

June 2/24 – Small Groups – Leader's Guide

Read Luke 9:1-6, 10-17

1. Luke presents Jesus' sending of the 12 as a recapitulation of Israel's covenant mission in the Promised Land as a people and nation through which the kingdom of heaven becomes real on the earth. However, ancient Israel fails this and Jesus picks this ancient mission back up in Himself and through His apostolic community. The question is: if as Christians you belong to the new Israel, to a new royal priesthood, rescued and led by a new Moses, Jesus Christ, who is like God who provides manna in the desert, how do you see yourself in this ancient story and how will you navigate your own apostolic mission in Jesus' Name in this life?

Our Christian mission is not anything drastically novel but a continuation and the fulfillment of an ancient saga began by God in Israel. And so, we can see our work of the kingdom as not just by ourselves or as ending with us but as taking part in a long continuum from before and into the future that ultimately belongs to God alone. Faith in this truth unburdens us from individualistic heroism, nihilistic pessimism, and humanistic self sufficiency.

2. There are three gleanings we can learn from the missional experience of the 12. The first gleaning is to rest in Jesus. Jesus took the 12 back to Himself and retreated. What does it look like for Jesus to take you to Himself and for you to rest in Him?

Allow for sharing ideas and experiences in what it means to experience rest in Jesus. It could involve examples of prayer, retreat, meditation, realisation, repentance, etc.

3. The 2nd gleaning is to expect interruption. In a moment of crisis, chaos, or conflict, how can we foster in ourselves to respond with wisdom and grace during every interruption?

Reading the Bible, knowing the Bible, having the Bible and its narratives and wisdom seep into your being, seeing Jesus in the pages, seeing Jesus in other Christians at work, sensing and experiencing the Holy Spirit -- these are a few ways we can gain spiritual wisdom and grace to respond to interruption.

4. The 3rd gleaning is to "give them something to eat". We always have something we can give or give up. It's a matter of when and how. How do we foster faith and obedience to believe that Jesus can provide and multiply what seems like nothing or little that we have?

We take steps of faith when we are called upon to respond, by giving what costs us, by taking the risk and the risk of ourselves for the sake of building another person up, for their welfare, for their provision. In our giving something, whatever or however little, even our attention or time, Jesus dignifies us and honours our response and He will multiply and reward our act of faith.