

I AM SENDING YOU

John 20:19-23

Key Verse: 20:21

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Tonight is World Mission Night, and it's actually my favorite night during the Summer Bible Conference. It also happens to be the longest night of the conference, so it is my duty to give as short of a message as possible and then sit back and relax. I won't be doing that for selfish reasons, I promise. It will be to hear, after my message, from those who have followed Jesus' command, "I am sending you." The risen Christ tells his disciples, "I am sending you." This is Ap. John's version of the Great Commission, which is highlighted in all 4 gospels of the Bible. Obeying this commission is the only logical response for a person who understands God's heart. As you study this passage, I hope you accept Jesus' commission, be renewed, and obey this command of Jesus.

I. AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME (19-21)

As someone who enjoys history, I like to hear about those who are the first to do things. It can be anything from the first US President, first to fly a plane or the first to invent the snapchat. What about the first missionary? Let's look at our key verse, verse 21. *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."* Spoiler alert. Jesus was the first missionary. He was sent to us first by God before He sent His disciples.

What was the condition of the disciples when Jesus sent them? We can understand their condition based on what Jesus says to them in this passage. Jesus told them twice, "Peace be with you." They clearly were not at peace in that moment. The author John, one of the men in that room, tells us the disciples were not doing very well emotionally. They were in a locked room, for fear of the Jewish leaders (19). We learned through Msn. Tunde's message about their last few days before Jesus appeared to them. The last few days were surreal for the disciples. A lot of things happened that led them to that locked room. One of Jesus' own disciples betrayed Him. Jesus was arrested by an armed mob. Everyone abandoned him including Peter who had boasted about himself earlier saying "I will never betray You." Then they saw how Jesus died on the cross, His horrifying death. They saw the blood flowing from his head, his hands, his feet, and his side. They were gripped with fear. They thought the Jewish police were probably going after them now.

In other words, humanly speaking, they were in no condition to carry out a mission command. They couldn't even take care of themselves! They were probably asking themselves, "What are we going to do with the rest of our lives?" or "Who is going to pay for the bills from now on?" But *"Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the*

Lord.” The disciples were extremely relieved and filled with joy when they confirmed it was really Jesus. When the disciples were gripped with fear, anxiety, and uncertainty, Jesus gave them His peace.

But along with His peace, Jesus said, *“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”* Jesus sent His disciples out just as He was sent by the Father. So why did God send Jesus to the world? Why was Jesus sent in the first place? The author John summarizes the reason why Jesus was sent: *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth”* (Jn 1:14). We had fallen and rebelled against God. We deserved God’s wrath and needed to pay the penalty of our sin. But we could not pay the price, and God longed for one soul to be saved. So God sent Jesus to receive the death penalty in our place and pay the price for our sins. Jesus became a man and lived among sinful humans like us so that we could see this grace of God. The famous John 3:16 sums up this grace: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”* Jesus came to deliver the message of God’s heart that so loves the world and that desires to save every soul. God wanted to make His heart known to us through Jesus’ life on earth and His death on the cross.

So what did Jesus mean when He mentioned, *“As the Father has sent me...”*? Jesus wanted His disciples to remember that He was the first one to be sent out. That is why the Bible says that He is the Cornerstone, which means He is the first one to be laid as the foundation of what would be built next. Eph. 2:20 says, *“Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.”* Obeying Jesus’ mission command doesn’t have to be a burden. We just have to imitate Him and do what He did. We are to build upon the foundation which He has already set. We may not feel qualified to carry the gospel, but we simply need do what Jesus did. We just need to imitate Jesus. We are to continue what He already started.

Do you know who is really good at imitating? Children. Why do you think they are so good at imitating their parents, whether good or bad? It’s because imitating is so easy and natural! When you have a model in front of you, it is easy to follow. Just like this baby boy in this video (show the video). The boy was simply mimicking his dad, bopping to the beat, sitting on the floor, and raising his legs. It didn’t look exactly the same but it must have been easy for the boy to imitate and follow because there was an example of a break dancer (specifically his dad). In the same way, Jesus isn’t asking us to do something that He hadn’t already done Himself. He already modeled how to carry the gospel through His life. We simply need to continue what Jesus had started.

II. I AM SENDING YOU (21-23)

Let’s read the key verse together: *Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”* After Jesus told them that the Father had sent Him, He

commanded the disciples, *"I am sending you."* This command is a simpler version of the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20. It reads: *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* Remember, the disciples couldn't even go outside of the house for fear of the Jewish leaders. But now, Jesus was giving them this Great Commission to be sent out. The disciples may not have seen this coming or may not have felt qualified, but Jesus had been training them already for this sending out. He trained them for 3 years to eventually be gospel workers by being the first model. Jesus had been preparing them all along by being the first missionary. Jesus was about to leave the world, and He wanted His disciples to be His hands and feet. Now, it was their turn. He sent them out to carry and preach the gospel all over the world.

In giving the mission command, Jesus is also sending us out. We are to obey this mission command as His disciples. Oh, ho, ho! Do you think you are not in an ideal condition to obey this command? Have you heard of a famous American saying, "Excuses are like butts; everybody has one"? You may make excuses such as that you are too busy with your job. You are too busy parenting. Your school work is just more important. Some of you have come from other countries in obedience to this command, but unfortunately your passion has been weakened by something—maybe mid-life crisis, conflicts with coworkers, lack of money, or complacency. You may feel you are exempt from this commission because you already have a role or responsibility in church apart from being sent to others. However, Jesus is sending *us* out not based on our condition, but based on knowing the heart of God. *All of us* must obey this mission command if we are *true disciples of Jesus*. Whether you are rich or poor, old or young, American or Korean, pastor or lay people, missionary or 2nd gen—whether you have a role in the church or not—you are called to carry out this mission command with the heart of God.

So why must we go out, carrying the gospel to the unbelieving world? We must do this because it is the heart of God. God cries out in Isaiah 6:8, *"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"* God is always waiting for *somebody* to carry the message of His heart and save one soul. St. Paul also says in Romans 10:14: *"How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?"* How can the world be saved if we don't carry the gospel to them? If we do not understand God's heart, who would? If we truly call ourselves Jesus' disciples who have learned of this deep desire of God, it is our mandate to obey this command! Jesus said, *"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you!"* As Jesus was willing to carry the gospel knowing God's desire, we must also be willing to carry the gospel. We must go out because we are the only vessels whom people will hear the gospel through.

When Jesus said, *"I am sending you,"* where was He sending us to? Acts 1:8 reads, *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* Carrying the gospel

doesn't necessarily have to do with location; Jesus sent his disciples to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Jesus may send you to Nigeria, but He may also send you to your local campuses. Carrying the gospel has to do with our attitude and our willingness to be sent wherever Jesus sends us. If He sends us to the most dangerous Amazonian jungle, we must be willing to go and carry the gospel there. If He sends us to the University of Pennsylvania, we must be willing to go and carry the gospel there.

In meditating on why God sent Jesus, I thought about my job at Cargill. Cargill is a great company. Although sometimes I feel insignificant compared to how big the company is, they consider me as an essential member. They tell me to value family over work. They are even willing to let me work from home sometimes, or add some vacation days if I travel out of the country. When I travel for business, they pay for me with free hotel, transportation, and food. As God sent Jesus, Cargill sends me on a lot of business trips. They send me in the hope that my trip benefits the company in fulfilling their business purpose and goal. They send me in the hope that my trip would benefit the company in nurturing and raising *one more* Cargill person useful for Cargill work. At first, I only worked there for the money. But after working there for over one year, now I understand the heart of Cargill. Their mission became my mission. Their desire became my desire. In the same way, when my desire is God's desire, I can be and must be sent out to carry the gospel.

I cannot fathom enough at how one person's obedience of this command can touch so many lives. My Bible teacher is Dr. Daniel Lee, but Dr. Lee's Bible teacher was Msn. Elijah Park. Instead of staying at home on one sunny day, Msn. Elijah, a busy college student, went to his campus and searched for lost souls to obey the mission command. He found Dr. Lee and invited him to Bible study. That was before I was even born. Through Msn. Elijah's understanding of God's heart and obedience of the mission command, Dr. Lee learned of God's word and also obeyed the mission command. He left his dear home country and flew overseas to carry the gospel to Shippensburg University. He, also understanding God's desire, carried the gospel to students like myself and Shp. Nate Turnock. Imagine, if Msn. Elijah, on the day he met Dr. Lee, didn't want to go out and meet students with an excuse the weather was too sunny. Imagine, if Dr. Lee refused to go out and meet students because he was too busy being a professor. If they didn't, who knows?; Nate may now be a random red-bearded guy, holding a beer, having food stuck in his beard and singing the introduction song of Star Trek. He certainly would not be doing a glorious work of shepherding lost souls in Philadelphia and married to a woman of faith like Marie. On the other hand, I, opposite of Nate, would be rich by now. (JK) If Msn. Elijah and Dr. Lee didn't obey the command, I would have been living a life masked with filthy parties but filled with total emptiness and no purpose. I wouldn't have met Miss Indonesia Dream and wouldn't have talked to random campus students in Shippensburg. Praise God for the mission command and for His servants who obeyed it by carrying the gospel!

Along with the mission command, Jesus also gave two things to His disciples. Verse 22-23: "And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive

anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." First, He breathed on them the Holy Spirit. These men needed to receive the Holy Spirit because the one who does the saving work is the Holy Spirit. We can share the gospel with others but only the Holy Spirit can help them to accept Jesus as their personal Savior. 1 Corinthians 2:3 also says, "...no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit." We must depend on the Holy Spirit to carry the gospel message to the unbelieving world.

Second, Jesus told His disciples to share the message of God's forgiveness. Verse 23: *"If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* This does not mean we have the power to forgive sins, because only God can forgive sins. But we are ambassadors of God; we are His hands and feet. We share the message of forgiveness through faith in Jesus with people who are still in darkness of sin. The message of forgiveness reveals the broken heart of God toward sinners. If we fail to share with them the message of forgiveness, they will remain in sin. What an awesome responsibility we have!

For a long time, I have been disobeying Jesus' mission command. When I went fishing on campus with Dream, I often refused to talk to random people. If I had an idea how to approach them such as going to the game zone and playing video games with them, I ended the night with simply playing the game without sharing the gospel to one soul. I did not feel qualified or ready to carry the gospel to anyone, because I didn't think I had enough knowledge about the Bible. Due to my people pleasing nature, I only wanted to make them smile and laugh. I did not want them to think that I am stupid or make them frown by bringing up God's word. I did not want to be considered a bigot for being a conservative Christian. But through this passage, Jesus tells me that He is sending me! When I don't feel qualified or could barely take care of myself, Jesus says that I must carry the gospel to the unbelieving world! His desire should be my desire, and His mission should be my mission. Just as Jesus trained the disciples for this very mission, I have just realized that He too had been preparing me all along to go out and carry the gospel for this mission. When I did not know about the Bible, God educated me through 1-1 Bible study with Dr. Daniel Lee. God used Dr. Lee to have compassion on a sinner like me, baby sit me, and feed me so that I could come to God through Jesus personally. Then God prepared a short term mission trip for me to Jakarta, Indonesia, despite the fact that I wrote "Costa Rica" on the short-term mission survey. He sent me to Jakarta UBF ministry for a good 2 months to see the concrete lives of disciples of Jesus. He opened my heart to feel a broken heart toward the Muslims. They were perfect in their rituals, covering their faces, and fasting, without knowing the hope of Jesus. He gave me the desire to someday return and carry the gospel to those lost souls. Through this mission trip, He planted a desire in me to marry a person from Indonesia. Lo! Behold! He led me to Dream to marry by faith, who had the same passion of understanding God's heart to bring lost souls to Christ. Through His servants Dr. Lee and Msn. Deborah and through His guidance, God has been opening my eyes to have His heart desire. He kept leading me to pray for going out to Indonesia. At first, I didn't know what this meant or how to think of it. What if people think I am a stupid westerner? Will I have a good comfortable job that pays enough? Will I be able to learn the language? Will I be able to eat burgers and

French fries ever again? Do I even have an adequate knowledge about the Bible? However, in the light of this passage, I have realized that He is sending me just as He sent Jesus! I must not be anxious about jobs, housing, food, comfort, or human qualifications, but only look at Jesus and obey His mission command with the heart of God. I must go out just as Jesus' disciples went out!

Jesus told his fearful disciples, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." They no longer needed to live in fear and sin, but to live as God's ambassador by following Jesus as their first model. We also need to simply follow Jesus' example and obey this command! We must carry the gospel to the ends of the earth! May God help us to accept his commission anewly and share the gospel of Jesus Christ faithfully in our mission fields. Let's pray.