

Luke 10:1-24

Verse 1:

--After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.

--It is good to hear about this wider group of seventy (or seventy-two depending on your translation) who are following and serving Jesus Christ, after we see three who may or may not have followed Him.

--The seventy are directly **appointed** for service. Luke says they were appointed **also**, which takes us back to the similar directive of the twelve apostles in **9:1-6**. The instructions are not exact, but very similar.

--They too, like the twelve earlier, were going to be sent in pairs to the villages and cities that Jesus Christ was heading to as His officially appointed ambassadors.

--There are numerous practical and instructive truths in this passage for any sincere servant of Christ.

--First, we don't know any of their names. It was not important that anyone knew their names or their titles. Who they represented and the content of their message were important. The same is true today. *We make too much of our own names and achievements. I am embarrassed by the bios and introductions people need!*

--Second, the most common design is that God allows us to serve Him with others. They were a part of the twelve, the seventy, and sent in pairs. There are those who accomplish unique works alone, but that is the exception and not the rule. *We see the same in Acts: Peter & John; Paul & Barnabas; Paul and Silas; Barnabas and Mark; etc.*

Verse 2:

--Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

--The harvest is that of souls. And when Jesus thought about souls, He also tended to think about those laboring to harvest those lost souls. He said something similar on more than one occasion.

****Matthew 9:36-38: But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."****

--See also **John 4:34-38**.

--Jesus tells us to pray and ask the Lord of the harvest for laborers. This is important because Jesus does not often command us to directly pray for specific things. Praying for laborers is one of the few. *Obedient prayer Vs. The overemphasis of various "training" programs in the church today.*

--First, the laborers Jesus Christ is looking for are ones who labor. They are laborers, not loafers. Workers, not whiners. They are busy with some activity that helps in gathering the harvest!

*Are we doing *anything* to participate in Christ's harvest?!*

--Second, they are *sent out* by Him. The Greek for **send out** (*ekballo*) is a word with violence or force. It means to *cast out, drive out, to expel, or compel*.

--Jesus Christ says we need to pray that God would powerfully compel people into service.

Why? First, they are His fields, and we need to harvest where He sends us. Second, if people are not serving because He sent them, they will be selfish servants who don't last long in the labor.

--Could you imagine any of Jesus' disciples taking it upon themselves to go and represent Him in this official capacity without His command coming first? Certainly not!

Verses 3-9:

--Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

--(3) **Go** . . . now Jesus forces them out. **Behold, I send you** . . . the emphasis should be on the *I* and never the *you*. The sent one walks in the authority of the Sender.

--They were also to represent the spirit of Christ and go **as lambs among wolves**. They were to go without self-defense, unthreatening, and non-combative. They were to be as He was, and would be, when He followed them into each city.

--Jesus makes it clear they were to leave if rejected, but they were not to call down fire from heaven or draw swords.

--Jesus also makes it clear they would not always be well-received.

1 John 3:13: Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

--Fortunately, it has been two thousand years, and the big bad wolves have not devoured all the sheep!

--(4) They were to fully trust God with their provision, not even carrying an extra pair of sandals.

Where God guides, God provides.

--They were to travel with a sense of purpose. They were not to pause their mission for unnecessary socialization (which could take a while in those days) or good times along the way.

So much "ministry" nowadays looks like networking or hobnobbing! Don't these people have anything to do?!

--(5-6) Wherever they were welcomed into a home, they were to communicate the peace they had come to know, and were charged by Jesus to communicate.

--A ***son of peace*** would describe anyone who retained the characteristics of such. Similar to the OT use of ***a son of Belial (1 Sam.25:17)*** or ***sons of rebellion (2 Sam. 23:6)***.

--God would have us know peace, but the wicked can reject what He would have for them.

****Isaiah 57:20-21: But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.****

--On the opposite end, God was happy to bless single households that expressed faith. *Think of Rahab or Lydia, Peter or Martha, etc.*

****2 Samuel 6:11-12: The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his household. Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness.****

--(7-8) Twice, Jesus commands them to eat and drink whatever they are given. Overcoming dietary law was difficult for Peter in the book of Acts (10:9-16)! Why? I think two reasons:

--First, they were to see all provisions and hospitality as from the Lord. They were about the Lord's business, and their labor was worthy of wages.

--Second, to argue about lesser issues was not proper when the gospel was on the line. *He had already taught them that food did not defile (Mk. 7:14-19).*

--***Do not go from house to house.*** . . . was also a warning against networking, favoritism, or putting personal comfort or preference ahead of their mission.

--(9) Jesus Christ also commands them to heal, as they had seen Him heal. The healings would both validate and embody their message.

--What was their message? That the kingdom of God, the place where King Jesus reigns (where sickness and demons do not reign!), had come near to them. And the King was following soon.

Verses 10-12:

--But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into the streets and say, 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.

--(10-11) Jesus did not want His followers anticipating an unqualified welcome or acceptance. He knew they would face rejection and failure along the way and equipped them for it as well. How were they to treat rejectors?

--First, they were to go into the streets and publicly wipe off the very dust from their feet! This symbolized the breaking of all connections.

--Second, they were to warn them and then leave. That left all judgment to God.

--(12) Jesus lets them know that no one is escaping judgment. In fact, they were more important witnesses than even the angels were when they came to Lot's house in Sodom!
--It is a serious thing for a sinner to reject the messenger of God.

Verses 13-16:

--"***Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.***"

--(13-15) Jesus makes it clear that these cities, which had so much of His time and ministry, were in a dangerous position. He says their judgment was going to be worse than that of the well-known, sinful cities of old. Not that Tyre, Sidon, or Sodom would escape judgment, but that their judgment wouldn't be as bad!

--The language for Capernaum, where Jesus did so much ministry, is really, *Capernaum, do you expect to be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades!* *Jesus makes it clear that there are only two destinations.*

--Jesus repeats similar warnings in **Mt. 11:20-24**. At this point, the time of testing for these cities was almost over.

--The Scriptures clearly teach that just as there will be differences of glory and reward in heaven; that there will also be differences of judgment in hell. See: (**Mt. 11:21-24; 23:14; Mk. 12:40; Lk. 12:47-48; Rom. 2:5-6, 12; Col. 3:24-25; 1 Tim. 5:24-25; 2 Pet. 2:21; Rev. 20:12-13.**)

****Luke 20:46-47: Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.****

****John 19:11: Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."****

****James 3:1: My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.****

--All sin is not the same. We will be judged according the light we had, how much opportunity we were given, what we said and did, as well as what the true motives of our hearts were.

--(16) This is a powerful statement. Jesus is saying that when they speak, He speaks! Their message is His message, and therefore their rejection is His rejection, and ultimately, the rejection of the Father who sent the Son, and the Spirit who inspired and empowered the Son. And Jesus is saying this to those who are not even the twelve apostles!

--We must always ask, *Is this the Word of God? Is this person giving Jesus' message?*

1 Thessalonians 2:13: *For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.*

--If we do not receive the Word of God as it is, all we have is a *word of men* attitude.

-A hazy, take-it-or-leave-it type of entertainment half-hour.

-Your opinion Vs. Mine or Others.

-Nice suggestions Vs. Commands we will be responsible for.

-No such thing as a “right interpretation”.

-The sheer audacity of someone claiming to speak “for God”.

--If a person comes to me speaking God’s Word, they are His ambassador, and I had better not mistreat or ignore the ambassadors of the King of heaven and earth!

Verses 17-20:

--*Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”*

And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

--(18) We don’t know how long this took, but it is likely that it was somewhat ongoing. Even the future promise of protection in **19** anticipates that. The disciples seem overjoyed, and they confess that the authority they walked in was more effective than they expected, because even demonic forces submitted to them in the name of Jesus Christ.

--(19-20) The meaning of Jesus’ response is somewhat debated.

--Some think Jesus is saying He saw Satan being defeated as they were out on their mission.

--Some say Jesus is just symbolically saying that His authority was greater than Satan’s.

--I think Jesus is stating a past fact to emphasize the truth He wants them to come away with. Remember, context matters.

--Jesus knew the truth about Satan—he is fallen. He saw it happen. Satan is on his belly, in the earth, cast down from the glory he had in heaven. Satan was a defeated foe before he landed on earth. All that was true, but not something to be rejoiced in as much as the fact that their names were enrolled in heaven where Satan had been cast from!

--Jesus promises them victory over all dark powers. I believe this was a personal promise to those present for their current mission—though obviously, all believers will have ultimate victory in Christ Jesus. No weapon formed against us will prosper.

Colossians 1:13: *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

--The whole point of their mission was eternal life. Jesus' mission to seek and save and ours on His behalf. The battle with Satan has an end, but our eternal life with God does not. Life in God is the greatest joy—over all ostensible success or failure in ministry. *Remember, Judas was present. He represents the sad state of the unsaved minister!*

--Clearly, assurance of salvation is taught here. How can we rejoice that our names are written in heaven if they could be erased at any minute? If I could lose my salvation by my own works, Christ's words here would be void, as would the joy He encourages.

Verses 21-24:

--In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

Then He turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."

--(21) Jesus rejoices! We know so little of the joy of God as seen in Christ Jesus!

*Chesterton (Orthodoxy, pg. 170): *"The Stoics, ancient and modern, were proud of concealing their tears. He never concealed His tears; He showed them plainly on His open face at any daily sight, such as the far sight of His native city. Yet He concealed something. Solemn supermen and imperial diplomatists are proud of restraining their anger. He never restrained His anger. He flung furniture down the front steps of the Temple, and asked men how they expected to escape the damnation of Hell. Yet He restrained something. I say it with reverence; there was in that shattering personality a thread that must be called shyness. There was something that He hid from all men when He went up a mountain to pray. There was something that He covered constantly by abrupt silence or impetuous isolation. There was some one thing that was too great for God to show us when He walked upon our earth; and I have sometimes fancied that it was His mirth."**

--Watching these young disciples, these babes in spiritual life and understanding, walk in faith and live out God's plan with His message and authority brought joy to the heart of Jesus Christ!

--All this when the religious elite were rejecting Jesus Christ and plotting to kill Him at worst, or if they did believe, they were living in hiding at best.

--What does this prove? That the knowledge of salvation, of God, and participation in His work on earth are not dependent on intellectual gifts, or more easily accessible to the intellectually gifted. *We are all called to love God with all our minds. Whatever capacity He has given us.*

--Intellectual knowledge is dangerous in that it puffs up, makes one wise in their own eyes, and tempts toward independence of self rather than dependence on God. That said, smart people don't have better relationships with other humans or God. *Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, etc.*

--This program was pleasing in God's sight. ***1 Cor. 1:26-31***

--**(22)** Jesus makes it clear that all true knowledge of God the Father comes through God the Son. He, and He alone, through the power of the Holy Spirit, teaches who God is.

--Please, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, will to reveal Your Father to our hearts! Give us eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand!

--**(23-24)** Apparently, Jesus turns from the wider group of seventy to the twelve, and expresses just how blessed they are. So much of the OT law and prophets, things the OT saints wanted to spiritually understand, was happening right before their eyes.

--May God make us aware of, alive to, and thankful for His work all around us.