

Lesson 81

TEXT Matthew 25:31-40; James 2:15-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 40:9; John 5:36; 17:4; Romans 10:15; Ephesians 6:15

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to enumerate several reasons why true Christians must be actively engaged in spreading the Gospel.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings. — Isaiah 52:7

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. — Mark 16:20

ANSWER TITLE: Home-Town Missionaries
SEARCH TITLE: Feet

Reference Information

Zacharias prophesied at the birth of his son John, that Jesus would “guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:79). With His guidance, we should be quick to “bring good tidings” of salvation to others. The good news is, “the Lord Jesus reigns.” In Matthew Henry’s Commentary he writes, “Christ Himself brought these tidings first (Luke 4:18; Hebrews 2:3), and of Him the text speaks: How beautiful are His feet! His feet that were nailed to the cross, how beautiful upon Mount Calvary!”

There appears to have been two types of messengers among the Jews: one always was employed to bring evil tidings and the other good. The names and persons of these different messengers appear to have been well known, so that at a distance the people could tell, from seeing the messenger, what sort of tidings he was bringing. Isaiah 52:7 and Nahum 1:15 relate to us the feelings towards those who brought good tidings.

YOUR OPENER

Feet

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RESPONSES

1. He was speaking of doing service for others: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, etc. After the text has been discussed, direct the students to comment on how they can fulfill each of these responsibilities.

2. Have students discuss various ways to spread the Gospel. They may come up with the following thoughts: inviting others to church, witnessing to their friends, sending Christmas cards with Scripture verses, etc. As a class activity, you might want to pursue one of the suggestions for spreading the Gospel.

3. By ministering to him, the good Samaritan became neighbor to the man who had been robbed. He dressed his wounds and took care of him at the inn. Lead the class into a discussion of what it really means to be a missionary. Do we have to cross an ocean? Do we necessarily have to learn a foreign language? Does not carrying the Gospel to every creature include our friends and neighbors? The history of the Early Church shows that the people who were scattered from Jerusalem because of persecution preached the Gospel wherever they went. That is what the Lord expects of us—to carry the good news of salvation whenever and wherever we go.

The sound of the guard's footsteps echoes outside the cell door—does he come with a message of freedom? Footsteps approach a pitiful hovel—could it be someone is bringing a morsel of food? That steady tread approaching a secluded mountain village—is it a missionary bringing the story of salvation? Followers of Jesus have a divine challenge and responsibility to be ambassadors of Christ. The Apostles were instructed to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. That commission is just as binding today as the day it was given. The task is tremendous.

1. When Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," of what was He speaking?

2. Acts 10:38 declares that Jesus went about doing good. The Gospel can be represented by many acts. How many ways can you think of that would come under the title of helping to spread the Gospel?

3. In what ways could the actions of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33) be used as an example in spreading the Gospel?

7

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. What goes hand in hand with faith as the Gospel is carried to the world? Why? See James 2:14-16.

5. Often people have a feeling of responsibility for the needs of the world. James states specifically to whom we should offer clothing or food. What does he say?

6. Mark 16:15 focuses on a different and broader responsibility of the Christian. What is this responsibility?

7. Write in your own words what you think Isaiah 52:7 means.

8. When Peter and John were called before the council and commanded not to speak or teach in the Name of Jesus, they responded, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Today, what sort of witness should we exhibit to the world? See John 20:29 and 1 Peter 1:8.

9. What does John 9:4 tell us about the urgency of our responsibility?

4. The Christian must accompany his faith with a willingness to give the necessities of life to those who are in need. This act of kindness demonstrates to the world that the Christians's declaration of faith is more than just a word. Discussion on this question should include the fact that lip service is not enough. Actions and works must follow our announced allegiance to Christ. Refer again to question 1. How many of the items mentioned by the Lord Jesus required some sort of action? The Apostle sums up the admonition: "I will shew thee my faith by my works."

5. He refers to helping a "brother" or "sister." Move directly to next question.

6. Christians are told to go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every person. After receiving this answer, refer to the preceding question. Help your students discuss the difference between their responsibility to the household of faith and to the world. How do these two obligations balance?

7. Allow students to give their interpretation. Help them realize that the feet are blessed—beautiful—if they carry a message of good tidings, publish peace and salvation, and declare, "Thy God reigneth."

8. Faith in the Christian's heart brings the same verity of Christ today as the Apostles had in their day. Discuss with the class that the assurance of the Biblical account of the living Christ puts a burning desire into the believer's heart to carry the message to all who will listen. The Apostle Paul did not see the Lord Jesus as He lived on earth, yet his experience with the resurrected Christ carried him on three missionary journeys to tell the Gospel story. May the Lord so inspire our hearts.

9. Jesus said that He must work for the Father while it was day, thus showing that our time on earth has a limit. To emphasize the brevity of life the Apostle James said our life is a vapor that vanishes in a short while. Summarize the lesson by discussing the fact that because life is brief, we should do everything for the Lord as quickly as possible. There is no promise of tomorrow, so we should not put off carrying the message of the Gospel today.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Think of all the places your feet take you. How many ways can those trips serve God directly or indirectly?

How did you find out about Jesus? Can you think of any way feet were involved?

The memory verse says, "How beautiful . . . are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." What does this mean? To whom are the good tidings to be brought? Who do you think should bring the good tidings?

Why is faith without works of little value to God?

What are some "works"—things we can do—that might reveal Jesus in us and point others to God?

How can we use our feet to spread the Gospel?

What did Sandy and Judy discover in our ANSWER story?

In our text, what was it that Christ looked at when He was separating "sheep" from "goats"?

Our love for Christ is shown by our love to others. What are some ways in which Christian young people can prove their love to God?

THINGS TO DO

Bring several envelopes, postage stamps, and other stamps like Easter or Christmas seals. Also bring letters or invitations to put inside the envelopes. Discuss Biblical invitations given in Isaiah 1:18; 45:22; Matthew 11:28; Revelation 22:17. Address envelopes to grownups or children of different lands, kids at school, etc. As you put the stamps on, make the point that each will do its job regardless of where it has to go or whatever the size of the envelope. God, too, needs real "stamps," not "seals," to carry His message.

Cut feet out of construction paper and label them with things we can do for Jesus; such as visiting the sick, going to Sunday school, spreading God's love at home or wherever we go. Explain that our feet take us places to serve the Lord. ("Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel.")

Bring some magazines with bright, colorful advertisements. Tell how the people that advertise in these magazines pay large sums of money to place their products before people. The advertising is colorful and written

with glowing accounts of the value of the product. What would you think of the advertiser who did not represent his product as the best? You would think something was wrong with his product. We have something to sell also, the most important message, but we do not offer it for money. How are you advertising? Some answers might be: bright face, cheerful songs, telling others.

Have class put on a skit showing some of the things a person working for the Lord can do. Give prizes to those who are working. Tell them that God promises rewards to us when we do the things He wants us to do.

Bring to class several bright-colored pennants made from construction paper with "God Loves You" written in different languages. Missionaries tell people in many other countries that God loves them. Now show your students the pennant in English. Let them know they can tell and show people right at home that God loves them. It is the most important message anyone will ever hear.

Answers for ANSWER

Footprint Find

The words written in the feet can be found in the puzzle. They may go across, up, or down. Find and circle each word. All the words are from Isaiah 5:7.

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