

## Luke 10:1~9

Beloved, I want to talk to you this morning about “*The Work of the Lord*”...

Here we find the Lord Jesus, sending His disciples, out into the world, to declare the message of the *Kingdom of God*. This is the second time in very short order that He has sent them out. The first time was back in chapter nine, when He sent only the twelve, and that was to the cities of Israel. Here He adds an additional seventy, and sends them out to the Gentile cities. And basically, both of them were pretty much the same mission, to declare the message of the Kingdom of God, calling the hearers to repentance.

And as we might expect, as Jesus explains, there will be some who will receive their message, and receive them. Then there will be others, who will reject their message, and reject them. And, given that, Jesus gives specific instruction as to how to respond in both instances. To those who receive them, they were to pronounce blessings on the house, proclaiming the peace of God on the house. In contrast, to those who reject them, they were to pronounce cursing on the house, declaring the Judgment of God on it.

Now notice, Blessing or Cursing...depends on how people respond to the disciple’s message of the Kingdom. Here we see a subtle shift of power, over to the disciples.

(Vs 16) The heart of this passage...<sup>16</sup>*He that hears you hears me; and he that despises you despises me; and he that despises me despises him that sent me.*

Here we see a clear shifting of power and authority, over to the disciples... It is as Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16...<sup>19</sup>*And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

(Ill: Hold Keys) What an interesting analogy that is... The disciples had the “Keys” to the kingdom! It symbolized the fact, they “held the power” to permit men entrance into the kingdom, and the authority to declare men excluded from the kingdom! The “Keys” or this “Power” refers to the message of Christ’s kingdom, the gospel of Jesus Christ! What men do with it, will define their eternal destiny! And now, here in Luke, Jesus declares, whether or not men will gain entrance into the Kingdom of God, will be determined how they treat the disciples, and their message! Here Jesus says, those who receive you, receive me...and those who reject you, reject me. And He adds...if they reject me, they exclude themselves from the kingdom, because by rejecting me, they are rejecting the Lord God Himself!

Now this morning, it is not my intent to point out the “*specifics*” of this passage, in terms of the manner in which He sent them out, and the instruction He gave them. Because basically, He sends this group out the same way He sent the previous one, we studied just a few short weeks ago.

(Vs 3~11) Just as He did in the previous time, He forbids them to take certain things with them...

- A “*purse*” refers to a *money pouch*...they were to take no money...
- A “*scrip*” refers to a *leather bag* used to carry things in...be it food or clothing...
- Nor are they to take “*shoes*”...(extra’s)...
- ... *and salute no man by the way*...(this simply spoke of the “*Urgency*” of the task... The exhortation was that they not to “*waste any time*...” It is to say, “*There’s no time to waste*”...)

When you consider the instruction He gives here, it’s really the same manner in which He sent the twelve out earlier, back in chapter 9.

Basically, they were to go with *nothing more* than *the clothes on their backs*...

Given that, the question then becomes... **Why?** Why is He *so adamant* that they take nothing with them on their journey? The answer... *faith*... He wanted to teach them to “*walk by faith*.” By taking absolutely nothing with them, they would be walking in **total dependence** on God *to supply their needs*. They’d be dependent on God for everything from clothes, food, provisions, a place to stay... **everything!**

**Even their protection**... He says... <sup>3</sup>*Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.*

If you know anything about sheep, you know that “*Wolves*” are their chief enemies. Wolves are savage, vicious animals. Which in contrast, sheep are just the opposite; they are vulnerable, and timid. Left alone, sheep are completely defenseless against wolves.

What a fitting description this is, given wolves are the enemies of sheep... The picture here is, that as they go out into **this world**, they will be traveling through **the enemy’s territory!** This is “*his ground*”... and those are “*his people*.” As long as they are “*In the World*”... they belong to him! And believe me, he will not sit idly by and simply watch, as people are delivered from his grip, and brought into the Kingdom of God. We may... we may sit idly by, and do nothing, as people all around us are perishing. But, he won’t. If he sees his people being rescued out of this world, and delivered into the kingdom of God, he will rise up and attack!

As He sends them out, He warns the disciples... as they go out into the world, to do the work of the kingdom, that they will be “**AS sheep among wolves**...” Now He says this, not to make them afraid... but rather, the aim here is “*Dependence*.” By explaining their *vulnerability*, and *defenselessness* compared to the enemy, rather than cause them to be weak and fearful, it will result in them being strong and courageous. How? Knowing they are “*As sheep among the wolves*,” they will walk in the awareness, that they are no match for the enemy! Knowing they will be walking “**AS sheep among wolves**...” that they will not trust in their own strength and power. Every step they take, they will do so by faith, trusting that the power and protection of the Lord. Their very defenselessness would cause them all the more *to depend on God*.

Again, the point of all this, is He wanted them to go out, walking in **total dependence** on God. They’d be dependent on God for everything from clothes, food, provisions, protection, a place to stay... **everything!**

Beloved listen, not only is it important that we “*Go*” out into the world, with the message of Christ... but it is *equally important* that we “*Go*” in the “*Right Manner!*” The intent behind the manner in which Jesus sent them out, was to have them go in “*Faith*,” so that they will walk in the “*power of God*.” To go out in our own power would not only be futile and vain, but could be deadly. Beloved, the “*Work of God*” requires the “*Power of God*.” As mere men, we cannot do the “*Work of God*.” The task at hand, involves much, much more than simply “*telling people*” about Jesus. Beloved, as we go out into this world, we are treading on enemy territory, this is Satan’s world! As we go out, we are walking against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness, against spiritual wickedness... And I don’t need to remind you, all of which we are no match for! We are easy prey, as sheep among wolves. And the people we’re trying to deliver, if we think we can do it on our own, by our knowledge of scripture, or our ability to talk, we’re only kidding ourselves. These people are held captive in a prison as it were, with the demons of hell standing guard! The stronghold that this world has on them, is so strong, that nothing short of the power of God, will be able to set them free!

But listen, that’s exactly what the “*gospel*” is! The gospel IS the POWER of God!

**(Romans 1:16)** *For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for **IT** is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

Beloved, the gospel of Christ has the power to set men free! We cannot possibly comprehend the “*power*” of this book and its message! It is the ONLY HOPE of this world...and listen, unless they hear it, unless we take it to them... they will perish!

We are to be merely the “*instruments*” by which *He carries His work out!* We are to present ourselves as “*tools*” in the hands of the master, for His use, to carry out His work. A “*Work*” that He describes here, using the metaphor of a “*Harvesting a Crop.*” This is the second metaphor in a row that He has used to describe the “*Work*” of the kingdom, to that of “*Working in the field.*” Just prior to this, Jesus spoke in terms of “*Plowing in a field.*” In both cases, the field represents the world, and the workers being His disciples. And in both cases, they both elude to the fact that we are to be out in the world, doing the work of the kingdom.

(9:62) In the image of *plowing in the field*, the emphasis there was the necessity of total commitment. Speaking of the fact, there is no room for “*Half-heartedness,*” or “*Double-mindedness.*” We must not be “*looking back*” to the world, and the things of this world...but rather with “*single-mindedness*” and with a “*whole heart,*” giving ourselves to work of the Kingdom of God.

In short, when we come to Christ, we must put this world behind us, and tend to the work that is before us! All around us beloved, is ground that needs to be “*worked.*” We need to lay our hands to the plow, and be about the Father’s business!

(Slide #1) And what is that business? That of bringing people into the “*kingdom.*” Here Jesus offers up a very interesting metaphor to describe this, the image here is that of harvest of grain, sitting in the field, waiting for the workers to come and harvest it and bring it to the barn. And given what Jesus says, the amount of work far exceeding the number of workers. I think it’s Safe to say...(No one should be standing around “*idle*”...right?)

Beloved, the truth of this passage may well be one of the most important truths, that we will ever hear, and no doubt the most important in the sense of embracing. Because herein lies *the heart and soul of the gospel* of Jesus Christ...“*People.*” People out here, all around us...who are dying in their sin! The world is full of them! You and I have been walking through the fields all week long, right through the midst of the harvest... The question that sounds out from this passage is, are we “*Doing anything*” to reach them?

The passage before us was written thousands of years ago, but the message is just as true today as it was then! For those of us who are the Disciples of Christ, “*The mission is still the same...*” To seek and to save that which is lost...to rescue the perishing! Listen, the “*Sole Purpose*” of the church, (in this world), is to reach out to the lost and dying that are in the world.

(Slide #2) The analogy of the harvest, and the laborers, serves as a really good analogy of the “*Church.*” Because beloved, there are people all around us that need to be harvested...*people that need to be delivered out of this world, and brought into the kingdom!*

(Slide #3) The “*Field*” in view here is the world... The “*Grain*” refers to the lost in this world, all those yet outside the kingdom. The “*Barn or Storehouse*” it is to be gather into, refers to the “*Kingdom of God.*” (People need to be taken out of the kingdom of this world, and placed into the kingdom of God.) The “*Lord of the Harvest*” speaks of God the Father, and the “*Laborers,*” the one’s responsible for doing the work, are the “*Disciples of Christ*”...you and I.

Beloved, we “*His people*” may be involved in a lot of things...but there are none more important, and none more needed, than this one! We can have our bible studies, learning more about the Lord (important)... We can discuss Doctrine, have interesting discussions over different theological issues...(all important) We could give our selves diligently in seeking to understand all prophecies,

learning what every “*Imagery*” of Revelation represents...(Again, important...) BUT, there is nothing more important, than that of going out here, into the fields, and deliver those who are yet in the world, and bring them into the Kingdom of God!

Listen...(or you'll misunderstand what I'm saying)

We often put way too much emphasis on “*Living Clean.*”

When we speak of *witnessing*...what often comes to mind, is “*example.*” Speaking of the way we live in the sense of respectful, honorable living. We often think of that as *witnessing*. We want our lives to be a witness for Jesus, we want people to see Jesus in us. How many of you want that?

Well as important a “*living clean lives*” is...(and it is important), **that is not witnessing!** All that does is give us the right to speak! “*Our lives*” serves as the platform from which we preach! It earns us a hearing. You know as well as I do, that if someone’s life is not right, they needn’t preach to me...right? Listen, “living clean” is important part of witnessing...but it’s not witnessing. If we are genuinely sincere in our desire to “*witness for the Lord,*” then rather than strive to live “Clean lives,” we are going to have to get a “*little dirty!*” Speaking of going out here in the fields, and getting our hands and feet dirty! If you want to be an “Example” to others of Christ, if you want others to see Jesus in you, then you are going to have to go out here in the fields, in the dirt, where the sinners are!

One more thing, I’d like to say about the idea of “*Living Clean*”... You know what usually ends up happening to those who have that kind of mentality, seeing “*witnessing*” as living clean? What usually happens, is they become filled with pride, and feel they are quite righteous, comparing themselves to sinners out here in the world, and they get all puffed up! Resulting in them judging and condemning those around them, rather than reaching out to them!

Beloved...the “*Heart & Soul*” of the gospel is PEOPLE! And beloved, there are people all around us, literally acres and acres of people...who are going to perish, if left out in the field!

Beloved, we need to understand this...that the lives of countless people hang in the balance. Given where they stand right now, they will perish! Beloved, the fact that we go to them, and try and reach them for the kingdom is imperative! They need not do anything, to perish, for that is where they are already destined! Just as a harvest, is sitting out in the field, needs to be harvested, so it is with people. And WE are the laborers! We are the ones that God has called into His harvest! We are called of God, to go out into the fields, and deliver people out of this world, and bring them into the kingdom! Knowing that all that is out in the field, will perish!

Can we reach them all...no. Can we reach some...absolutely. I’ve noticed in the past few years, it’s getting harder and harder to get people to come to Christ. More and more, people don’t want anything to do with the gospel or His kingdom. But that’s irrelevant, whether or not they will repent and come to Christ is not my concern. That is between them and the Lord. If they reject my message, they will have God to answer too! The last part of this passage, (and the most emphasis) is that of the coming judgment upon those who reject Christ and His Kingdom! Lord willing, I will be speaking to that next week...

But whether or not men receive Christ and His kingdom, is not our concern... Our concern, is that they hear! Our concern is that they be told and be given the opportunity. What they do with the gospel is between them and the Lord... But listen, the same is true with us, who call ourselves His disciples. What we do with the gospel, is between us and the Lord.

Church...how can we, who call ourselves “*Christians,*” sit idly by, and watch the world perish?

**Closing**... Beloved, we need to get out in the fields, and get to work...

As Jesus “*Sent Out*” these disciples, I send you out...