**The Marks of an Effective Ministry (Church)**

**Luke 9:1-17**

**Three questions:**

1. What are the marks, the distinguishing characteristics, of an effective church or ministry?
2. What was the main purpose of Jesus’ ministry?
3. What was Jesus’ strategy for reaching the world?

How are we to discern if the church we are attending, or the ministry we are involved with, has God’s special anointing. In two words: **TIME and FRUIT**.

In **Matthew 7:15-20**: Jesus says, “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree CANNOT bear bad fruit, and a bad tree CANNOT bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”

**1 John 5:4** “Who is it that **overcomes** the world? Only He who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”

**Luke 9:1-17**

**OUTLINE**

* In this first section, verses 1-9, we are going to look at **the marks of a biblical and godly ministry**.
* In the second section, verses 10-17, we are going to see what **the main purpose of Jesus’ ministry** was and still is.

**Luke 9:1-9:** The **Five Marks** of an Effective Ministry (Church):

**FIVE truths to unpack:**

1. Jesus **called** the Twelve.
2. Jesus gave them **power and authority** to do the work of the ministry.
3. Jesus **sent them out** to preach about the kingdom of God.
4. Jesus commanded them to **take nothing** with them.
5. Jesus authorized them to share the truth and then **move on**.

Jesus Called the Twelve:

1. What was Jesus’ mission?—to save us from our sins.

**John 3:17** “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.”

1. Jesus did not just send out His disciples He gave them **power** and **authority**. In other words, He anointed them for two ministry endeavors:

* **Preaching!**
* **Supernatural miracles**, specifically, driving out demons and healing the sick!

**Mark 1:4** *And so, John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of* ***repentance for the forgiveness of sins****.*

**Mark 1:14-15** *After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said, “The kingdom of God is near.* ***Repent then and believe the good news.****”*

**In Mark 16:15, 19** and **20, Jesus says,**

“*Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it*.”

1. Jesus sent them out with the command “Go into all the world!”

* Another mark of an effective church? It is a sending-church! It sends missionaries out into the world to preach the good news to all creation.

1. Jesus commanded his disciples to take nothing with them.

Verse 4: Jesus told them, “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic.”

* Why did Jesus send them out with nothing? He wanted them to be **totally dependent upon God** and God alone.

In **Matthew 6:25** and **33**, Jesus says, “Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear…But see first His kingdom and all these things will be given to you as well.”

1. Jesus **authorized** them to share the truth and then **move on**.

**Verses 4 and 5**: “*Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5 If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them*.”

* Shake the dust off and move on. This simply means that you have lived up to your responsibility to share the gospel with someone or in some place. By moving on you are leaving them in the hands of God.

1. Herod was perplexed about who Jesus was just as many are today. He simply wanted to know who Jesus is? What do you say? Who is Jesus to you?

**Luke 9:10-17:** Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand!

* All of Jesus’ physical miracles were really **signs pointing to some very important spiritual truth**.

* What is the spiritual truth we learn from this miracle?
  1. Jesus did not come primarily to feed our bodies but **to feed our souls**.
  2. He came to give us life, abundant life. Not material prosperity; but prosperity of your soul.

In **John 10:10**, Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have **life**, and have it to **the full**.”

**The Final Invitation in the Bible:**

Did you know that the Bible ends with one last invitation?

**Revelation 22:17** says,

The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” Whoever is thirsty, let him come: and who ever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.