**The New Mission**

***13****And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.****14****And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach****15****and have authority to cast out demons.****16****He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter);****17****James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder);****18****Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot,* ***19****and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. (Mark 3:13-19, ESV)*

 The new mission that Jesus gave to the disciples is one that clarifies our present-day individual missions. Greetings to you dearly beloved on the occasion of this worship service as we study the meaning of the bestowal of the Apostolic mission by Jesus and its effect on our own missions.

 Each of us is a believer and called to a mission (for the Lord). Each of us becomes a “sent-one” when we come to the Lord and declare Him as Lord and Savior. Today, however, we’re going to talk about how our own ministry is called to deal with the world, given the example of today’s Scripture passage. Again, Jesus’ giving of the mission to his disciples clarifies how we do ministry and faith in our journey following Jesus.

 Being a disciple of Jesus means growing in the Kingdom ministry in the face of difficulties despite the pressures of this world. In the Old Testament, we see that ministry was very much connected to the teaching of the scribes’ and rabbis’ interpretation of ceremonial law. Ministry was connected to ceremonial purity and faithfulness to tradition built up over the years.

Jesus started His mission in that kind of atmosphere – but he encountered a serious problem: when He was rejected for His Kingdom message and healing and emancipating miracles, he was faced with a challenging decision to make. Would He capitulate to the teaching of the synagogue, or would He continue His God-given mission? Of course, we know that He did not give into their pressure, but He even created new means of ministry. Instead of surrendering to the teachers of the Law or the Pharisees’ ceremonial standards, He multiplied His ministry by a factor of twelve!! Instead of lowering the number of miracles on the Sabbath (with the intent of stopping them altogether), He not only did not stop those, but He gave the authority and power to preach and do miracles to 12 others.

This is like when someone who faces the difficulties of life does not give into the temptation to become depressed or wallow in their temporary fatigue. Or this is like the runner who continues to run the race despite the tired feeling and winds up surpassing many other runners because of the perseverance.

Today, we are the children of the multiplication of Jesus ministry. We are the result and fruit of the teachings of the Twelve Apostles. When we professed faith in Christ and devoted ourselves to following Him, we joined in that apostolic mission. Before that, perhaps we lived only to survive materially and to save up personal financial wealth for ourselves. But now that we are Christ’s, all those worldly and material things are subject to and secondary to the mission of the preaching of Christ and the miracles that come through prayer.

Therefore, as believers, we are the ones who increase and strengthen our faith and good works when faced with opposition. Furthermore, since there is always resistance in this world, we are always going to be the ones going in the opposite direction, growing, and becoming stronger for the Kingdom of God in front of the opposers. We are the ones who work to shine even more as the darkness remains around us. Among the weak, we make an effort to strengthen them increasingly as we also grow ourselves.

Just like Jesus’ ministry, we are the ones who grow and expand our ministries in the face of this opposing and unbelieving world.

Being a disciple of Jesus means growing in the face of resistance and difficulty and doing it in the context of Kingdom ministry despite the pressures against us. The new mission that Jesus gave to the disciples is one that clarifies our present-day individual missions.

 So, when the pressures against us increase as believers, you will simultaneously increase in strength and grow in the work of His Kingdom.

 May the Lord Bless you as you do so. Amen.