

**Jesus, as the Lord over human authorities, sends His servants to proclaim and manifest His kingdom.**

**1) Jesus equips and sends His servants with authority (1-2, 6).**

- a) He “called together”—a deliberate, official gathering
- b) He “gave them power and authority”—near synonyms, with “power” indicating ability and strength, while “authority” indicates legal right to expect submission/obedience; representative or ambassadorial authority—God’s Kingdom addressing the insurgent “government” of man
  - i) “over all demons”—spiritual dominions that keep people from hearing the Word of Christ (cf. Luke 8:12; Eph. 2:2, “prince of the power of the air, the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience”; 2 Cor. 4:4, “the god of this world has blinded the mind of unbelievers”; Luke 4:5-2 “[authority over all the nations] has been given to me [the devil]”)
  - ii) “to cure diseases”—physical agents of death
  - iii) “He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God”—announcing and explaining the rule of God through Christ; political connotations of “kingdom” not lost on Herod
  - iv) “to heal”—more than the curing of disease, the restoration of the whole person (cf. Luke 4:18; Isa. 61:11 “to bind up the brokenhearted”); requires confrontation with evil, ministering to the weaknesses and afflictions of humanity, and teaching
- c) Result? “And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.”—“everywhere” is restricted in this context to Israel, but the language anticipates the mission of the Church in Acts

**2) Jesus instructs His servants as representatives of the kingdom (3-5).**

- a) “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics.”—Mark 6:8 says “except a staff” instead of “no staff”—the point of both commands is “go with what you have, making no special preparations”
- b) “And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart.”—some itinerant teachers (Cynics) took advantage of towns by taking advantage of people’s hospitality—consuming one household only to move on to another household, until they exhausted the resources of a given community, at which time they would depart to another community; the Apostles were not to even give the appearance of seeking luxury as representatives of the Kingdom
- c) “And wherever they do not receive you”—to reject an ambassador is to reject the one he represents
- d) “when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet”—The Jews had a tradition that when they returned from traveling in Gentile territory they would shake the dust from their feet to “cleanse” themselves from the impurity of the Gentile world. Ironically, Jesus commands the disciples to do the same among the towns of Israel who do not receive the Kingdom of God.
- e) “as a testimony against them”—God will judge that city severely, so you do not even want the dust of that city upon you, lest you share in that judgment.

**3) Principles for Christian Ministry/Living**

- i) Simplicity—their power/authority would not be demonstrated in grand retinues displaying wealth and worldly splendor and might, but in lives of holiness, deeds of compassion, and words of truth
- ii) Detachment for the sake of freedom to serve—Edersheim compares Jesus’ instructions with a Rabbinic rule that one must not enter the temple precinct with staff, shoes and moneybag in order to avoid the appearance of being engaged on any other business than that of worship—“The whole being should be absorbed in the service of the Lord.”
- iii) Trust in God’s provision

- iv) Holy living—lives that are in stark contrast to the darkness of evil
- v) Compassion not coercion
- vi) Proclamation of the Truth—Church authority is declarative
- vii) “Spiritual” authority does not mean that the Kingdom of God does not have tangible, material effect; quite the contrary, spiritual authority encompasses the whole of life.

**4) Jesus confounds the evil human authorities by the character of His reign (7-9).**

- a) “Now . . . all that was happening”—with the mission of the Apostles; the Apostolic mission reveals that Jesus’ influence will not be contained to a corner of the world (Acts 26:26)
- b) “Herod the tetrarch”—ruler of a fourth part of Palestine, particularly, Galilee—morally unscrupulous, but not without a conscience (3:1-6, 19-20—fear of and murder of John the Baptist; 13:31-33—threatens Jesus’ life, but “that fox” could not frighten the lion of Judah; 23:7-11—mocking trial of Jesus; Acts 4:27—condemned for complicity in the murder of Jesus)
- c) “He was perplexed”—his lack of insight indicates that he is like the wayside soil—the devil immediately snatches the word away
- d) The speculation of the crowds about Jesus indicates that they recognized the unique presence of God with Him, but did not yet arise to the full insight regarding Jesus’ dignity and person.
- e) “John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?”
  - i) That this question is prefaced with “John I beheaded” indicates that Herod viewed Jesus as a threat to his rule.
  - ii) Herod mocked the idea that Jesus was the King (23:7-11).
  - iii) John was not raised from the dead as the people suggested; but Jesus would be—and ascended at the Father’s right hand He rules as King of Kings and Lord of Lords—a fact which should cause every “Herod” to tremble and “kiss the Son.”