

### 3. Sent Horizontally- Listening

*14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*  
- John 1:14 NIV

*13 To answer before listening--that is folly and shame.*  
- Proverbs 18:13 NIV

*19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,*  
- James 1:19 NIV

Jesus said we were being sent as the Father sent Him. And Jesus was sent to dwell among us, or “move into the neighborhood.” Not everyone will be called to another country as a missionary, your everyday life is already a mission field. God wants us to love others as He loves them. So, we need to care enough to listen to what people are saying. Be sensitive to their needs.

*When people feel unheard they feel unloved. When has someone heard your heart and responded in love? How would you describe the difference between hearing someone's heart and hearing their words? How can you let someone know that you hear them?*

Jesus satisfied the needs of those who were weary with rest, the lonely with His presence and the outsiders with God's love and acceptance. As we bring the Good News we are offering forgiveness, grace, peace, love and ultimately salvation. Wherever you go there should be evidence of the Gospel and the Way of Jesus for the world to see.

#### WRAP-UP

Jesus' call to make disciples applies to all Christians, not just the original disciples. Yet many don't share their faith due to fear—often of rejection or feeling inadequate. In John 20, Jesus transforms His fearful followers by giving them peace, purpose, and the Holy Spirit. This shows that courage comes from being close to Him, not from ourselves. We are sent by God, empowered first by prayer, and called to live out the Gospel in our everyday lives with love and sensitivity to others.

#### MEMORY VERSE

*21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." - John 20:21 NIV*

*Challenge-. During this series we are asking you to consistently pray for lost friends and family. Focus your prayers this season on 5 people in your life who don't yet know Jesus.*

### Overcoming the Fear of Being Sent Cultivating -As You Go -Week 2

#### INTRODUCTION

When Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, He wasn't only speaking to the 12 (11 without Judas). He was speaking to anyone who would become a follower of Jesus. If you call yourself a Christian, you are called to make disciples. Most, in fact nearly all Christians, would agree that being a witness for Jesus is a part of the Christian faith. So why is it only about 5% consistently share their faith with others? What keeps us from sharing our faith? It often comes down to fear. But what do we fear, and how do we change that fear into faith? We can look to the examples of the disciples in John 20 to shed some light on that.

#### Ice Breaker

*What has been your experience in public speaking?*

#### Key Passages

*19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. - John 20:19-22 NIV*

#### STUDY QUESTIONS

##### 1. Understanding Our Fear

*9 (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) 10 Then the disciples went back to where they were staying. - John 20:9-10 NIV*  
*10 She went and told those who had been with him and who were mourning and weeping. 11 When they heard that Jesus was alive and that she had seen him, they did not believe it. - Mark 16:10-11 NIV*

Fear is a normal response in many situations. In our key passage, the disciples had recently witnessed the brutal crucifixion of Jesus, their Lord and friend. Even after Peter and John saw the empty tomb and Mary told them that she has seen Him, they were confused, uncertain and afraid.

*What has been your most frightening experience? What did it take to resolve your fear?*

Being called to go into the world and make disciples can cause most people to feel afraid. But what is that fear based on? One factor is the burden of the weight of that calling. This is a significant responsibility. You will represent Christ to the unsaved world. What you do or say may be the thing that convinces them to accept Jesus as Lord. You may also fear that you might not say the right thing and what you say do falls short. In other words, you are afraid that you are inadequate to do the job.

*20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. - Romans 1:20 NIV*

*14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" - Romans 10:14-15 NIV*

*How do the verses above help you see God's role and your role in making disciples? Describe how God's role and your role are connected in reaching the lost?*

Being called to make disciples is a big responsibility, but it is not your responsibility alone to carry. God has chosen to include us in the work of making disciples. He calls us and sends us, but He also prepares us and those we are sent to. God can speak to the hearts of the lost, even when words fail us. But we are blessed when we get to join Him in saving a lost soul.

*20 After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. 21 Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." 22 And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. - John 20:20-22 NIV*

When Jesus appeared among them, four things happened to change the disciples from fearful to faithful. Jesus offered them peace, they "saw" and encountered Him, Jesus gives them their commission, and they receive power and authority through the Holy Spirit.

When are distant from Jesus, we are subject to our fears. It is only when we draw near, and depend on His power and direction that we are able to fulfill our calling and dispel our fear.

## 2. Sent Vertically – Talk to God first

*18 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. - Matthew 28:18-19 NLT*

*28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." 29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings! ... 42 Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah. - Acts 5:28-29, 42 NIV*

Even if you are convinced that the Great Commission is calling you to be Christ's witnesses, you need to start with prayer. You can't change a single life unless God enables it. So, before you go, stay (in prayer), waiting on the Lord for direction. God uses prayer to change us before He uses us to change the world.

*In the Book of Acts, those Jesus called were now referred to as apostles (apostolos- messenger or sent one). What was their explanation for why they disobeyed the orders of the religious leaders? How did they know what God was calling them to do? What does this passage reveal about their commitment to their calling?*

God had shaped the apostles' hearts, instilling in them an urgency based on their desire to please God and to help those who were lost. Their identity was no longer merely a follower (disciple) they were now apostles because the embraced their calling as a messenger who is sent to bring good news.

*6 Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. - Acts 16:6 NLT*

Paul and Silas may have been eager to preach the Gospel in Asia, but that was not God's assignment for them. This verse tells us the Holy Spirit prevented them from preaching.

*Have you ever felt that God was directing you not to do something you thought would be a good idea for ministry or serving? Or have you done something you thought God would want, only to find it ineffective? How do you hear God's direction in your life? Wise counsel of others, the nudging of the Spirit, circumstances that clearly shut or opened opportunities???? Has God shown you where He is already moving and invited you to join in?*