JESUS SENT OUT THE TWELVE

Luke 9:1-9

Key Verse 9:2

“And he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”

How many of you have seen the movie ‘Terminator’? There had been another ‘Terminator 2: Judgment day”. But the basic plot is the same. In the first movie, “Terminator”, two beings, one cyborg assassin called Terminator, and another human being, were sent from the future to the present.

What happened in the future is this: The artificial intelligence network called “Skynet” tried to destroy all humans by nuclear holocaust. But some men survived, and one man called John became the leader of resistance movement against Skynet and its army of machines. When the resistance was on the verge of victory, Skynet found one last method to change its situation. It is to send one cyborg to the past and kill the mother of the resistance leader. So they sent Terminator. And resistance group also sent one man to protect the mother. Then the man who was sent explained to the woman about what was going on and protected her.

Figuratively speaking, today’s passage is similar to the movie in a several ways. Skynet and its army of machines can be compared to the devil and its legions of demons, and they want to destroy all humans. Jesus can be compared to the leader of resistance group, and his disciples are his soldiers. “In heaven” can be compared to “future” and “on earth” can be compared to “present”. In heaven Jesus has already won the victory, and his kingdom has been firmly established. But the war has been going on earth for several thousand years. And the people on earth do not know whether Jesus has already won the victory and his kingdom has already been firmly established in heaven, and it is only a matter of time for the kingdom of God to be fully established on earth. So how does Jesus deliver the message and save men from the devil’s deception? This is what we want to learn today. Again today’s topic is ‘how does Jesus want to save men?’

**Part I. He sent them out (v.1-2)**

Look at verses 1 and 2. **“When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”**

Verse 1 is preparation before sending out the Twelve. Before sending out his disciples Jesus gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases.

Then verse 2 reads, “and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.” This verse reveals two things about how Jesus wants to save the world.

**First,** Jesus wants to save the world by sending out his disciples. Jesus did not try to save all peoples on earth by himself. As sh. Terry revealed in his message titled, “Don’t cry” Jesus only saved one poor widow who lost her only son. What about all other poor widows who were miserable as much as she was? Why didn’t Jesus try to help them? It is because Jesus was limited by time and space, being a man. How does Jesus want to save all other widows? By sending out his disciples to them because they had the same compassion, and the same power and authority of Jesus over death. This is how Jesus wants to save the whole world. God sent Jesus to us. Then Jesus sends us to other people. Come to think of it, there may be many other ways to save men. For example, by some divine ways through the work of the Holy Spirit, God can touch the hearts of all men whom he wants to save, and they could repent and believe in Jesus. But God did not choose the way, but his way is to send out Jesus and his disciples.

To send out is Jesus’ purpose of calling his disciple. It is well revealed in **Mark 3:14 “He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.”** So first Jesus wanted them to be with him, and learn from him. But eventually he wanted to send them out.

Jesus said in **John 17:18 “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world”** in his priestly prayer.

So we are all called to be sent out. To our children at home or our bible students in campuses Jesus calls us to send out, and that is how he wants to save the whole world.

God saved us in order to save others in one way or another, and it is plain truth. And we are happy when we are used by God to save others.

About 25 years ago, missionary Mari Lopez delivered the message titled, “Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?” from the book of Isaiah in our International Summer Bible Conference. In her message, Isaiah replied, “Here I am. Send me!” She also made a decision to be sent out. Then within one year God sent her to Los Angeles as a missionary. And Maggie Wong has been saved because missionary Mari was sent.

God sent missionary John Baik to save William, and Willim was sent to Frank, and Frank was sent to Somnia to be saved as well. And the story goes on and on.

Jesus never tried to save all peoples on earth in one shot. Or he tried to save many multitude by himself. Sometimes many but other times one by one Jesus saved people, and he wants to continue to save them by sending out his disciples. Indeed Jesus wants to save the world by sending out his disciples.

**Second**, Jesus wants to save the world by proclaiming the kingdom of God. “To proclaim the kingdom of God” is like proclaiming the victory against the devil and its demons. “To proclaim the kingdom of God” is so important because what the devil wants to do is to deceive people – that there is no such thing called the kingdom of God, and the victory does not belong to God. Then what will people do? They will despair because there is no hope of victory over the power of sin and death in their lives. They will give up saying, “Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die.” They will stop fighting against the evil desires of the devil and its armies of demons, and they will live as slaves of their sinful desires. But the truth is God is the king, and he has already won the victory over sin and death in heaven. The victory belongs to God who is the king, and the kingdom of God has come near.

The kingdom of God has already established in heaven. But it has not been fully established on earth. But it is coming by and by. So Jesus taught his disciples to pray in **Matthew 6:9b-10**, **“Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”**

If people hear the good news that the kingdom of God has already established in heaven, and it has come near on earth, they will repent and resist against the rule of the devil and its demons. So the devil and the demons try to deceive men by saying, “You cannot overcome the power of sin and death. So you just need to give up and live as a sinful man just as you are.” To live under the kingdom of the devil and its rule means not to repent but to live as slaves of fear under the power of death. **Hebrews 2:14-15** reads**, “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil”**

Here ‘the children” refers to “believers”. “He” refers to “Jesus”. Jesus became a man so that he can break the power of death which the devil held through his death on the cross.

**John 3:13** reads, **“No one has gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man.”** Jesus is the only person who has come from heaven. He is the only qualified person who can testify about what has happened in heaven. He is the only person who knows “in heaven” the power of sin and death has been completely broken, and it is only a matter of time for the kingdom of God to be fully realized on earth.

And Jesus says in **Matthew 4:17, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.**” What Jesus says is something like this.

When we have a baby we talk to a baby as if the baby understands what we say. Baby does not understand what we say. But why do we keep on saying? It is because we know eventually our babies will understand what we say and even say what we say. It is because they are created in that way. Jesus knows eventually we will understand his message and even say the same thing, “Repent, for the kingdom of God has come.”

“To proclaim the kingdom of God” means ‘we have already been saved from all power of sin and death through Jesus’. We should not allow the devil to fool us, saying, “You are kidding. Look at your own lives. You are full of sinful desires; anger, lust, jealousy, laziness etc. How can you claim that you have already been saved?” What is the answer? The answer is “Because the Bible tells me so.”

One of children’s songs is, “Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so”. It is one of the most profound hymns for me because of its simple truth.

How we can know ‘we have already been saved although we see seemingly tremendous power of sin and death over our lives? “Because the bible tells me so.” The bible tells us that we are saved when we believe in Jesus who died for our sins and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

The Bible tells us that there is the kingdom of God. If you look at the world, you do not see the kingdom of God or hear about the kingdom of God. All you hear is some crazily violent group of people who want to establish kingdom of Caliph which is called ISIS, or economy, our economy and economy of other nations because it influences our economy, Russia becoming like old Russia during the cold war period, presidential candidates such as Hillary Clinton, mysterious German aircraft disaster, and etc. Where is the kingdom of God? There is no kingdom of God when we look at the world. Where is the kingdom of God?

Bible talks about the kingdom of God. Bible talks about Jesus. Bible talks about Jesus sending out his disciples to proclaim the kingdom of God.

**2 Timothy 4:1-2 “ In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.**

So in the end what will remain is ‘God and Christ Jesus, and Jesus will judge the living and the dead, and he will appear with his kingdom’. This is the picture which will be revealed at God’s right time. The devil tries to deceive people that he is reigning, but Jesus and his disciples proclaim that God is reigning, and he will reign forever. So Jesus’ way of saving the world is to send out his disciples and they proclaimed the kingdom of God.

**Part II. So they set out (v.3-9)**

Now Jesus gave other instructions before sending the twelve out.

Look at verses 3-5.

**3He told them: “Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. 4Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. 5If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”**

Jesus’ instruction mainly teaches us two thing.

**First**, Jesus’ instruction shows that they should trust God for their financial needs. To believe that God will provide our financial needs is great faith, and Jesus trained his disciples for it. The Bible reveals there is God, and he is able to provide our financial needs as we trust him. To trust that God will provide our food, clothes, houses, cars, computers, tuitions, etc is the first thing Jesus wants his disciples to learn when they are sent out.

**Matthew 6:25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?”**

**Matthew 6:33 “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”**

**Second**, Jesus’ instruction shows that Jesus wants his disciples not to be discouraged because of people’s rejection. Verse 5 says, “**If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”**

Jesus wants his disciples to know how precious they are. They are ambassadors sent from the true king. They are like people who are sent from the future to the present telling people about what will happen. The rejection of such ambassadors will bring disaster on those who reject their message.

So Jesus said in **Matthew 11:20-24.**

**20Then Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. 21“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. 23And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades. For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.24But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”**

These were towns who rejected Jesus’ message, and they will suffer loss.

Look at verses 6-9. “**6So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere. 7Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, 8others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life.9But Herod said, “I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?” And he tried to see him.**

The disciples set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere, and the result was great. Even Herod the tetrarch heard about it and he was perplexed. Jesus and John the Baptist were two completely different people, but he was confused because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. But what did Herod say? He said, “I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?”

The fact is John never performed any miracles. He only preached the baptism of repentance. But his message of repentance shook the nation. The message of Jesus’ disciples and healing shook the nation too. So Herod was confused, and he tried to see Jesus.

Herod the tetrarch was king. He ruled his kingdom according to his power and authority. He had such authority and power to behead the righteous man, John the Baptist, without any proper cause.

But he was powerless against evil desires of the devil. In order to protect his pride he ordered John to be beheaded, and today’s passage shows that although he was a king he was suffering from guilty conscience. By appearance he was king. But his true identity was a miserable slave of the devil, a mere subject in the kingdom of the devil.

Herod the tetrarch represents all men who are suffering from sin and condemnation because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. People suffer from guilty conscience, living under the kingdom of the devil.

This shows that no matter what we do and think we are not physical being alone. We are spiritual being created in the image of God. To me, one person’s story reminded me of this.

A few days ago, suddenly I was curious about how O.J. Simpson is doing these days. How many of you know OJ Simpson? I still remember his trial. It was so popular, and many people watched it very closely.

He was a famous football player, and he was rich. He is black, and his ex wife is white. Then in 1994, two people, his ex-wife and her boy friend were killed by someone. And OJ Simpson was the only suspect.

In 1995 he was acquitted of 1994 murder. But I found that in 2007 which is 12 years later he was arrested and charged with numerous felonies including armed robbery and kidnapping. In 2008 he was found guilty and was sentenced with 33 years’ of imprisonment. Now he is serving his sentence in a prison in Neveda.

I was curious about what he is doing, because many people believe that he was a murderer, but he was released because his lawyers did an excellent job. I wanted to know if he is enjoying his life because he could have spent his entire life in prison from 1995. But when I saw that he was in prison, now serving 33 years from the year of 2008, I felt that he voluntarily went into a prison by committing many other felonies. This is my personal guessing. I don’t have any other proof.

The reason I feel this way is this: He is also a human being created in the image of God. Whether he was a murderer or not, I do not know. But one thing I do know is this: He is also a human being created in the image of God. I feel that he could not bear his guilty conscience.

What he did reminds me of **2 Corinthians 13:8 “For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth.”** What this verse teaches me that we may think we are free, and we can commit sin freely, but we are not free. We cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. God gave us conscience, and we are not free from our conscience when we sin.

Personally I feel that OJ Simpson could not bear his guilty conscience although he was free from human court. By our legal system he became a free man. But he was not free from his own conscience. My guess is his conscience bothered him so much that he wanted to serve in a jail. Otherwise I cannot explain his behavior. Why did he commit so many felonies suddenly?

Again this is my guessing. If he were an innocent man he would know the value of our legal system and be thankful, and he would know how much he was lucky when he was freed and use his freedom preciously. But he used his freedom to commit numerous crimes.

So whether we are kings or queens, or shepherds or shepherdesses or missionaries or college students or high schoolers, we need to hear the good news, “Repent, for the kingdom of God has come near”, and proclaim “repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Jesus’ name” all the more.

In sum, today we learned that Jesus wants to save the whole world by sending out his disciples, and he wants to save the world by proclaiming the kingdom of God. His disciples are like those who are sent from heaven to declare the message. “Repent, for the kingdom of God has come near”.

One word: he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God.