

SEND ME

Living Sent for the Mission of God

SHAPED
BY SCRIPTURE

SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE



Dr. Scott K. Thomas II



LONEOAK
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

September

Shaped by Scripture

Introduction to *Shaped by Scripture*

Shaped by Scripture exists to help you plant God’s Word deep in your heart so it can transform your life. This resource is designed to guide you toward Scripture memorization and to equip you with the Word of God. Life in general—and the Christian life in particular—is spiritual warfare. Every believer faces continual pressures from the world, the culture, and the enemy of our souls. Yet God does not leave us defenseless. He gives us His Word to shape us, strengthen us, and sharpen us for victory.

The Bible says in Proverbs 7:2-3, “Keep my commandments and live; keep my teaching as the apple of your eye; bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.” Notice how this verse begins with both a command and a promise: *Keep the Lord’s commandments—and live*. When God’s Word is hidden in your heart, it becomes your shield, your guide, and your joy.

Why We Created *Shaped by Scripture*

In an effort to promote Scripture memorization and spiritual growth, *Shaped by Scripture* was developed to guide participants in learning, understanding, and applying God’s Word. Over the course of a year, you will explore 12 unique themes covering 50 selected verses (with mid-year and end-of-year breaks for reflection). Each monthly booklet introduces a new theme, providing both an “entry point” for new participants and a “re-engagement point” for returning participants.

How to Use This Resource

Each week follows a simple rhythm designed to help you memorize Scripture and grasp its meaning:

- **Day 1 – Memorization & Meditation:** Learn the verse, reflect on the weekly theme, and receive prompts to begin memorization.

- **Day 2 – Contextual Understanding:** Discover the historical and biblical context so you can see how the verse fits into the larger story of Scripture.
- **Day 3 – Theological Insight:** Based on context, explore what the passage teaches about God, His character, and His purposes.
- **Day 4 – Personal Application:** Using the Inductive Bible Study method (Observe, Interpret, Apply), discover how the verse directly speaks into your life.
- **Day 5 – Recap & Reinforcement:** Review, rehearse, and reinforce what you’ve learned to lock the verse and its truths into your heart.

A Word of Encouragement

For some, memorizing Scripture comes naturally. For the rest of us, it feels daunting. Be encouraged—*Shaped by Scripture* is designed to support learners at every level. By investing a few focused minutes each day, you will develop the skill of Scripture memorization and a deeper appreciation of God’s Word. Over time, you’ll look back and realize you’ve retained far more than you expected, and more importantly, you’ll be shaped by the living Word of God.

Dr. Scott K. Thomas II
Senior Pastor

Send Me: Introduction

Living Sent for the Mission of God

September 7–October 2, 2026

When the Scottish physician David Livingstone surrendered his life to God's call, he could not have imagined where that obedience would lead. Traveling thousands of miles across Africa, he endured disease, hardship, and isolation so others might hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. His life reminds us that God often accomplishes extraordinary work through ordinary people who willingly say, "Here am I! Send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

That same spirit of surrender shapes this month's theme, *Send Me: Living Sent for the Mission of God*. While few believers will serve in distant lands, all followers of Christ have been sent to represent Him where God has placed them. Jesus calls His people to make disciples in their homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and communities. Living sent is not reserved for missionaries; it is the calling of every Christian.

As you memorize Scripture this month, you are doing more than learning Bible verses. You are allowing God's Word to shape your heart, renew your mind, and prepare you to participate in His mission. Scripture teaches us to see people through the compassion of Christ, recognize opportunities to serve, and faithfully share the hope of the gospel. As these passages take root in your life, they will encourage greater obedience, deeper trust, and a growing desire to make Christ known wherever He leads.

Each week builds upon this theme through four foundational passages. Week One begins with Christ's Great commission (Matthew 28:19–20, reminding us that we are sent to make disciples. Week Two (Luke 10:2) calls us to see the harvest and pray for laborers. Week Three (1 Peter 4:10) teaches that God equips every believer to serve through spiritual gifts. Week Four (Romans 10:14–15) concludes by emphasizing the church's responsibility to proclaim the gospel.

Week 1	<i>The Call to Go</i>	Matthew 28:19–20
Week 2	<i>The Harvest is Plentiful</i>	Luke 10:2
Week 3	<i>The Power of Serving</i>	1 Peter 4:10
Week 4	<i>Sent and Sending</i>	Romans 10:14–15

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

On a remote riverbank in the jungles of Ecuador, 1956 became the year Jim Elliot’s obedience to God’s call cost him his life. Elliot and four missionary partners—Nate Saint, Ed McCully, Peter Fleming, and Roger Youderian—had committed themselves to taking the gospel to the Huaorani people. Their desire was straightforward and deeply biblical: they wanted people who had never heard the name of Jesus to have an opportunity to hear the gospel and believe.

Their efforts at peaceful contact ended tragically. All five missionaries were killed by members of the very people they had hoped to reach. From a human perspective, their deaths could have appeared to make the end of their mission; yet the story continued.

Elisabeth Elliot, Jim’s widow, eventually returned to Ecuador and lived among the Huaorani with her young daughter. She went to the people who had killed her husband and demonstrated the forgiveness she proclaimed through the gospel. In time, several Huaorani people came to faith in Christ, including men who had participated in the missionaries’ deaths. What appeared to be an ending became part of a much larger story of gospel witness.

Stories like this can inspire us, but they can also make the great Commission feel distant from ordinary Christian life. We may admire missionaries while quietly assuming that their calling belongs to a special category of Christians. The “average” follower of Christ may believe strongly in missions while struggling to understand personal responsibility for the mission. *Does Jesus expect every Christian to go? Does going require moving overseas? What if I do not feel gifted for evangelism? What does the Great Commission require of me where I live today?*

These questions emphasize careful attention to Jesus’ words. This week we will memorize and study Matthew 28:19–20: “Go therefore and

make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Before considering how we should apply these words, we need to observe what Jesus actually says.

Go *therefore*. The first word immediately creates movement: “Go.” Yet the word “therefore” tells us that Jesus’ command rests upon something He has already declared. In verse 18, Jesus says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” The Great Commission flows from the authority of the risen Christ. Jesus sends His disciples because He is Lord.

Grammatically, the central command of the passage is “make disciples.” “Go” carries the idea of going or proceeding as part of that disciple-making mission. The emphasis therefore reaches beyond travel. Wherever Christ’s followers go, they are to participate intentionally in making disciples. For some, obedience will involve crossing cultures and nations. For others, it will happen primarily in homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and communities. Every disciple lives under the authority of the One who sends.

Make *disciples of all nations*. Jesus identifies the purpose of going: “make disciples.” A disciple is more than someone who possesses information about Jesus. A disciple follows Jesus, learns from Jesus, submits to Jesus, and increasingly orders life according to His teaching.

Notice also the scope of the command: “all nations.” The gospel cannot remain confined to one people, culture, language, or geographic region. The word translated “nations” refers broadly to peoples or ethnic groups. Jesus directs His followers outward toward the peoples of the world.

The mission is therefore both personal and global. Christians make disciples of individual people, while the Church carries the gospel across cultural and geographic boundaries. From the beginning, Jesus envisioned a people gathered from the nations who would live under His Lordship.

Baptizing them. Jesus then describes how disciple-making takes visible form: “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Baptism publicly identifies a new believer with Christ and His people. Jesus does not envision discipleship as a private spirituality disconnected from the community of faith. Those who believe the gospel openly confess their allegiance to Christ and enter the visible fellowship of His Church.

Teaching them to observe. Jesus continues, “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” The wording is important because Jesus calls disciples to teach disciples to “observe” His commands. Christian discipleship aims at obedient lives.

A disciple learns the words of Jesus in order to live according to them. Evangelism therefore begins a process of spiritual formation rather than completing it. The Church proclaims the gospel, baptizes those who believe, and patiently teaches believers to follow Christ in every area of life.

The word “all” also deserves attention. Jesus does not permit His followers to select only the commands that are comfortable or culturally acceptable. Disciples learn to bring the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ.

“I am with you always.” The passage concludes with one of Scripture’s great promises: “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The One who sends His disciples promises to accompany them. That promise changes how we understand everything that comes before it. Jesus knows that making disciples will require courage. His first disciples would face opposition, persecution, cultural barriers, and eventually martyrdom. Yet their mission would never depend upon human ability alone. The risen Christ would remain with His people as they carried the gospel throughout the world.

Jim and Elisabeth Elliot understood that obedience to Christ could carry a significant cost. Their circumstances were extraordinary, but the command they sought to obey belongs to every follower of Jesus. Matthew

28:19–20 calls us to see ourselves as disciples who participate in making other disciples.

Memorization & Meditation

1. **Read the verse aloud and write the verse** – Say the verse aloud several times. Read slowly and clearly. Also begin writing the verse by hand to help memorize and retain the wording.
2. **Reflect on the Meaning** – What does it mean for you, today, to make disciples as you go about your daily activities?
3. **Pray the Verse**

Lord Jesus, thank You for the disciple who shared the gospel with me and those who discipled me. Help me remember your call to make disciples and give me and awareness of opportunities to tell others about Jesus and teach them to observe all that you have commanded. In Jesus' name, amen.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

D I S C O V E R Y

Not everyone is gifted the same way and that is not a flaw. God gives each of us unique abilities, passions, and strengths; and when we use them they don't just fill a need, they unlock purpose. The goal isn't just to serve, it's to serve where you fit.

SHAPED
BY SCRIPTURE

Wednesdays at 6 PM
Beginning October 14

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

Matthew 28:19–20 comes at the conclusion of a Gospel carefully written to reveal who Jesus is and what His coming means for the world. Matthew begins by identifying Jesus as “the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1). These titles place Jesus within the unfolding story of God’s redemptive work. He is the promised King from David’s line, and His coming advances the promise God made to Abraham that through him “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). From its opening chapter, Matthew points toward a King whose saving work will ultimately reach beyond Israel to the nations.

The rest of the gospel develops this message. Jesus announces the kingdom of heaven, calls disciples to follow Him, teaches with authority, heals the sick, confronts sin, welcomes outsiders, and demonstrates His authority over creation. His disciples gradually discover His identity, even as they struggle to understand the full meaning of His mission. Jesus repeatedly prepares them for His suffering, death, and resurrection. Eventually, He enters Jerusalem as the promised King, is rejected and crucified, and rises from the dead. The Great Commission must be understood as the culmination of this larger gospel story. The One who sends the disciples is the crucified and risen King.

Matthew then narrows our attention to a particular scene. After the resurrection, Jesus instructs His disciples to meet Him in Galilee. Matthew 28:16 tells us that the eleven disciples went “to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.” These are the men Jesus had called, taught, corrected, and prepared throughout His ministry. They have also experienced His arrest, their own failure and fear, His crucifixion, and now the astonishing reality of His resurrection. When they see Jesus, they worship Him, although Matthew candidly adds that “some doubted” (28:17).

It is to these imperfect disciples that Jesus gives His worldwide mission.

The occasion is important to note. Jesus stands before them after conquering death and immediately declares, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (28:18). What follows in verses 19–20 flows from that reality and statement. The disciples are sent to make disciples of all nations because the risen Christ possesses authority over all. Their assignment grows directly out of everything they have witnessed and learned while following Him.

Matthew therefore closes with movement. The disciples who once heard Jesus say, “Follow me” are now sent to help others follow Him. Matthew’s Gospel story has reached its conclusions, but the mission created by that story is beginning. The risen King sends His disciples into the world, and His promise— “I am with you always”—assures them that they will never carry out that mission alone.

Take Action: Open your Bible and read Matthew 28:16–20. As you read, picture the scene: eleven disciples gathered on a mountain in Galilee before the risen Jesus. Notice their response when they see Him, the declaration Jesus makes about His authority, the mission He gives them, and the promise with which Matthew closes his Gospel.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the larger story of Matthew’s Gospel prepare the reader for Jesus’ command to make disciples of all nations?
2. What had the eleven disciples experienced between Jesus’ initial call to follow Him and their meeting with the risen Christ in Matthew 28?
3. Why is Jesus’ declaration that He possesses “all authority in heaven and on earth” important to understanding the mission He gives His disciples?

Memorization Reminder: Continue memorizing Matthew 28:19–20. As you practice today, remember the setting of these words. Picture the risen Jesus speaking to His disciples on the mountain and sending them into the world.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

Theology is the study of God and the truths He has revealed about Himself. Yet biblical truth is intended to shape the way Christians live. Practical theology considers how what we believe about God directs our actions, relationships, priorities, and participation in His mission. Matthew 28:19–20 provides a clear example. Jesus reveals theological truth about His authority, the Triune God, discipleship, obedience, and His continuing presence. He then directs His followers to live according to those truths by making disciples.

At the center of the Great Commission is Jesus’ command to “make disciples of all nations.” Disciple-making is the practical expression of a fundamental Christian conviction: Jesus Christ is Lord. Because Jesus possesses “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18), those who trust Him become his disciples. They learn His teaching, submit to His authority, and order their lives according to His Word. Disciple-making invites others into that same life of following Christ.

Jesus describes disciple-making through the actions surrounding His central command. His followers *go*, carrying the gospel beyond themselves. They *baptize*, calling those who believe to publicly identify with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and with the community of believers. They *teach*, helping disciples understand the words and ways of Jesus. They teach toward *obedience*, because Jesus specifically commands them to teach others “to observe all that I have commanded you.” Disciple-making therefore involves evangelism, identification with Christ and His church, biblical instruction, spiritual formation, and obedient Christian living.

This means disciple-making cannot be reduced to a church program or the responsibility of a select group of Christians. It is part of the ordinary life of following Jesus. Mature disciples participate in helping other people know and follow Christ. Parents disciple children. Believers

encourage one another toward obedience. Christians explain the gospel to friends, coworkers, and neighbors. Pastors and teachers equip the Church through biblical instruction. Missionaries cross cultural and geographic boundaries to proclaim Christ among people who have not heard. These activities differ in setting and responsibility, but each can contribute to the disciple-making mission Christ has given His Church.

The Great Commission also teaches us that disciple-making depends upon Christ rather than human ability. Jesus concludes, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” His presence gives confidence to ordinary believers who may feel inadequate for the task. We do not need extraordinary personalities, perfect knowledge, or specialized platforms before we can participate. We need faithfulness to Christ, dependence upon Him, and a willingness to help others take their next step in following Jesus.

Practical theology asks us to connect conviction with action. If Jesus truly possesses all authority, then His command deserves our obedience. If the gospel brings salvation, then it deserves to be shared. If disciples are taught to obey everything Christ commanded, then growing disciples should become disciple-makers themselves.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Jesus’ authority provide the theological foundation for the command to make disciples?
2. According to the entry, how do going, baptizing, teaching, and obedience work together in the process of making disciples?
3. Where do you currently have opportunities to help someone take a next step in following Jesus, and what might faithful participation in disciple-making look like in that relationship?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

Inductive Bible study moves us through three important questions: What does the text say? What does the text mean? What should I do in response? During the first three days of this week, you have carefully considered Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:19–20. Today, the focus turns toward a response. The Great Commission must eventually move from the page into the patterns and priorities of our lives.

Begin with what you have observed. Jesus speaks as the risen Lord who possesses all authority in heaven and on earth. He commands His followers to make disciples of all nations. They accomplish this mission by going, baptizing, and teaching people to obey everything Christ commanded. Jesus then promises His presence with His disciples until the end of the age. The passage begins with Christ’s authority, moves to the disciple’s responsibility, and concludes with Christ’s presence.

Next, identify what these observations mean. Jesus expects His disciples to participate in making other disciples. Following Jesus has an outward direction. The gospel that has reached us is meant to move through us toward others. This does not mean every Christian will become a pastor, missionary, or Bible teacher. It does mean that every follower of Jesus should live with an awareness that God has placed people within our reach who need to know Christ and grow in obedience to Him.

Now consider the application. Start with the places you already go. Think about your home, workplace, school, church, neighborhood, friendships, and regular routines. Who has God placed around you? Some may need to hear the gospel. Others may already follow Jesus but need encouragement, biblical instruction, prayer, accountability, or an example of faithful obedience. Disciple-making often begins by intentionally seeing the people who are already part of our lives.

Then ask a more personal question: Am I intentionally helping anyone follow Jesus?

That question brings the Great Commission close to home. It is possible to attend church, study Scripture, give generously, and affirm the importance of missions while leaving disciple-making to someone else. Matthew 28:19–20 does not allow us to separate following Jesus from participating in His mission. The disciples who received this command were themselves commanded to teach future disciples “to observe all” that Jesus had commanded them. The Great Commission therefore continues from one generation of disciples to another.

Your application can begin with one person. Identify someone you can intentionally pray for, encourage, teach, invite, or engage in a gospel conversation. Learn to ask spiritual questions. Share what Christ is teaching you. Invite someone to read Scripture with you. Walk alongside a younger believer. Pray for opportunities to speak about Jesus and remain attentive when God provides them.

Reflection Questions:

1. What do Jesus’ authority, His command to make disciples, and His promised presence teach you about your responsibility in the Great Commission?
2. Who has God already placed within your everyday relationships whom you could intentionally help take a next step toward or with Jesus?
3. What specific practice could you begin now to make disciple-making an irreplaceable part of your life and ministry?

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19–20

This week, you have examined the Great Commission from several perspectives. You began by observing Jesus’ command to make disciples through going, baptizing, and teaching. You then considered the broader context of Matthew’s Gospel and the scene in which the risen Christ commissioned His disciples. You explored the practical theology of disciple-making and discovered that the Great Commission belongs to the ordinary life of every follower of Jesus. Finally, you considered how Christ’s command should become a personal priority expressed through intentional relationships and faithful obedience. Today, reinforce what you have learned by putting these truths into your own words and identifying how you will respond.

Remember the Word

Without looking at your Bible or this guide, write Matthew 28:19–20 from memory. Then compare what you wrote with the passage. Circle or underline any words or phrases you missed and spend a few minutes reviewing them.

Summarize the Truth

In two or three sentences, explain the Great Commission in your own words. Include what Jesus commands His disciples to do, how they are to carry out that mission, and the promise He gives them.

Make It Personal

Complete this statement: Because Jesus has called me to make disciples, I will intentionally _____. [Choose an action that is specific enough to practice rather than a general intention. Consider praying

regularly for someone, initiating a gospel conversation, inviting someone to study Scripture, or beginning an intentional discipling relationship.]

Final Prayer

Spend several minutes praying over the names you identified. Ask God to give you compassion for people, courage to speak about Christ, wisdom to recognize opportunities, and faithfulness to act when those opportunities come. Thank Jesus for His promise: “I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

“And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”

Luke 10:2

Every so often, an opportunity appears that seems too important to ignore. A community experiences a disaster, and volunteers are urgently needed. A medical team needs additional hands during a crisis. A family faces an unexpected hardship and needs someone willing to help. In moments like these, the need becomes visible, the opportunity becomes clear, and a decision must be made: Will someone respond?

Following the devastating earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010, people from around the world responded to overwhelming human need. Doctors, nurses, construction workers, pastors, relief organizations, and ordinary volunteers traveled to Haiti to provide medical care, distribute supplies, rebuild communities and comfort grieving families. Many arrived knowing that their individual contribution would address only a small part of an enormous need. They went because the size of the task made additional workers necessary. The need was great. And there was work to be done.

Jesus uses a similar picture of urgent need in Luke 10:2. He looks at the mission before His followers and describes it as a harvest waiting for laborers. *“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”*

The statement is brief, but every phrase helps us understand how Jesus wants His followers to see the world and their place within His mission.

The harvest is plentiful. For Jesus’ original audience, the image would have been familiar. Harvest was an important season in an agricultural society. Crops that had grown over time eventually reached the point when they needed to be gathered. A plentiful harvest represented blessing and opportunity, but abundance also created responsibility. A large harvest required workers.

Jesus takes this familiar agricultural picture and applies it to the work of God's kingdom. He wants his disciples to see something beyond the towns and people immediately before them. There is great spiritual work to be done.

But the laborers are few. The harvest is abundant, but the number of people working within it is inadequate for the task. The contrast creates urgency. Jesus draws His disciples' attention to the gap between the magnitude of the mission and the number of available workers.

Notice the word He chooses: laborers. Harvesting is work. It requires effort, persistence, and willingness to enter the field. Jesus does not describe spectators who admire the harvest from a distance; He speaks about people who participate in gathering it.

Therefore pray earnestly. What does Jesus tell His disciples to do when they recognize the shortage? Pray. The command connects their prayer directly to what they have just observed. Because the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few, His followers should earnestly ask God to provide more workers. Prayer, therefore, is part of participation in the mission. Jesus teaches His followers to look at the need and bring that need before God. The language carries a sense of urgency. This is purposeful prayer shaped by concern for God's work in the world. Before the disciples are told where to go, they are taught how to pray.

To the Lord of the harvest. Jesus then identifies the One to whom they should pray: "the Lord of the harvest." The harvest belongs to God. This truth keeps the mission in proper perspective. Christians participate in God's work; we do not own it. We cannot change hearts, create spiritual life, or produce salvation through our own ability. God is Lord over the field, the harvest, and the workers.

This gives us both humility and confidence. We labor faithfully because God has called us to participate, and we depend upon Him because the results ultimately belong to Him.

To send out laborers into his harvest. Finally, Jesus tells His disciples what to request: ask the Lord "to send out laborers into his harvest." There is a striking feature to this command. The people Jesus tells to pray for workers are themselves about to be sent. Luke 10:1 tells us that Jesus appointed seventy-two disciples and "sent them on ahead of

him” into the places He intended to go. Jesus does not permit them to pray about the harvest from a safe distance. They pray as people prepare to enter it.

That connection gives Luke 10:2 particular importance for this month’s theme, *Send Me*.

When we earnestly ask God to send people, we must remain open to the possibility that we may be among those He sends. Our prayer for missionaries may lead us to greater involvement in missions. Our prayer for someone to reach our community may lead us across the street. Our prayer for someone to disciple younger believers may reveal a relationship we should begin. Our prayer for workers in our church may expose an area where God has equipped us to serve.

As you memorize this verse, allow Jesus’ words to change the way you look at the people around you. The harvest belongs to God, and He continues to send laborers into it.

Memorization & Meditation

1. **Memorize the Word:** Begin memorizing Luke 10:2 today. Read the verse aloud several times, paying attention to its natural progression: The harvest is plentiful → the laborers are few → pray earnestly → the Lord of the harvest → send our laborers → into His harvest. Cover the verse and repeat as much as you can from memory.
2. **Meditate on the Word:** Spend a few quiet moments considering the picture Jesus gives you. Think about the people you encounter regularly in your family, workplace, school, neighborhood, church, and community. Ask yourself:
 - Where do I see evidence of a plentiful harvest around me?
 - Do I tend to see people primarily through their circumstances or as people who need the hope of Christ?
 - Am I willing to become part of the answer when I ask God to send laborers?

3. **Turn the Verse into Prayer:** Scripture memory becomes especially formative when the words we learn begin shaping the prayers we pray. Take each phrase of Luke 10:2 and turn it into a personal prayer. Acknowledge the harvest, confess the need for laborers, ask God to send workers, and make yourself available to Him.

Sample Prayer:

Lord of the harvest, You see the people around me more clearly than I do. You have told me that the harvest is plentiful, and the laborers are few. Give me eyes to recognize the opportunities You place before me and a heart that cares about people who need Christ. Raise up and send laborers into Your harvest. As I ask You to send others, make my own heart willing. Show me where You want me to serve, whom You want me to reach, and how You want me to participate. Lord, send laborers into Your harvest—and if You choose to send me, help me say yes. In Jesus' name, amen.

“And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”

Luke 10:2

Luke 10:2 becomes more vivid when we enter the scene in which Jesus first spoke these words. Jesus is traveling toward Jerusalem, His disciples are being prepared for greater responsibility, and communities throughout the region are about to encounter the message of the kingdom of God. The plentiful harvest Jesus describes is not an abstract idea. His disciples are standing on the edge of a real mission involving real towns, real homes, and real people.

The broader setting begins in Luke 9:51, where Luke records a decisive moment: “When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.” From this point forward, Jesus is moving toward the cross. Much of the teaching that follows occurs along this journey. Jesus knows where He is going, and He uses the journey to prepare His followers for the demands of discipleship and their participation in His mission.

Luke 10 opens with action. Jesus appoints seventy-two others and sends them ahead of Him “two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go” (10:1). These followers are more than traveling messengers. They are preparing communities for the arrival of Jesus. Their mission derives its meaning from the One who is coming after them.

Then Jesus says, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (10:2). Look around the scene. Dozens of disciples are gathered before Jesus. Towns and villages lie ahead. People need to hear that “the kingdom of God has come near” (10:9). Jesus sees the magnitude of the opportunity and teaches His followers how to understand it. There is a harvest before them, and more laborers are needed.

What happens next makes His command especially striking. Jesus tells these disciples to pray earnestly for the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers, and then immediately says, “Go your way” (10:3). They pray

for workers while becoming workers themselves. Prayer and participation stand together in the scene.

Jesus also prepares them for the difficulty. He sends them “as lambs in the midst of wolves” (10:3). They must depend upon God rather than extensive provisions, receive hospitality where it is offered, care for the sick, and announce the nearness of God’s kingdom. Some towns will welcome them; others will reject them. The plentiful harvest does not guarantee an easy mission or a positive response from everyone.

The setting therefore brings Luke 10:2 to life. Jesus is traveling toward Jerusalem, sending His followers ahead of Him, and preparing them to represent Him faithfully wherever they go. They must see the opportunity, recognize their dependence upon God, pry for more laborers, and then enter the harvest themselves. Before Jesus sends them into the surrounding communities, He teaches them to see those communities from the perspective of the Lord of the harvest.

Take Action: Open your Bible and read Luke 9:51 and Luke 10:1–12. Begin by noticing where Jesus is going and then pay attention to the movement in Luke 10. Look for who Jesus sends, where He sends them, what He tells them to pray, what He tells them to do, and how people might respond.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does knowing that Jesus was traveling toward Jerusalem help you understand the urgency and importance of the mission in Luke 10?
2. What were the seventy-two disciples sent to do, and how were they preparing people for the ministry of Jesus?
3. What does the movement from “pray earnestly” in verse 2 to “go your way” in verse 3 teach us about the relationship between prayer and participation in God’s mission?

Memorization Reminder: Return to Luke 10:2 and recite it several times without looking at your Bible. If you need help, remember the movement of the verse: harvest → laborers → pray → Lord → send → harvest. As you practice, picture the setting you studied today: Jesus preparing the seventy-two followers to enter towns where He was about to go.

“And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”

Luke 10:2

Prayer and evangelism belong together in the mission of God. Luke 10:2 makes this connection unmistakable. When Jesus looks upon a plentiful harvest and too few laborers, His first instruction is, “Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” Before His followers enter the surrounding towns, Jesus teaches them to pray. Their mission begins with dependence upon God.

This order reveals an important theological truth: the harvest belongs to God. Jesus calls Him “the Lord of the harvest.” God is the One who saves. He opens hearts to receive the gospel, gives spiritual life, and draws people to Himself. Christians faithfully proclaim the good news, but we cannot produce conversion through our intelligence, personality, methods, or persuasion. Evangelism therefore begins with prayer because prayer acknowledges our dependence upon God to accomplish what only He can do.

Prayer also shapes the heart of the person who will share the gospel. When we consistently pray for people who do not know Christ, we begin to see them differently. Names replace categories, compassion grows, spiritual needs become personal, and we become more attentive to opportunities for gospel conversations and more concerned that people hear about Jesus. Prayer aligns our desires with the mission of the God to whom we are praying.

This connection appears throughout the New Testament. The early Church prayed for boldness and then continued speaking the Word of God (Acts 4:29–31). Paul asked believers to pray that God would open a door for the message of Christ (Colossians 4:3–4). He also urged prayer that the word of the Lord would “speed ahead and be honored” (2 Thessalonians 3:1). These examples demonstrate a consistent pattern: believers pray because the mission depends upon God, and then they

faithfully proclaim the gospel because God has entrusted that mission to His people.

Luke 10 adds another important dimension. The disciples Jesus commands to pray for laborers become the laborers He sends. Verse 2 says, “pray earnestly.” Verse 3 begins, “Go your way.” Their prayer does not replace their participation; it prepares them for it.

This guards us against two errors. We can attempt evangelism without prayer, depending primarily upon our own strength. We can also pray for people to hear the gospel while continually expecting someone else to tell them. Jesus brings dependence and obedience together. We ask the Lord of the harvest to work, and we make ourselves available for the work He gives us.

Prayer, therefore, becomes one of the ways God prepares His people to be sent. As we pray for our family members, neighbors, coworkers, communities, and nations, we should remain attentive to how God might involve us in the answer. He may give us an opportunity to begin a conversation, share our testimony, explain the gospel, invite someone to read Scripture, support a missionary, or enter a new place of service.

Reflection Questions:

1. Why does evangelism begin with prayer, and what does calling God “the Lord of the harvest” teach us about our dependence upon Him?
2. According to the essay, how can regularly praying for people who do not know Christ change the way we see them and respond to gospel opportunities?
3. What does the movement from “pray earnestly” in Luke 10:2 to “go your way” in Luke 10:3 teach you about the relationship between prayer and personal obedience?

Memorization Reminder: Return to Luke 10:2 and practice reciting the entire verse from memory. If you get stuck, use the progression you have learned: harvest → laborers → pray → Lord → send → harvest.

"And he said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"

Luke 10:2

Inductive Bible study moves us from observation, to understanding, and finally to application. We begin by asking what the text says. We then consider what it means in its biblical context. Finally, we ask how its truth should shape our lives. After spending this week in Luke 10:2, Jesus' words now invite a personal response.

Begin with what you have observed. Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." He commands His followers to "pray earnestly" to the Lord of the harvest and ask Him to send more laborers. The verse presents an abundant harvest, a shortage of workers, an urgent prayer, and a God who sends people into His harvest.

Next, identify what these words mean. The mission belongs to God. He is the "Lord of the harvest," and His followers depend upon Him for its fruit. Yet dependence upon God does not produce inactivity. In the immediate context, the people commanded to pray in verse 2 are told, "Go your way" in verse 3. Jesus teaches His disciples to pray for workers while preparing to become workers themselves. Prayer and obedience belong together.

Now bring this truth into your own life.

Begin by asking God to change the way you see people. We often move through our days thinking about schedules, responsibilities, deadlines, and personal concerns. Jesus invites us to see something more. The people around us are people God loves. Some do not know Christ. Others may be searching, hurting, questioning, or more open to spiritual conversation than we realize. Living with a harvest perspective means becoming attentive to people we might otherwise overlook.

Then pray. Identify specific people who need Christ and begin bringing their names before the Lord regularly. Pray for God to work in their hearts. Pray for opportunities for them to hear the gospel. Pray for

believers who can faithfully speak into their lives. Pray for missionaries, pastors, church planters, and other laborers serving in difficult places.

But do not stop there. Ask God whether you might be one of the laborers He intends to send. Perhaps the person you have been asking God to reach is someone He has already placed beside you. The coworker you regularly see, the neighbor across the street, the family member you have prayed for, or the friend who has begun asking spiritual questions may represent an opportunity for obedience. You do not need to know how that person will respond before you act. Luke 10 reminds us that Jesus' messengers experience both reception and rejection. Your responsibility is faithfulness.

This is where Luke 10:2 becomes personal. It is easy to pray, "Lord, send someone." The verse becomes transformative when our prayer grows into, "Lord, send someone—and I am available."

Reflection Questions:

1. What people or situations in your everyday life might you begin to see differently if you intentionally viewed them through Jesus' picture of a plentiful harvest?
2. Who is one person you can begin praying for consistently, and what specific opportunity could you ask God to provide for you to serve, encourage, or share Christ with that person?
3. What might need to change in your priorities, habits, or willingness for your prayer to move from "Lord, send someone" to "Lord, I am available to be sent?"

“And he said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’”

Luke 10:2

This week, you have listened carefully to Jesus’ words about the harvest. You observed the plentiful harvest, the shortage of laborers, and the command to pray earnestly. You entered the setting of Luke 10 and saw Jesus send the seventy-two into communities He was preparing to visit. You explored the essential relationship between prayer and evangelism and discovered that dependence upon God should lead to obedient participation in His mission. Finally, you considered how Luke 10:2 should change the way you see people, pray for the lost, and make yourself available to be sent. The message of the week is clear: see the harvest, pray for laborers, and be willing to go.

Remember the Word

Without looking at your Bible, write Luke 10:2 from memory. Then open your Bible and compare what you wrote with the verse. Circle any words or phrases you missed.

Recall What You Learned

Without returning to the previous days, answer these questions in your own words:

- What does the image of a plentiful harvest teach you about the mission before Christ’s followers?
- Why does Jesus identify God as the “Lord of the harvest”?
- What happens immediately after Jesus tells the seventy-two to pray for laborers?
- How are prayer and evangelism connected in the Christian life?

Final Prayer

Lord of the harvest, You have told me that the harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few. Give me eyes to see people as You see them and a heart that cares deeply about those who need Christ. I ask You to send laborers into Your harvest. Raise up faithful believers who will proclaim the gospel, make disciples, serve Your Church, and carry the good news wherever You lead. As I pray for others to go, keep my own heart surrendered to You. I am available to You. Send me into Your harvest and help me go in faithful obedience. In Jesus' name, amen.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

1 Peter 4:10

In J. R. R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*, the future of Middle-earth rests upon an unlikely group of companions known as the Fellowship of the Ring. An evil ruler named Sauron is gaining power, and the only hope of defeating him is to destroy a ring that contains tremendous power and is connected to his strength. The task falls to Frodo Baggins, an ordinary hobbit who must carry the Ring deep into enemy territory and destroy it in the fires where it was made.

Frodo carries the Ring, but he cannot carry the mission alone. A fellowship forms around him, and its members could hardly be more different. Gandalf brings wisdom and direction. Aragorn provides courage and leadership. Legolas contributes extraordinary awareness and skill. Gimli offers strength, determination, and loyalty. Merry and Pippin are easily underestimated, yet each eventually plays an important role in the larger story. Then there is Sam. He possesses neither the strength of a warrior nor the wisdom of a wizard. He simply refuses to abandon his friend. His loyalty, encouragement, and sacrificial service eventually become essential to Frodo completing the journey.

The Fellowship moves forward because different people bring different strengths to a shared mission. Frodo does not need Sam to become Aragorn, and Aragorn does not need Gimli to become Gandalf. Each person has something to offer. As each one contributes what he possesses, seemingly ordinary actions become part of something much larger than any individual member of the Fellowship.

Most of us want our lives to matter. We want to believe that our time, abilities, experiences, and efforts contribute to something meaningful. Yet we live in a culture that often teaches us to measure significance by what we receive. We are encouraged to pursue our goals, protect our time, advance our interests, build our platforms, improve our lifestyles, and arrange our schedules around our preferences. Without realizing it, Christians can begin evaluating life by the same standard.

We ask what a church offers us before asking where we can contribute. We protect our schedules so carefully that interruptions begin to feel like inconveniences rather than opportunities. We notice the visible roles while overlooking the quiet acts of service that allow ministry to happen. We may even evaluate serving according to whether the task fits our preferences, receives recognition, or feels sufficiently important.

There is a subtle danger here. A self-centered world can train Christians to overlook one of the primary ways God gives our lives purpose: serving other people.

We may imagine that doing something significant for God requires an extraordinary opportunity. Perhaps significance belongs to the missionary who crosses an ocean, the pastor who preaches to thousands, the leader who influences a global organization, or the person whose ministry produces visible results. Meanwhile, opportunities of genuine spiritual importance pass directly in front of us.

A grieving person needs someone willing to sit and listen. A child needs a patient teacher who will consistently explain the Bible. A new believer needs someone willing to walk alongside him. A family in crisis needs a meal. A ministry needs someone who can organize details. A discouraged Christian needs encouragement. A visitor walks into church hoping someone will notice. A practical problem needs to be solved, and no one else has stepped forward.

None of these opportunities may appear extraordinary, yet through Christian service, ordinary actions can become instruments of divine grace.

Peter writes: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). Peter gives us a radically different way to think about significance. God has graciously placed something in the hands of every believer, and He intends to use what we have received for the good of others.

This is where the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts becomes essential to understanding the power of serving. Spiritual gifts are gracious provisions from God that equip believers to contribute to the life and ministry of Christ's Church. Scripture describes believers teaching, leading, serving, encouraging, giving, showing mercy, and strengthening

others in a variety of ways. God does not equip every believer identically because the Church needs the faithful contribution of different people.

Let's look at this verse, phrase by phrase.

"As each has received a gift" Peter assumes that each believer has received a gift from God. The gift originates in God's grace rather than personal achievement. Within Peter's instruction to the church, every Christian possesses something God intends to use for the benefit of others.

"Use it to serve one another" God gives gifts with a purpose: service. Peter directs believers away from self-interest and toward one another. Whatever gift God provides finds its proper expression when it contributes to the spiritual and practical good of Christ's people.

"as good stewards" A steward manages something entrusted by another. Peter therefore presents spiritual gifts as a responsibility. Believers do not ultimately own what God has given them. Faithfulness requires recognizing, developing, and using His gifts according to the purpose for which He provided them.

"of God's varied grace" Peter describes God's grace as varied, emphasizing the many ways it works through His people. Different believers receive different gifts, allowing God's grace to meet different needs within the church. As Christians faithfully serve, the richness of God's grace becomes visible through their diverse contributions.

Memorization and Meditation

1. **Memorize the Word:** Begin memorizing 1 Peter 4:10 by dividing the verse into four parts: Each has received a gift → Use it to serve one another → Good stewards → God's varied grace

Read the verse aloud several times. Then look away and repeat the first phrase. Add one phrase at a time until you can recite the entire verse.

2. **Meditate on the Word:** Spend a few moments concentrating on Peter's opening phrase: "As each has received a gift." Allow the word "each" to include you. Resist the temptation to compare yourself with someone whose gifts appear more obvious or

significant. Consider: Where do I already see God using me to strengthen or help other people? What kinds of needs do I naturally notice? Am I faithfully using what God has entrusted to me, or am I waiting for a different opportunity?

3. Pray the Verse:

Father, thank You for the grace You have given me and for the way You equip every believer to serve. Help me recognize what You have entrusted to me, and teach me to use it faithfully. Guard me from comparison, pride, fear, and inactivity. Make me a good steward of Your varied grace. Show me where my gifts can strengthen Your Church and serve the people You place around me. Whatever You have given me, I place at Your disposal. Use me where You choose to send me. In Jesus' name, amen.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

1 Peter 4:10

Peter wrote his first letter (1 Peter) to Christians scattered throughout regions of Asia Minor, located in modern-day Turkey. These believers lived as spiritual outsiders in communities that did not share their allegiance to Christ. Throughout the letter, Peter prepares them to remain faithful while experiencing hostility, rejection, and suffering. Their difficult circumstances did not remove their responsibility to live distinctly Christian lives. Instead, Peter teaches them how their identity in Christ should shape the way they live together and represent Christ before the world.

Peter establishes that identity early in the letter. In 1 Peter 2:9, he describes believers as “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.” God has called them out of darkness and made them His people. From this identity, a new way of life flows. Peter instructs Christians to pursue holiness, practice honorable conduct, respond faithfully to suffering, bless those who mistreat them, and remain prepared to explain the hope they possess (2:11–12; 3:9, 15).

By Chapter 4, Peter adds a sense of urgency. Christians have already spent enough of their lives pursuing the values and desires of the surrounding culture (4:1–15). Now they must live according to the will of God. In Verse 7, Peter declares, “The end of all things is at hand.” This expectation does not lead Peter toward speculation or inactivity; it leads directly to faithful Christian living.

Verses 7–11 show what that life looks like within the church. Peter tells believers to be self-controlled and soberminded for the sake of prayer. They must “keep loving one another earnestly” (v. 8) and “show hospitality to one another without grumbling” (v. 9). Then comes our memory verse: “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another” (v. 10). Prayer, love, hospitality, and gifted service belong together as expressions of a healthy Christian community.

Verse 11 carries the thought further. Those who speak should do so as those entrusted with God's words, and those who serve should depend upon the strength God supplies. Peter then identifies the ultimate purpose: "in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

The placement of 1 Peter 4:10 is therefore important. Spiritual gifts appear within Peter's larger vision of Christians faithfully caring for one another while living in a difficult world. Gifts are not presented primarily as a means of personal discovery or individual fulfillment. They are expressions of God's grace given so believers can strengthen one another and build up the church. Even in seasons of suffering, the Church continues praying, loving, welcoming, speaking, and serving. As each believer faithfully contributes what God has supplied, the Church becomes a community through which God's varied grace is made visible and God receives glory through Jesus Christ.

Take Action: Open your Bible and read 1 Peter 2:9–11, 3:8–17, and 4:1–11. As you read, trace Peter's movement from Christian identity to Christian conduct and finally to Christian community.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the identity Peter gives believers in 1 Peter 2:9 shape the way he expects them to live, even while experiencing suffering and opposition?
2. What do Peter's instructions concerning prayer, love, hospitality, and spiritual gifts reveal about the kind of community the Church should become?
3. According to 1 Peter 4:10–11, what is the purpose of using our gifts to serve others, and what ultimate result should Christian service produce?

Memorization Reminder: Return to 1 Peter 4:10 and practice reciting the verse without looking at your Bible. If you need help, remember its progression:

receive → use → serve → steward → grace

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

1 Peter 4:10

The doctrine of spiritual gifts is an important area of practical theology because it connects what Christians believe about God with how they live and serve. Practical theology asks how biblical truth should shape the practices of Christian life and ministry. Spiritual gifts provide a clear example: God graciously equips His people, and believers respond by using what He provides to strengthen the Church and serve others.

A spiritual gift is a gracious, Spirit-enabled capacity given by God to a believer for service within the body of Christ and the advancement of His purposes. The New Testament discusses spiritual gifts in several passages including Romans 12:3–8, 1 Corinthians 12–14, Ephesians 4:7–16, and 1 Peter 4:10–11. These passages describe gifts such as teaching, serving, leadership, mercy, giving, encouragement, administration, and other expressions of Spirit-empowered ministry. Conservative evangelicals differ over whether certain miraculous gifts described in the New Testament continue to function in the manner today. Yet they broadly affirm the central truth Peter emphasizes: God equips His people to serve.

Spiritual gifts originate with God's grace. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each has received a gift." The believer does not earn a spiritual gift through maturity, education, position, or personal achievement. God gives according to His wisdom. This should produce gratitude rather than pride and contentment rather than comparison. The proper question is not, "Why did God give someone else a different gift?" It's, "How can I faithfully use what God has entrusted to me?"

Spiritual gifts are distributed throughout the body of Christ. Paul compares the Church to a human body composed of many members (1 Corinthians 12:12–27). An eye serves differently from a hand, yet both are necessary. In the same way, Christians contribute differently to the life of the Church. No believer possesses every gift, and no believer should

conclude that his or her contribution is unnecessary. God has intentionally created interdependence within His people.

Most importantly, spiritual gifts are given for service. Paul says the manifestation of the Spirit is given “for the common good” (1 Corinthians 12:7), while Peter commands believers to use their gifts “to serve one another.” Spiritual gifts, therefore, direct our attention away from ourselves. Their purpose is not personal status, recognition, or self-expression. God gives gifts so that others may be strengthened through their faithful use.

This also helps us understand how believers discover and develop their gifts. Spiritual-gift assessments can sometimes help us recognize patterns, but Scripture places great emphasis on serving faithfully within the Church. As believers serve, other mature Christians can affirm areas of effectiveness, new opportunities surface that reveal their abilities, and their gifts are refined through experience. Discovery and service often occur together. We learn how God has equipped us as we make ourselves available to His people.

Spiritual gifts ultimately point beyond the gifted person to the Giver. Peter teaches that believers are “stewards of God’s varied grace.” When Christians teach truth, demonstrate mercy, encourage the discouraged, lead faithfully, give generously, or meet practical needs, God’s grace becomes visible through ordinary people.

Reflection Questions:

1. What is a spiritual gift, and why does the doctrine of spiritual gifts belong within practical theology?
2. How do the biblical teachings about grace and the body of Christ protect believers from both pride and comparison concerning their spiritual gifts?
3. According to the entry, how can serving faithfully within the Church help a believer recognize, develop, and use the gifts God has provided?

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

1 Peter 4:10

Inductive Bible study moves us through three important questions: What does the text say? What does the text mean? What should I do in response? After spending this week considering the context and theology of 1 Peter 4:10, we now turn toward personal application. Peter's words call us to recognize what God has given and intentionally place it into service.

Begin with observation. Peter writes, "Each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." Notice the movement of the verse. *Each* believer has *received* something from God. What has been received must then be *used*. Its purpose is to serve one another. Peter describes believers as stewards, remind us that what we possess has been entrusted to us by God. Behind the entire verse stands God's "varied grace," expressed through different believers in different ways.

Next, consider interpretation. Peter is writing to Christians about life within the community of faith. In the surrounding verses, he calls them to pray, love one another earnestly, practice hospitality, speak faithfully, and serve through the strength God supplies. 1 Peter 4:10 therefore teaches that God graciously equips believers to contribute to the life of His Church.

The New Testament doctrine of spiritual gifts helps us understand how this takes place. God gives believers different capacities for ministry so that the body of Christ can be strengthened. Some teach. Some encourage. Some give. Some demonstrate mercy. Others faithfully serve in practical ways. No believer possesses every gift, but every believer possesses a gift.

Now move toward application. Begin by asking: How has God equipped me to serve? You may not immediately know the answer. Do not allow uncertainty to become an excuse for inactivity. Spiritual gifts can be discovered and are often recognized while serving. Pay attention to the

needs you naturally notice, the ministries toward which you are drawn, the ways other mature believers affirm you, and the places where your service consistently benefits others. A spiritual-gifts assessment may provide helpful direction, but faithful participation in the life of the Church provides an important setting for discovering and developing your gifts.

Then ask the more searching question: Am I actually using what God has given me? Peter says, “use it.” Knowledge without service leaves the purpose of the gift unfulfilled. Perhaps you know that you can teach but are not teaching. You recognize the capacity to encourage but rarely act upon it. You see practical needs but assume someone else will respond. You have resources to give, leadership to offer, mercy to extend, or experience that could strengthen another believer. The application of 1 Peter 4:10 requires movement from recognition to participation.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does the progression of receive, use, serve, and steward teach you about God’s purpose for the gifts He gives His people?
2. What patterns in your service—needs you notice, ministries you enjoy, affirmations from other believers, or areas of effectiveness—might help you recognize how God has spiritually gifted you?
3. Where is one specific need within your church or among other believers where you can begin using what God has entrusted to you rather than waiting for someone else to serve?

Memorization Reminder: Return to 1 Peter 4:10 and recite the entire verse from memory. If you need a prompt, remember the progression you have followed throughout the week.

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” 1 Peter 4:10

This week, you explored the power of serving through 1 Peter 4:10. You observed Peter’s teaching that every believer has received a gift from God and is responsible for using that gift to serve others. You examined the context of 1 Peter and saw spiritual gifts situated within a Christian community characterized by prayer, earnest love, hospitality, and service. You also considered the practical theology of spiritual gifts: God graciously equips His people in different ways for the common good of His Church. Finally, you moved from understanding to application by asking How God has equipped you and whether you are faithfully using what He has entrusted to you.

Remember the Word

Without looking at your bible, write 1 Peter 4:10 from memory. Then open your Bible and compare what you wrote with the verse. Circle or underline words or phrases you missed.

Recall What You Learned

Without looking back at the previous entries, answer these questions in your own words:

- What is a spiritual gift?
- Why does God give spiritual gifts to believers?
- What does Peter mean when he calls Christians “stewards”?
- Why are spiritual gifts different among believers?

Make Yourself Available

Complete this statement as a personal commitment: Because God has entrusted His grace to me, I will faithfully use what He has given me to

_____.

Final Prayer

Father, thank You for the gifts You have entrusted to me. Help me recognize and faithfully use them to serve others, strengthen Your Church, and display Your grace. Give me eyes to see where I am needed and a willing heart to respond. In Jesus' name, amen.

Primary Verse: *“As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:15

Expert Level: *“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:14–15

During the year 1793, a young English shoemaker named William Carey stood before a gathering of Baptist ministers in Nottingham and proposed a revolutionary idea: that the Church must take seriously the command to bring the gospel to the nations. His words, fueled by passion and Scripture, were met with some resistance. One minister famously responded, “Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine.” But Carey would not sit down. Instead, he stood up—again and again—and sailed to India that same year, igniting what we now call the modern missionary movement. He spent over four decades in India translating Scripture, preaching Christ and living the gospel. His legacy endures because he believed something many of his contemporaries had forgotten—that people cannot believe unless they hear, and they cannot hear unless someone is sent.

Romans 10:14-15 is the heartbeat behind Carey’s boldness and behind every faithful effort to make Christ known. This pair of verses comes as part of the Apostle Paul’s extended argument in Romans 9-11 concerning the unbelief of Israel and the universal offer of salvation through Christ. Romans 10 emphasizes that salvation is by faith, not by works (v. 9-10), and that this invitation is open to “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord” (v. 13). But then comes the critical logic chain in verses 14-15, a gospel pipeline of sorts. Paul’s rhetorical questions begin to peel back the layers of how God’s saving work is made known: people must *call* on Christ to be saved, but they will not call unless they *believe*;

they will not believe unless they *hear*; they will not hear unless someone *preaches*; and no one preaches unless they are *sent*.

Paul is not offering a theoretical sequence; he's issuing a practical summons to the Church. "Sending" is not optional; it is essential. Theologian John Stott explains it this way: "Behind the preacher is the sender, and behind the sender is the Lord Himself. The logic is inescapable. The conclusion is clear: the Church must send gospel heralds if the world is to hear the gospel and believe."

Paul's use of Isaiah 52:7 in the phrase, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news," adds emotional and theological weight to the message. In Isaiah's context, the herald brings a greater announcement: salvation through Christ for all who believe. In both cases, the feet are "beautiful" for the significance of their movement. The messenger goes. The messenger brings hope. The messenger is sent.

Douglas Moo writes, "Paul does not here outline the full theology of missions, but he gives us the fundamental principle: evangelism depends on a chain of necessary events. And it begins with someone being sent."

We are living in a moment where the Church must reclaim the urgency of being a *sending* people. Missions is not a fringe department of the church. It is the church's very identity. We are not merely called to gather but to scatter—to go and send so that others may hear and believe. Whether across the street or across the globe, every follower of Jesus plays a role in God's great mission. Some are called to preach, others to pray, many to support, and all to participate.

Romans 10:14-15 also presents a corrective to a privatized or passive view of faith. The gospel is for you to receive and enjoy, and it is for you to proclaim and extend. As Charles Spurgeon once declared, "Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter." While not everyone is called to cross a sea, everyone is called to cross a street. You are *sent* into your workplace, your neighborhood, your family, and your community. And your church is called to *send* others beyond—to the unreached, the forgotten, the lost.

Imagine the impact if every local church embraced this chain reaction. Imagine a congregation that saw itself as a launchpad for

kingdom workers every week. Imagine students who graduate with a vision to go, families who give sacrificially to send, professionals who move with purpose, and pastors who equip and mobilize every member to take the gospel wherever God leads.

That's the power of this passage. It awakens a sleeping church. It energizes weary believers. It clarifies our calling and leads us to be *senders*.

When you live as one sent by God, your life takes on gospel purpose. You begin to see your feet—your ordinary, everyday movements—as part of an extraordinary mission. Whether you walk into a school hallway, a job site, a hospital room, or a distant village, your steps carry the beautiful message of redemption. You're not just going—you've been *sent*. And when the Church embraces this holy sending, the world hears the good news of Jesus Christ. That changes everything.

Memorization & Meditation

1. **Memorize the Word:** Read aloud or write out the verse several times to begin the memorization process. Reading slowly or writing deliberately enables you to think consciously about each word and phrase. If you want to work on the “expert level” verses, consider learning the sequence first: call → believe → hear → preach → sent
2. **Meditate on the Word:** Spend a few moments thinking about the people God used to bring the gospel to you. Someone preached. Someone taught. Someone shared. Someone invited. Someone gave. Someone prayed. Behind your own story of hearing and believing stands a history of Christians who faithfully participated in making Christ known. Now consider the people who still need to hear. Ask yourself:
 - Who has God placed within my everyday life who needs to hear the good news of Jesus?
 - Do I see myself as someone Christ has sent into my family, workplace, school, neighborhood, and community?

- How am I helping send others to places and people I may never personally reach?
- What might change if I began viewing my ordinary movements as opportunities to carry the gospel?

3. Pray the Verse:

Father, thank You for sending people who faithfully brought the gospel to me. Give me a heart for those who have not heard and courage to make Christ known. Show me where You are sending me, and help me support those You send beyond my reach. May my life carry the good news of Jesus wherever You lead. In Jesus' name, amen.

Primary Verse: *“As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:15

Expert Level: *“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:14–15

The Apostle Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, composed his letter to the Romans around 57 A. D., likely while staying in Corinth near the end of his third missionary journey. Romans contains Paul’s most extensive explanation of the gospel. Early in the letter, he announces its central message: the gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16). From there, Paul explains humanity’s universal problem with sin, justification by faith in Jesus Christ, new life through the Holy Spirit, and God’s work of creating one redeemed people from Jews and Gentiles.

Romans 10:14–15 appears within Chapters 9–11, where Paul addresses an important question arising from this message. If Jesus is Israel’s promised Messiah, why have so many Israelites rejected Him? Paul approaches this question with deep personal concern. At the beginning of Chapter 10, he writes, “Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved” (Romans 10:1). His discussion is theological, but it is also deeply personal. Paul longs for people to know the salvation found in Christ.

Paul explains that righteousness before God cannot be achieved through obedience to the law. Christ is the fulfillment of the law for everyone who believes (10:4). Salvation is received through faith in Him. This message applies equally to Jews and Gentiles because “the same Lord is Lord of all” (10:120). Paul supports this truth by quoting Joel 2:32:

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13).

That promise leads directly to the questions of verses 14–15. If people must call upon the Lord to be saved, how will they call upon someone they have not believed? How will they believe if they have not heard? How will they hear without someone preaching? How will anyone preach unless they are sent?

Paul develops his argument by tracing the proclamation of the gospel back through the steps that make hearing possible. People call because they believe. They believe because they hear the message of Christ. They hear because someone proclaims that message. Someone proclaims because that messenger has been sent. The sequence emphasizes the essential place of gospel proclamation in God’s mission.

Paul then quotes Isaiah 52:7: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” In Isaiah’s original setting, the messenger announced the good news of God’s saving reign to His people. Paul applies that language to those who carry the good news of Jesus Christ. The message is beautiful because it announces salvation, and the work of carrying that message is worthy because people need to hear it.

Take Action: Open your Bible and read Romans 10:1–17. As you read, follow the progression of Paul’s argument from his desire for Israel’s salvation to the necessity of hearing the gospel. Pay particular attention to Verses 12–17. Notice how Paul connects calling, believing, hearing, proclaiming, and sending.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does Paul’s concern for Israel’s salvation help explain why gospel proclamation receives such emphasis in Romans 10?
2. What sequence does Paul establish between being sent, proclaiming the gospel, hearing the message, believing in Christ, and calling upon the Lord?
3. How does the promise that “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” help explain the church’s responsibility to participate in sending and proclaiming the gospel?

Primary Verse: *"As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"*
Romans 10:15

Expert Level: *"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"*
Romans 10:14–15

Romans 10:14–15 presents gospel proclamation as an essential part of God's work of bringing the message of salvation to the world. Paul develops a clear sequence: people call upon Christ because they believe in Him; they believe because they hear the gospel; they hear because someone proclaims it; and someone proclaims because that messenger has been sent. This sequence helps us understand the biblical work of evangelism.

Evangelism is the faithful communication of the good news of Jesus Christ with the desire that people, hear, understand, repent, and believe. The message begins with God's holiness and humanity's problem of sin. It announces that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins and rose from the dead. It calls people to turn from sin and trust in Christ for salvation. Evangelism therefore centers on a message with specific content. Paul summarizes that message earlier in Romans: "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Romans 10 also establishes the relationship between evangelism and faith. Paul writes, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). God is sovereign over salvation, and He has chosen to use the proclamation of the gospel as the means through which people hear about Christ. The evangelist cannot produce faith in another person. Only God can save. Our responsibility is to communicate the gospel clearly, faithfully, and lovingly and to call people to respond to Christ.

Paul also emphasizes the importance of sending. The gospel has always advanced through people whom God sends. Jesus commissioned His disciples to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19), and the Holy Spirit directed the Church at Antioch to send Barnabas and Saul into missionary service (Acts 13:1–3). Sending therefore involves both divine calling and the participation of the church. Churches pray, equip, encourage, support, and send believers to carry the gospel to others.

This responsibility belongs to the whole church. Some Christians are called to cross cultures, learn languages, and serve as missionaries in distant places. Every Christian, however, lives among people who need to hear about Jesus. God places His people in families, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and communities where they can speak about Christ. The methods and opportunities may differ, but the message remains the same.

Gospel proclamation is therefore an essential practice of the fully devoted disciple. We have received good news that must be shared. God provides the message, God saves those who believe, and God sends His people into the world as faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ.

Reflection Questions:

1. According to Romans 10:14–17, what role does gospel proclamation have in helping people hear about and believe in Jesus Christ?
2. Why is it important to understand that Christians are responsible for faithfully communicating the gospel while God is responsible for producing saving faith?
3. How do individual believers and the local church participate together in the work of proclaiming and sending?

Memorization Reminder: You have reached the middle of this week’s study. Challenge yourself to recite your selected passage without looking at your Bible. If you are working on the primary verse, practice Romans 10:15 until you can recite it confidently. If you have chosen the expert-level challenge, continue working toward memorizing Romans 10:14–15 together.

Primary Verse: *“As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:15

Expert Level: *“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:14–15

Romans 10:14–15 confronts us with a simple reality: people need to hear the gospel. Paul develops this truth through a series of questions that lead us backward from a person calling upon Christ to the messenger who first carried the good news. People call because they believe. They believe because they hear. They hear because someone proclaims. Someone proclaims because that person has been sent. Each statement points to the importance of faithful Christians making Christ known.

As we observe Paul’s words, we should notice that the messenger has an important responsibility, but a limited one. Paul does not say that Christians have the power to save another person. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Our responsibility is to proclaim faithfully the message God has entrusted to us. This truth should give us both urgency and confidence. We should feel urgency because people cannot believe a gospel they have never heard. We can have confidence because the results do not depend upon our ability to change someone’s heart.

Applying this passage begins by recognizing that every follower of Christ has been sent into a world that needs the gospel. Jesus told His disciples, “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21). For some believers, being sent means crossing an ocean, learning another language, and serving among people who have little access to the gospel. For many, the place where God has sent us is already part of our daily routine. Our mission field includes homes, neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, friendships, and communities.

This requires us to look differently at the people around us. The coworker in the next office, the neighbor across the street, the family member at the dinner table, or the friend we have known for years may need someone to explain clearly who Jesus is and what He has done. Living with Christian integrity matters, but Romans 10 emphasizes hearing. At some point, the good news must be communicated. We must be willing to speak about Jesus.

Fear can make that difficult. We may worry about saying the wrong thing, receiving a difficult question, or creating an uncomfortable conversation. Paul's words redirect our attention from our ability to God's message. We do not need to know the answer to every question. We need to know the gospel and be willing to share it faithfully, clearly, and lovingly.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does understanding the difference between your responsibility to proclaim the gospel and God's work of saving people give you greater confidence in evangelism?
2. Who has God already placed in your family, workplace, school, neighborhood, or circle of friends who needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ?
3. What specific step can you take this week to participate in God's mission through praying, supporting those who are sent, or personally sharing the gospel with someone?

Primary Verse: *“As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:15

Expert Level: *“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’”*
Romans 10:14–15

This week you examined Paul’s powerful description of how the gospel reaches people. You discovered the progression of sending, proclaiming, hearing, believing, and calling upon the Lord. You considered evangelism as the faithful communication of the good news of Jesus Christ and learned that God has chosen gospel proclamation as the means through which people hear about Christ.

Remember the Word

Without looking at your Bible, recite your selected memory passage. Now write the passage from memory. Open your Bible and compare what you wrote with the text.

Recall What You Learned

Without looking back at this week’s entries, answer these questions in your own words:

- What is evangelism?
- What responsibility belongs to the Christian who shares the gospel?
- What part of salvation belongs to God alone?
- How can a local church participate in sending people to proclaim the gospel?

Final Prayer

Father, thank You for sending someone to bring the gospel to me. Give me courage to proclaim Christ faithfully. Give me generosity to help send others. Open my eyes to the people who need to hear, and make my life available to carry the good news wherever You send me. In Jesus' name, amen.

AI Ethical Guidelines¹

As emerging technologies like AI find their way into the realm of ministry and theological writing, I've developed personal guidelines to preserve the integrity of this devotional work:

- 1 Avoid plagiarism and ensure authenticity: AI tools are helpful for idea generation, word choice, and structural planning, but I avoid copying AI-generated content verbatim. The goal is not expediency but authenticity. My personal study, meditation, and prayer are indispensable to every page written.
- 2 Maintain human oversight and moral responsibility: AI lacks moral agency and theological conviction. Human discernment is necessary to evaluate the appropriateness, tone, and truthfulness of all content.
- 3 Use AI to enhance, not replace, human creativity: AI serves as a helpful assistant but never replaces the divine inspiration that flows from prayerful engagement with the text. The Holy Spirit—not a machine—is the true illumination of Scripture.

These guidelines ensure that *Shaped by Scripture* is not only a tool of spiritual formation but also a product of integrity and pastoral care.

¹ I have chosen to include this disclosure and set self-imposed guidelines because the use of AI in writing and research remains a point of ethical concern and public skepticism. In the interest of transparency and pastoral integrity, I believe it is important to clarify how these tools were used in a supportive— not substitutive— role in the development of this work.

DAILY PODCAST

SHAPED BY SCRIPTURE

Monday - Thursday

Hear the daily devotions and reflection questions.

Friday

Join Bro. Scott for practical insights, spiritual encouragement, and Biblical truth for everyday life.





EXALT CHRIST
|
MAKE DISCIPLES
|
PASS THE TORCH

LONE OAK FBC

3601 Lone Oak Rd
Paducah, KY 42003

270-554-1441 | loneoakfbc.org