can be invested in. The assumption being made by Jesus is that God the Father shares Jesus' heart of compassion and His concern for the spiritual needs of others. The way the large kingdom work and spiritual needs are met is through heartfelt and continual prayer. Disciples want others to be spiritually cared for so desperately that they beg the Father to raise up and send out more workers, knowing only God can make it happen.<sup>25</sup>
- G. What is your attitude toward other people and their needs? Do you notice and pay attention to the spiritual needs of the people around you? Those without the heart attitudes of Jesus will find the needs of others to be annoying and inconvenient. While this type of person will typically want other people to help them when they are in need, they don't see a problem with not doing the same for others. They are too busy enjoying life when life is going well, so they don't want to be distracted or interrupted by other people's problems. They don't have time or desire to help.
- H. Jesus and those who follow Him, are motivated to help others with their needs and are spiritually nourished by investing in the lives of others. They want others to be connected with Jesus and grow spiritually so they can experience a better quality of life that also glorifies God. They will make time to help those who are open to learning how to do life Jesus' way. Those who aren't stuck in their own ways and are willing to learn better ways to navigate life through the application of the wisdom of God.
- I. One way we can put our compassionate heart toward the spiritual needs of others into action is to pay attention to the way those around us act and what they say. When we observe other people's words or actions clearly contrary to the word of God and what is good for them, we can help them understand how God's way is better. We can help them be aware of healthier perspectives, attitudes, emotions, actions, and responses to the situations of life. We can make them aware of their need for Jesus and the transforming influence of the Spirit.

#### IV. Series Review

- A. Let's do a quick review of Community Alliance Church's Four E discipleship:
  - 1. Expose Stage
    - a. Invitation: Come and See
    - b. Question: Who is Jesus?
    - c. Goal: Personal conviction about Jesus
    - d. God's Role: Father draws
  - 2. Educate Stage
    - a. Invitation: Learn from Me

<sup>25</sup> Logos 10 Bible Study Software Exegetical Guide on Matthew 9:38 "plead"

- b. Question: How do I live?
- c. Goal: Understand Jesus' way of life
- d. God's Role: Jesus reveals
- 3. Equip Stage
  - a. Invitation: I Will Make You
  - b. Question: How do I serve?
  - c. Goal: Be equipped for every good work
  - d. God's Role: Jesus enables
- 4. Engage Stage
  - a. Invitation: I Am Sending You
  - b. Question: Where do I serve?
  - c. Goal: Identify spiritual opportunities
  - d. God's Role: Holy Spirit empowers

**V. Conclusion**

- A. Healthy disciples who reach spiritual maturity have compassion for the needs of others and devote their lives to spiritually investing in those around them. They have been equipped to serve Jesus effectively in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus provides the pattern and example for how their loving service is carried out.
- B. We need to learn to get our eyes off ourselves and our own issues and develop the habit of consistently paying attention to the people around us. Let's observe other people's actions and words and look for opportunities to help them do life God's way so they can benefit from living according to truth and goodness.