

II. Group discussion *Each number below includes a set of questions that relate to the scripture text. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better.*

Read Matthew 10:5-20 aloud.

1. What type of supplies were the apostles to take for their journey? (9-10)

How is this different from the way you prepare for a trip?

What concerns would you have in traveling this way?

What does it mean when a traveler carries multiple bags?

Well-prepared, planning to stay for awhile, wealthy.

What does it mean when a traveler has no luggage?

Urgent business, in a hurry, poor, dependent, flew the wrong airline.

What was Jesus communicating by the type messengers he sent ahead of him?

2. How were the apostles to find a place to stay?

How many of the apostles would you guess were turned away?

When have you traveled without knowing where you would spend the night? How did you do it?

3. How were the apostles supposed to respond if they were arrested? What kind of preparation did Jesus give them?

How would it affect our faith if it became illegal to be a Christian?

What would happen to church buildings and professional ministers if Christianity was outlawed?

4. As they traveled, how dependent were the apostles on the Holy Spirit?

What factors keep us from being dependent on the Spirit?

How has hardship caused you to grow in your dependence on God?

5. Where do you believe the Holy Spirit might be leading us?

How do you think he intends for our lives to be different?

How do you think the Holy Spirit would like our church to grow and change and improve?

Fill in the blank: I have always wanted to be part of a church that...

How do you think the Holy Spirit has been involved in leading you to that dream for the church?

How could we move in that direction?

6. If we were to practice our faith outside the church building, what would be some concerns you would have?

What is happening in our society that might make you doubt that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world?

How confident are you that the Holy Spirit is working outside our church building?

What does John 16:7-11 say about the work of the Holy Spirit in the world? How could this help our confidence for practicing our faith outside the building?

Just like the apostles, we can find courage in the thought that the Holy Spirit is already working in the world. When we leave the building, we are joining God's work

III. Other resources

The point – We have to depend on God to lead us to become the people he dreams that we might become. Leaving the church building to serve in the world can be frightening, but we believe the Holy Spirit is already working in the world when we go there.

Prayer

Ask for the Holy Spirit to make his will abundantly clear for us. Ask for ears to hear and eyes to see and hands to serve.
Pray for courage to follow the Holy Spirit, even if he leads us beyond places of comfort.
Pray for God to lead us to become more the church of our dreams (and God's dreams).

Kid-friendly activity. *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

Blindfold some of the group members (kids and adults). Tell each one to find a treasure by listening only to one particular voice. Set them loose and have everyone shout directions to the treasure (candy hidden ahead of time). See how well they can focus on that one voice with clear directions in the midst of other voices.

How difficult was it to find the treasure? Why?

How much did you have to depend on the person leading you?

How is this like depending on God?

Read Matt. 10:5-14 aloud. How dependent were the apostles on God to lead them?

What are some ways we depend on God to lead us?

How could we be more dependent on God?

The Church has Left the Building

Matthew 10 – Depending on the Holy Spirit

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **Depend on the Holy Spirit.**

A church who leaves its building will have to depend on the Holy Spirit. Living the Christian faith is pretty safe within the familiar surroundings of the church building. But going to serve others will stretch us. They do not share our views or follow our customs.

We studied Matthew 10 three weeks ago when we considered how the church takes risks to honor God. But this text also has significant implications for our depending on the Holy Spirit as we take those risks. Imagine what it must have been like for Jesus' apostles traveling around Judea with no agenda other than to represent him.

Leadership tip: Build bridges from your group to people who do not yet know Jesus. Include an empty chair in each week's meetings, and invite participants to pray for a friend who might fill that chair each week. Periodically, you might host a bring-a-friend party during a group meeting.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and "break the ice." No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ When are you most aware of how much you depend on God?
- ❖ On a typical one-week trip, how many pairs of shoes would you pack?
- ❖ What was your worst hotel experience?

"The Church has Left the Building" is a series of Small Group guides written in support of the Missional Church curriculum by David Wray and Chris Benjamin. It is designed around the concept of adults discussing material in Bible class and then processing it in small group meetings during the same week. These guides, as well as the Missional Church curriculum, are based on the book, *Treasure in Clay Jars*, by Lois Barrett and others.

Training tools and study guides are at www.collegehills.org, then Ministries, then LIFE groups.