

Embracing God's Missionary Call at Christmas

Sermon Summary:

This Christmas sermon explores the theme of being "sent" as the culmination of a four-part series on love, mend, train, and send. The pastor emphasizes that God is fundamentally a missionary God, demonstrated through Jesus Christ being sent by the Father as the first great missionary. The sermon challenges the congregation to recognize that every Christian is a sent one—whether locally, regionally, or internationally. The pastor shares his personal calling to train pastors in Africa and unveils a vision for the church to partner with a sister church in Mexico, creating ongoing gospel cooperation. The message emphasizes that being sent requires preparation (being loved, mended, and trained first), comes with costs (spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial), and demands wisdom and discernment. The sermon calls the congregation to prayerfully discern where God is sending them and to support those who are sent through prayer and financial partnership.

Key Points:

- God is a missionary God who sends: the Father sent Jesus, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit sends believers
- There is a divine order: love, mend, train, then send—preparation is essential before being sent
- Every Christian is a sent Christian, whether to family, workplace, community, or nations
- Being sent is difficult and costly, requiring spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial preparation
- Only 25% of pastors worldwide who preach regularly have received formal training
- The church has a vision to partner with a sister church in Mexico for ongoing gospel cooperation

- Being sent requires wisdom, discernment, and proper preparation including spiritual defense
- The church commits to supporting those who are sent through prayer and financial partnership
- Different ministries within the church can participate in unified mission efforts

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Mentioned References:

1. John 5:21-24 - Jesus discusses being sent by the Father, judgment, and eternal life
2. John 14:15-17 - Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit (the Advocate)
3. John 16:7 - Jesus explains the advantage of His departure and sending the Spirit
4. John 20:21-22 (referenced as "John 22" in transcript, likely John 20) - Jesus sends the apostles and breathes the Holy Spirit upon them
5. Acts 13:1-3 - The Holy Spirit calls Barnabas and Saul to be set apart and sent
6. Luke 22:35-36 - Jesus instructs disciples about preparation when being sent

Alluded to but Not Explicitly Cited:

7. Genesis 1-3 - Creation account and Adam and Eve in the garden
8. John 3:16 - Implied in discussions of God sending Jesus (missionary God concept)

9. 2 Corinthians 5:20 - Mentioned as "ambassadors for Christ" reference
10. John 10:10 - Alluded to regarding Satan's mission to "steal, kill, and destroy"

Suggested Verses Aligned with Main Themes:

11. Matthew 28:18-20 - The Great Commission (sending theme)
12. Acts 1:8 - Being witnesses to the ends of the earth
13. Isaiah 6:8 - "Here am I, send me"
14. Romans 10:14-15 - "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news"
15. Philippians 4:19 - God meeting needs according to His riches in glory (referenced at end)
16. Luke 10:1-3 - Jesus sending out the seventy-two
17. Matthew 9:37-38 - Harvest is plentiful, workers are few

Small Group Guide: "Send" - A Missionary Church

Opening Prayer

Begin your time together by asking God to open hearts and minds to His calling. Pray for wisdom and courage as you discuss what it means to be "sent ones."

Ice Breaker

Share about a time when you were "sent" somewhere (a trip, a job, a ministry opportunity). What emotions did you experience? What did you learn?

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **God is a Missionary God** - The Father sent the Son, the Son sent the Spirit, and now the Spirit sends us.
2. **The Order Matters** - Love → Mend → Train → Send. We must be healthy, healed, and equipped before being sent.
3. **Every Christian is a Sent Christian** - Whether across the globe or across the street, we're all called to be ambassadors for Christ.
4. **Being Sent is Hard** - It requires preparation, costs something (emotionally, spiritually, physically, financially), and demands wisdom.
5. **We Send Together** - As a church, we support those who go through prayer, encouragement, and financial partnership.

Discussion Questions

Understanding God's Missionary Nature

1. **Read John 5:21-24 and John 20:21-22.** How does understanding that Jesus Himself was "sent" change your perspective on missions?
2. Pastor Chris said, "Christmas is really a celebration of the first missions moment in the history of the world." How does this reframe how you think about Christmas?

Personal Reflection

3. **Reflect on Love → Mend → Train → Send.** Where are you in this journey? What areas need more attention before you can be effectively "sent"?
4. The sermon mentioned that "we often minister in the very place where we suffered." Can you identify an area of brokenness in your life that God has mended and might use for ministry?

Being Sent

5. **Read Luke 22:35-36.** Jesus told His disciples to be prepared when sent out. What does spiritual, emotional, and practical preparation look like for being sent today?
6. Where do you sense God is sending you? (Consider: family, workplace, neighborhood, community organizations, short-term missions, long-term missions)

Church Vision

7. Pastor Chris shared a vision for partnering with a church in Mexico. What excites you about this possibility? What concerns or questions do you have?

8. How can our small group specifically support missionaries—both those already sent and those preparing to go?

Practical Applications

This Week:

- **Pray Daily:** Ask God, "Where are You sending me?" Write down what comes to mind.
 - **Identify One Person:** Who is one person God might be sending you to share His love with this week?
 - **Research:** Learn about one of the missionaries our church supports. Pray specifically for them.
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This Month:

- **Invite Someone:** As mentioned in the sermon, invite someone to Christmas Eve service. Be a "sent one" to your community.
 - **Assess Your Readiness:** Are there areas where you need healing (mend) or training before being sent? Identify one step to take.
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This Season:

- **Consider Short-Term Missions:** Pray about participating in a future mission trip (Mexico partnership, women's prison ministry, local outreach).
- **Financial Partnership:** Evaluate your giving to missions. Can you increase support for those being sent?
- **Use Your Gifts:** Identify your specific gifts and how they might be used in missions (language skills, construction, teaching, encouragement, prayer, administration, etc.).

Group Activity Option

Mapping Exercise:

- Get a large piece of paper or whiteboard
- Draw concentric circles representing: Your home/family → Your workplace/school → Your neighborhood → Your community → Your region → The world
- Have each person write their name in the circle(s) where they sense God sending them
- Pray over each person's calling

Closing Reflection

Read Acts 13:1-3 together.

The Holy Spirit spoke to ordinary people gathered in prayer and fasting, and sent them out. Our group can be like that Antioch church—a place where the Spirit speaks, identifies, and sends.

Questions for Silent Reflection:

- Am I willing to be sent?
- Am I willing to support those who are sent?
- What is my next step in obedience?

Closing Prayer

Pray for:

- Missionaries currently supported by our church
- Pastor's upcoming trip to Africa
- The vision for partnership with a church in Mexico
- Each group member's specific calling
- Courage to step out in faith
- Resources needed for the work God is calling us to

Additional Resources

- **For Further Study:** Read the book of Acts, noting every time someone is "sent"
- **Missionary Biographies:** Consider reading about Hudson Taylor, Amy Carmichael, or modern missionaries
- **Church Missions Committee:** Connect with the missions committee to learn more about current partnerships

Before Next Week

Come prepared to share one way you stepped out as a "sent one" this week, whether in a small conversation, an act of service, or a bold invitation.

Remember: "Every Christian is a sent Christian. You may not be sent to Indonesia... You may be sent right here. And that's okay."