

Lambs among Wolves St. Luke, Evangelist Tuesday, October 18, 2016 8:15 AM
2 Tm 4:10-17b; **Lk 10:1-9** (How do you break the power of darkness? You break the power of darkness through shining example of light.)

“Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.”

There is a clear theme in the gospels that people often do not quite notice, and that is the hostility of the world to the word of God, to the kingdom of God. This captures it rather well: “I am sending you like lambs among wolves,” because the idea of lamb of course lambs are not animals that defend themselves. **Jesus is called the “Lamb of God” because he lived a life of complete and total nonviolence.** He did not even justify self-defense; that is his “lambness.” And **he instructed his disciples to be likewise**, men of peace, men of complete nonviolence, and so lambs.

Now he is sending them into a world that he recognizes as a world of wolves. He is not foolish in the sense that he thinks that they’ll be fine. Well, no, **he realizes the jeopardy that he is putting them in.** That’s all part of the bargain in the very beginning. I’m calling you to something great, but your lives will be in jeopardy. And this is one of the early moments in the gospel where he is sending them out two-by-two for, you might call it, a training exercise. But **he is not naive at all about people.**

He says, “Carry no money bag.” Why? Well because if you had one, someone might steal it and might kill you on the way. “No sack, no sandals and greet no one.” Why? Why is “greet no one along the way”? Don’t cause anyone to pay attention to you. Slip by quietly. It’s not that he is trying to be antisocial; it’s that he is trying to protect them in this hostile world of wolves. “Into whatever house you enter, say, ‘Peace to this household if a peaceful person lives there.’” If, but he is very well aware that maybe there won’t be.

We have to get over the idea that everybody is basically good, not everybody. Human nature is created good, yes, but many people follow something bad, something dark. And **the power of darkness is totally proportional to the number people that follow it**. The devil, so to speak, has absolutely no power except to deceive. The devil is the father of lies, no power except to deceive. But **insofar as the devil deceives anyone, then he gains power**. Deception gains power, darkness gains power by those who follow. **It's all about human beings and what humans choose**. Do we choose light or do we choose darkness? Do we choose peace or do we choose war? **It's all up to us**. But the power of deception gives more and more power to darkness. Jesus is aware of this. **But how do you break the power of darkness? You break the power of darkness through shining example of light**. And that's what he called his disciples to be: shining examples of light willing even to give up their lives if necessary for the sake of something better: the eternal life of God, the kingdom of God.

“Do not move about from one house to another.” In other words, let things be. **If you have a place to stay and they are giving you something to eat, well, just make do with that**. “If they welcome you, cure the sick in it and say to them, ‘The Kingdom of God is at hand for you.’” **So the kingdom of God is at hand, yes, but practically speaking only for those who welcome it**.

So this is a challenge to future disciples. And Luke put this in here for a very good reason, because in the Acts of the Apostles he continues the work of Jesus after his death and resurrection and shows exactly how it plays out; and so it shall. **Goodness is persecuted, but it eventually triumphs**.