



Introductory Biblical Commentary – For your Personal Preparation

Luke 10:1-2

Few people today would suggest that the popular Television program "The Apprentice" offers a realistic experience for young entrepreneurs. However, a Web-based program called "Farmer's Apprentice" is everything its "celebrity"-studded TV counterpart is not: this show offers 10 young hopefuls a first-hand look and a jump start in the United Kingdom farming industry. This web documentary isn't the byproduct of clever media marketing. Rather, it is a concerted effort by the UK to recruit 60,000 young people to a vital industry that is in dire need of people who will become the next generation of farmers.

To accomplish this, Farmer's Apprentice will immerse the apprentices in a variety of industry-specific work, such as sheep shearing, crop planning, and harvesting. In these, the apprentices gain a sense of the skills required, acquire insight to the opportunities available, and discover their own strengths and weaknesses related to the work. While the winner receives \$10,000 (UK), they all come out ahead from the experience.

In reading the gospel of Luke, it appears that the followers of Jesus found themselves in a similar experience in becoming farmers' apprentices. Jesus originally called 12 men to follow him in his work of preaching the kingdom of God and healing those in need. Jesus watched his apprentices make several errors of inexperience along the way. When they tried to send away the 5,000 people who gathered to him at Bethsaida, Jesus instead commanded the crowd to be fed (Luke 9:10-17). Later, Jesus cast an unclean spirit from a boy after the apostles failed in their efforts to do so (Luke 9:37-43). When a Samaritan village refused to receive Jesus, he rebuked the apostles for their suggestion that they pray for fire to rain judgment upon the village (Luke 9:51-56). Amidst these events, more people flocked to Jesus, and he continually corrected their mistaken thinking and faithfully guided their efforts.

As Luke 10 opens, Jesus is expanding his ministry through his growing number of followers. He gathered 72 of them, sending them in pairs to the cities where he would go to prepare them for his eventual arrival. In sending them, he gave them an encouraging charge that offers great insight to the efforts we undertake today to bring the gospel to new people, in new communities, offering new and everlasting hope in Jesus. So, even as we read the words that Jesus shared with the 72, let us also learn as apprentices, to apply God's timely truths to our own opportunities.