

Sent—With A Guarantee Of Success

by J. W. Jepson

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The very day of His resurrection the Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples with this startling announcement: "Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (John 20:21).

The Master's words were startling indeed, and sobering too; for in effect Jesus was saying to them: "Your lives have been decided. You are under divine appointment. From now on you will be on a mission, the same mission I am on."

The same mission? Yes, for He said, "As ... even so ..."

Of course, Jesus had a unique assignment. Only He could accomplish our redemption. Still, it was the same mission. The Father sent the Son to provide salvation. The Son sent His church to proclaim it. And because the mission has not yet been fully accomplished, *the Son is still sending His disciples.*

His mission—our mission—is the most important mission possible. The values at stake are infinitely greater than all else combined. God's highest glory and humanity's most desperate need, for both time and eternity, carry in themselves an imperative and an urgency that cannot be denied or ignored.

We dare not be careless in carrying out such a task. How shall we proceed? "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Corinthians 2:16). There must be a divinely ordered pattern.

Here it is in our text: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." Jesus did not send His church to follow a mode of operation different from His. He sends us the same way the Father sent Him.

It is obvious that if we are to have a clear understanding of the principles and procedures of this mission, we must look at the way the Father sent the Son and act accordingly.

First, the Father sent the Son with the only acceptable *motive*—love. Even so the Son sends us. No other motive is worthy of such a noble calling.

Also, the Father sent the Son to make *a total commitment*, to give all. Even so the Son sends us.

The Father gave all when He sent His Son to certain death on the cross. The Son gave all when He voluntarily left the bliss of heaven for the agonies of Calvary. The Holy Spirit gave all

when He condescended to come and strive with man, to be resisted and insulted. Even so our Lord sends us to work, to suffer and perhaps even to die.

The Father sent the Son *in person*. Not only did He send the written word; He also sent the living Word—His Son. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life ..." (1 John 1:1).

Even so He sends us. Media ministries are a very important part of the mission; still, they cannot substitute for the personal presence of real-life people.

The Father sent the Son with a *message*, with *the* message. Even so the Son has sent us. We have no divine authorization to propagate our personal philosophies and opinions. The solemn commission from heaven is to "preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2).

"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people" (Matthew 9:35). Likewise the disciples "went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere" (Luke 9:6). Even so we also are to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

This leads us to another important consideration. The fact that the Son sent us even as the Father sent Him means that *we are to do what Jesus did*. Here are the words of our Lord, recorded in John 14:12: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do because I go to My Father."

To do this the Son has sent us with the same divine *resources* that the Father gave Him.

Jesus depended completely on God. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38). Jesus was endued with the power of the Holy Spirit with the result that wherever He went there were mighty miracles and healings, and the people were set free.

We are on the same mission with the same divine resources. The same Holy Spirit who anointed Jesus has been given to us, and He will work in us as He worked in Jesus. Therefore, *the results should be the same*. God was with Him and He promised His disciples, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). This should send us forth with both confidence and humility.

Also, because we are sent even as Jesus was sent, *we will be accepted or rejected along with Him*. The mission is the same. The message is the same. The responses will be the same. He said to the disciples, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also" (Matthew 15:20).

Finally, the Father sent the Son with *the assurance of success*. Through the prophet Isaiah the Father declared concerning His Son: "He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He will bear their iniquities" (Isaiah 53:10, 11).

The Son has sent us with the same assurance of success. He will build His church! (Matthew 16:18). There will be sheep to set on His right hand (Matthew 25:33).

On the island of Patmos, John had the privilege of previewing the company of the redeemed, a multitude so great that no one could number them (Revelation 7:9). Hallelujah!

The Father sent the Son to succeed—and He *did* succeed—gloriously. Even so the Son has sent us with the guarantee of success. Let us be about the business of the Kingdom. The mission will not fail!