

John 14. 12: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do. Acts 2. 43: And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. Heb. 2. 4: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles. Acts 5. 16: There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

Mark 16. 20: And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them. 1 Cor. 1. 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Rom. 10. 15: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace!

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

1 Pet. 5. 7: For [God] careth for you. 1 Cor. 9. 11, 14: If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

Acts 10. 32: Peter.... is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside. Acts 16. 14, 15: Lydia when she was baptized.... besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.

1. God's great plans for the world are progressive, and advance by stages as men are ready to receive them. The purposes of this commission were, (1) To meet the growing demands of the people for instruction, as Christ could be in but one place at a time. (2) To counteract the schemes of the Pharisees, who were daily becoming more pronounced in their opposition. (3) To train the apostles themselves for their coming work of preaching the Gospel to the world. **Twelve disciples.** For their names see Matt. 10. 2-4; Mark 3. 16-19; and Luke 6. 14-16. The number was probably suggested by the twelve tribes of Israel, and was a suitable one for their work; the persons were chosen from among those who had avowed themselves his followers, and who in his infinite wisdom he saw were best qualified for his work; and their office was to receive instruction directly from Christ, to bear testimony to the facts of his life and the truths of his Gospel, and to be the founders of his Church. They left no successors in their office, which was not intended to be permanent. **Over all devils.** There seems but one way to understand this expression: that evil spirits did possess and dwell within human bodies, and that Christ gave to his apostles power to cast them out. **Cure diseases.** These were to be the tokens of their divine authority. People would believe in their right to deliver God's message, when they saw their mighty works. Such miracles are no longer needed, now that the Gospel has become firmly established, and men can see its results.

2. He sent them. The word apostle means "one sent." **To preach the kingdom.** They were not to explain the precise plan of the kingdom, for that they knew only obscurely, perhaps knew not at all, until after the resurrection and ascension; but they were to awaken the attention of the people to the fact that it was close at hand, and prepare them for the clearer instructions that should follow. 2. The preacher's first effort should be to arouse the attention of the people to divine things. **To heal the sick.** Both as the proof of their divine commission, from compassion, and because the bodily healing was in a sense typical of the spiritual restoration which they proclaimed. 3. Christ comes to bring blessing to all who are in need.

3. Take nothing. Their journey was not long—but to the neighbouring villages, not over two days' travel in distance; they were to win the hearts of the people by casting themselves upon their generosity; and they were thus to attest their faith in God, as well as to show themselves successors in spirit to the old prophets. **Neither staves.** They were not even to provide a staff for their journey, though if they already possessed one, they might take it. Mark 6. 8. **Nor scrip.** A leather bag for food, generally slung over the shoulder, such as is now worn by Syrian shepherds. **Neither bread.** The bread of the people in Christ's land and time was thin, hard cakes, generally made of barley. **Neither money.** "Nor silver." Both in respect to food and lodging they were to depend upon the people among whom they sojourned. **Neither have two coats.** "Two tunics." The tunic was the undergarment, somewhat resembling a shirt. Sometimes people of wealth wore two of these garments of different materials. The apostles were to be dressed not as priests nor men of rank, but as common people, to which class they belonged. These instructions were suited to the mildness of the climate, the simplicity of manners in that age and land, and to the temporary nature of their mission. These are not to be taken as rules for the permanent government of the Church in all countries where the requirements of climate and the conditions of society are different, yet their spirit should be maintained. 4. The ministry should be of the Gospel, should be, (1) Self-denying. (2) Trusting in God. (3) Looking to the people for their support. (4) Not ostentatious in their manner of living. (5) Devoted to one work only.