

(Through the Bible) Luke 9-10

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preaching the kingdom of God and the requirements of discipleship, including denying oneself, taking up one's cross daily, and following Jesus Christ.

Duration: 1:21:37

Scripture: Luke 9:1-5, Luke 9:35-36, Luke 10:2-3, Luke 10:38-42

Topics: "Kingdom Of God", "Following Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the reasons why Jesus came to earth. He emphasizes that Jesus did not come to destroy, but rather to save. Jesus came to establish the kingdom of God, where righteousness, joy, peace, and love prevail. The speaker also highlights the importance of counting the cost of following Jesus and the need for laborers in God's harvest.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles to the Gospel according to Luke chapter 9. Luke here records the sending of the twelve to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. This is not to be confused with the time that he sent out the seventy. We will get that in the beginning of chapter 10.

But here he is sending out the twelve to go throughout the area of the Galilee. In fact, to go as far as they can. They're to travel light, which means that they will be traveling fast and they'll be getting out as far as they can in this period of time.

So he called his twelve disciples together and he gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither bread, neither money, neither two coats apiece.

And whatsoever house you enter into, there abide and from there depart. And whosoever will not receive you when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed and went through the towns preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Now Herod the Tetrarch heard of all that was done by him and he was perplexed because that it was said of some that John was risen from the dead. And others said that Elijah had appeared and still others that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John I have beheaded, but who is this of whom I

hear such things? And he desired to see him.

A desire that was not fulfilled until Jesus was standing trial on the day of his crucifixion. Now we notice that when Jesus sent out his disciples, he told them that they were not to take a purse, nothing for their journey, neither scrip nor bread, money, nor two coats. Wherever they would go, they were to abide with the people there and eat what was given to them and receive from the people for the labor, he said, is worthy of his hire.

Traveling light, they could travel fast and they could travel far, which they were to do. Their mission was to preach the kingdom. Incidental to preaching the kingdom was the healing of the sick and the curing of diseases.

But that was only incidental to the preaching of the kingdom. That was not their mission. The mission was not to heal the sick or cure diseases.

The mission was to preach the kingdom and the healings were incidental to the mission. And so must it always be. The church should be involved with the total person.

We should be interested in the needs of society and we cannot ignore them. But we mustn't make the mistake of making the social work the mission of the church. It is incidental to the mission of the church of preaching the kingdom of God.

That's the mission we're to declare to the world of a glorious kingdom that is coming. That kingdom of God of which a person can now become a part by submitting himself to God as king. Now, as we proclaim the kingdom of God, we cannot ignore the hunger of people, the needs of people.

And thus, incidental to our mission is that work, that social work of the church in the community. But it should never become the primary mission of the church. And unfortunately, today in the modern church, they have exchanged the message, really, for the social work and the social gospel and they're not doing really a good job at either.

Now, the disciples in a sense were poor in that they were to take no money nor two coats. But yet they were very rich by what he gave them. He gave them power and authority.

To use that power. The word power is *dunamis*, the energy, the dynamic. And then that authority to use that power.

Now, they were evidently effective in their ministry because word got around of what was happening. It even came to Herod and he heard the various things that were being done. And he desired to see Jesus.

And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them and went aside privately into a desert place belonging unto the city of Bethsaida. So, they had come back now from their journey.

They were suffering jet lag. And so he figured, well, it's a good time to just go over to the other side of the lake and just to be alone with them for a little bit. To get their reports and to see how things went and to sort of put things together.

And so, across to the sort of deserted side of the lake, a deserted area near the village of Bethsaida. And the people, when they knew it, they followed him. So that when they arrived, actually leaving from

Capernaum, Bethsaida is just a short little ways, maybe five miles across the northern end of the Sea of Galilee there.

And visibility is good and you can watch the ship that is going. You can tell the course that they're taking. You know exactly where they're going to land on the other side.

And as soon as the people saw the ship going over that direction toward Bethsaida, they said, that's where he's going, come on. And they jogged around the upper end of the Sea of Galilee. And as they were jogging through the villages, people said, hey, where are you going? Oh, Jesus is going to be over here.

So people joined them, so that by the time Jesus arrived, there was a huge crowd. Trying to get away alone with your disciples, have a little quiet time. And he is greeted by a tremendous throng of people.

Some, well, 5,000 men beside women and children. So you can create your own estimates on the crowd. Perhaps 15,000 or so.

Now at this point, it would be very easy to be irritated. As you're trying to get away for some quiet time. But Jesus, it said, received them.

And he's spoken to them of the Kingdom of God. Last Sunday, we dealt with the subject of the Kingdom of God. If you weren't here, I would suggest you get the tape of last Sunday morning.

This was the central message of Jesus. He was proclaiming to man that there is a Kingdom where God wants men to live. A Kingdom of light and life.

A Kingdom that is marked by righteousness and joy and peace and love. And that Kingdom comes to a man when he submits himself to God as the King of his life. And that's what the Kingdom of God is all about.

When God reigns as King. And so he preached to them of the Kingdom of God. God spoke to them of it.

And he healed those that were in need of healing. And when the day began to wear away. The twelve came to him and said, Lord, you better send the multitude away.

That they may go into the towns and the country around here. And find a place to spend the night. And to get some food.

For this is a deserted area. There's no McDonald's around here. And he said unto them, Go ahead and feed them.

And they said, We don't have anything but five loaves and two fish. Unless we would go into town and buy food for all of these people. For there were about five thousand men.

And he said unto his disciples, Make them sit down in company of fifty. And so they did that. And they made them all sit down.

And he took the five loaves and the two fish. And looking up to heaven, he blessed them and he broke them. And he gave the disciples to set it before the multitude.

And they did all eat. And they were gluttoned. And then they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

We have commented on this when we were going through Matthew and Mark's Gospel. And I don't feel that it is in need of any further comment than that which has already been made. Now, from Bethsaida, the Sea of Galilee, the northern end there.

Our next little scene takes place around forty miles away. Jesus has now moved with his disciples from the area near Bethsaida. We know that he returned across the lake to Capernaum.

But now Luke's next little, I want to say vignette. I don't know if that's a word or not or if that belongs there. But this next little scene that we have takes place up at Caesarea Philippi, which is the area that is today called Banias.

And it is right at the foot of the Mount Hermon where the Jordan River begins as a huge spring just coming right out of the rocks. The water just begins to flow right there from the rocks. It's an interesting thing to go to Banias today and see the beginning of that Jordan River right there at Banias, right at the base of Mount Hermon.

And so we are moving now from the Sea of Galilee. We're up at the upper end. It's like he's getting alone with his disciples, leaving the crowded areas around the Sea of Galilee and coming up now to Caesarea Philippi.

And Luke again, who is more careful to point out the prayer life of Jesus than the other Gospels. For there are seven places in Luke's Gospel where he points out the fact that Jesus was praying when certain things took place that are not recorded in the other Gospels. But Luke is careful to report them because Luke's emphasis is upon the humanity of Jesus.

And because his emphasis is upon the humanity of Jesus, and one of the greatest needs that man has is contact with God through prayer. Something that Jesus felt important and essential even in his God-man state. So Luke is careful to point out the prayer life of Jesus.

So it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him. Now that's an interesting statement, isn't it? It sounds contradictory. As he was alone praying, his disciples were with him.

But such is the case when a man is in prayer. Prayer is a very private thing. It is communion between you and the Father.

And you know that communion can be a very private thing even in the midst of a large company. And sometimes I have found it so strengthening and helpful in a crowd to get alone with God in prayer. Pressed by a situation.

And so he was alone praying, his disciples were with him. And he asked them, Whom say the people that I am? What's the popular opinion? What are the people saying? And they answered and said, John the Baptist. But some say Elijah.

And others that one of the old prophets is risen again. Now these are the stories that you remember Herod heard. Herod heard that John the Baptist was risen again or that it was Elijah or that it was one of the old prophets risen again.

And so he said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he immediately charged them and commanded them to tell no man that thing. Now you may wonder why

did Jesus tell them not to tell anybody? I believe that it is because at this point they had a totally false conception of the Messiah.

You are the Messiah of God, Peter said. Jesus said don't tell anybody. For the disciples themselves did not understand this at this point.

Because the whole Jewish concept of the Messiah was the establishing of the kingdom and the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world. And they did not understand that He was to come into the kingdom by His death. So because they did not fully understand the complete implications of Him being the Messiah of God, He said don't tell anybody.

You don't know enough about it yourself yet. Don't tell anybody about this. Because He knew that His mission was to be accomplished not by establishing His throne in Jerusalem and overthrowing the Roman powers and bringing the world in submission, but His kingdom was to be established by Him hanging on a cross.

Something the disciples did not understand, could not understand, would not understand until He rose again from the dead. So these are things that they did not comprehend and would not comprehend until after the resurrection. So don't go out and publish this because the crucifixion would then blast the hopes of all the people.

They went out and said, Oh, the Messiah is here. The crucifixion would have destroyed everybody. It was premature until the resurrection of the dead.

And then they could proclaim the fact that this was the Messiah for they could now even point out the Scriptures being fulfilled in His death. But they didn't understand it. So He said don't tell anybody.

It's premature. You don't understand this fully yourself. And then He said, The Son of Man must suffer many things.

He just said you're the Messiah of God. In their mind, they thought, Oh, sitting on the throne, He's going to reign. Lord, can I sit at your right hand? I want to sit at your left hand.

And so now He is beginning to break to them the news. You're right. I am the Messiah of God.

Yet, I'm going to suffer many things. And I'm going to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes. And I'm going to be slain.

But I will rise again the third day. Now He's beginning to tell them, though they don't understand, this is just going over their head. In fact, Matthew tells us at this point that Peter began to rebuke Him.

He said, Oh, Lord, be that far from Thee. Don't talk like that. And Jesus said, Get Thee behind Me, Satan.

So they don't understand. Don't go out and publish this yet. You're not ready.

You don't understand. And He said unto them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it.

But whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world and lose himself or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My

words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory and in His Father's and of the holy angels. Now you see, He's beginning to tell them now more about the truth about the Messiah.

Thou art the Messiah of God. Don't tell anybody. Because I'm going to be despised.

I'm going to be rejected. I'm going to be slain. But I'm going to rise again the third day.

And I'm going to come again in the glory of the Father. That's when the kingdom will be established. When I come again with the glory of the Father and all the holy angels.

Now, if you want to be a part of this kingdom, if you want to come after Me, you've got to deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Me. These are the requirements of discipleship. If any man will come after Me, and they remain today the requirements of discipleship, there is a denying of self, for the kingdom of God is not selfishness.

It is not self-centeredness. The kingdom of God is not man-centered. It is God-centered.

And a man whose life is centered in God cannot be centered in himself. But because it is centered in God, it will have as that fruit the desire to give and to help fellow man. Because that is God's desire.

And as I submit to God, God will lead me in giving myself and of myself to others. So you must deny yourself and take up your cross daily. The taking up of the cross involves the total submission of your will to God.

Jesus in the garden prayed, Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, referring to the cross. Nevertheless, He said, not My will, Thy will be done. And as I take up My cross, what I am doing is saying, Father, not My will, Thy will be done in My life.

It is the submitting of myself totally to the will of the Father. The third aspect is following Jesus Christ. Those are the requirements of discipleship.

Now, the rationale is next given by Jesus. These are the requirements. You want to be the disciple, but here's the rationale.

If you seek to save your life, you're only going to lose it. If you try to set your own destiny, if you follow your own ambitions, if you live to fulfill your own desires, you're just going to lose your life. If you try to save it, you're going to lose it.

But, if you will lose your life for My sake, you'll find what living is all about. Real life is found when you lose your life for Christ's sake. You lose your life in Him.

When you submit yourself totally to Him, you really discover the real meaning and purpose of life itself. Why are you here? Why did God create you? Why did God place you here? In order that you might go out and fulfill all your desires and follow after your ambitions? No way. In order that you might find all of the pleasure that you can and live for pleasure? No way.

If you live for pleasure, you're dead while you still live. The man who seeks to find his own pleasure and his own way in life is only losing it. But, the man who will seek to bring pleasure to God is the man who has discovered life, its meaning, its purpose.

And when you start living to please God, you'll find a very satisfying, fulfilling life. Further rationale. What is a man advantaged if he would gain the whole world? Now you say that my ambition is to be wealthy.

My ambition is to have goods. My ambition... Hey, wait a minute. What if you attain it? What if you achieve it? What if you gain the whole world? What advantage is it if you lose your own soul or you are cast out from the kingdom of God? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory and in His Father's and of the holy angels.

He's coming again in His glory, the glory of the Father with the holy angels. And so, that's the kingdom of God. Now you say I'm the Messiah of God.

Right. But you don't understand it. Keep it under your hat for a while until you come to a more complete understanding of what that means.

It doesn't mean the immediate establishing of the kingdom and of the throne of God upon the earth. It means there's going to be some hard times. There's going to be suffering.

There's going to be rejection. There's going to be the cross. There's going to be the resurrection.

And then there's going to be the service, the work of bringing others into the kingdom which will come to pass as men deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Him. But, there's a glorious reward. If you are faithful in serving Him, not ashamed of Him, then He will not be ashamed of you, but you will share in the glory in that day when He comes in His glory and that of the Father's to establish God's kingdom.

But I tell you of a truth. There are some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God. Now, they're up at Caesarea Philippi and He is saying to them, there's some of you right here.

You're not going to die until you see the kingdom of God. And so it came to pass about eight days after these sayings that He took Peter and John and James and He went up into a mountain to pray. The purpose of going up there in the mountain, again, Luke points it out, was to pray.

He gives us these beautiful little insights to the prayer life of Jesus. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered and His raiment was white and glistening. That word glistening is an interesting old English word.

And the word in Greek is as lightning, as lightning flashing. His raiment became like lightning flashing. The glistening is flashes of light coming off of it.

And here He is in prayer and while in prayer, this in the Greek word is metamorphosed. There was that change. The metamorphosed.

The total change of body so that they saw Him in the glory of the kingdom. As He said, there are some of you that are here that you're not going to die until you see the kingdom of God. And there they got an insight into the kingdom of God as they saw Him in the glory.

In the 17th chapter of John, Jesus prayed to the Father, Father, glorify Thy Son with the glory that I had with Thee before the world ever was. And the Father answered and said, I have glorified Thee and I will glorify Thee. In the first chapter of the book of Revelation, John gives us a very graphic and beautiful description of Jesus in His glory.

And again, John speaks of His face shining like the sun with brightness. Here, His clothes like flashes of lightning glittering or glistening. And behold, there talked with Him two men which were Moses and Elijah who appeared in glory and they were talking to Him of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.

Or the word decease is departure. His departure from the earth and coming back into glory that would be accomplished there in Jerusalem. Now, how did they know it was Moses and Elijah? Did Jesus say Peter? I want you to meet Moses.

It's Peter. People oftentimes ask me, will we know our friends when we get to heaven? Will we know each other there? Well, God help us. I pray we're not going to be more stupid there than we are here.

If we know each other here, surely we will know each other there. Oh, but I want Scripture. All right.

When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be put away, then shall we see face to face and then shall we know even as we are known. I'll know you just like I know me. I'm not going to need introductions to anybody in heaven.

The Lord will plant DNA or whatever into my consciousness so that I will immediately and automatically know everybody. I'll say, oh, there's David over there. I've never seen him before.

And you'll immediately know everybody. They didn't need introductions to Moses and Elijah. They just knew that's who it was.

You just know intuitively. You have the oedis. The intuitive knowledge.

Interesting that Moses and Elijah were alive. And interesting that they were talking with Jesus as the disciples were privileged to see this glimpse into the spiritual world. But Peter and those that were with him were sleeping heavily.

And when they woke up, they saw the glory in the two men that stood with him. Now, Peter, it seemed like to sleep when Jesus prayed. And he was in a heavy sleep.

Can you imagine that? They're up on the Mount of Hermon. It's a steep mountain. Good climb.

And so you're probably really tired. And Jesus is there praying. The disciples saw Peter, James, and John, the three disciples there.

They were in a heavy sleep. And they probably heard voices. Probably woke them up.

Who's he talking to? And when they looked, they saw Jesus in the transformed glory. His clothes like lightning flashes. And there's Moses, the giver of the law.

And Elijah. Whoo! They're talking with Jesus. And Peter, when it came to pass that Moses and Elijah departed, Peter said to Jesus, Oh, Master, it was good for us to be here.

Now, you remember just a few days earlier, Jesus told them that he was going to die. I'm going to go to Jerusalem. I'm going to be rejected by the scribes, Pharisees.

They're going to kill me. Peter said, Lord, it's good to be here. Let's stay right here.

Let's build three tabernacles. Let's not leave this place. Let's not go back to Jerusalem.

Let's stay right here, Lord. Let's build three tabernacles. It's good for us to be here.

Not to be in Jerusalem. And that's going to happen there. Let's just stay right here, Lord.

It's good to be here. Let's build three tabernacles and stay here. One for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah.

Not knowing what he said. Another gospel said, because he didn't know what to say. If you don't know what to say, it's better to just shut up.

We can get in a lot of trouble just saying something because we think you ought to say something. But many times in that place, it's better to just keep silent. I guess Peter began that, at least his idea began that which to me has become a curse in the land of Israel, and that is building a tabernacle over the site of some event.

And to me, one of the disappointing things of going to the Holy Land is all of the churches that have been built on supposed sites of scriptural events. And there's nothing to take away the awe and the wonder of the birth of Christ than to go into the church of nativity. It will just spoil it every time.

You go in and see all the tinsel and the baubles and the priests with a handout. And somehow it just doesn't fit. And Peter, I guess, was the one that started that whole custom.

Lord, let's build a tabernacle right here, you know, to commemorate this glorious event. Three of them in fact. One for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah.

Good to be here. And while he was thus speaking, there came a cloud. And it overshadowed them.

And they feared as the cloud they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud saying, This is My beloved Son. Hear Him.

Now, there it appeared who? Moses, who was the spokesman to the nation through the law. They saw Elijah, who was the spokesman to the nation through the prophets and represented the prophets. And the Old Testament is made up of the law and the prophets.

You've heard the law and the prophets, but this is My beloved Son. Hear Him. God who at sundry times and in diverse ways spoke to our fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by His own dear Son.

This is My beloved Son. Hear Him. And so the words of Christ supersede the law and the prophet which He summed up to be Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, strength, and mind and thy neighbor as thyself.

And when the voice was passed and Jesus was found alone, they kept it close. And they told no man in those days of those things which they had seen. When they came down from the mountain, they didn't share it with the others.

And it came to pass that on the next day when they were come down from the hill, there were many people there to meet Him there in the area of Caesarea Philippi. And behold, a man of the company cried

out saying, Master, I beseech thee, I beg you, look upon My Son. He is My only child.

And lo, there is a spirit that takes Him. And He suddenly cries out and it tears Him and He foams at the mouth and it bruises Him and it hardly ever leaves Him. And I begged your disciples to cast Him out, but they couldn't.

And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you? Bring your Son to Me. And as He was yet bringing His Son, the devil threw Him down and tore Him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the child and delivered Him again to His Father.

And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered, everyone, at all these things that Jesus did, He said to His disciples, Let these sayings sink down into your ears. Now pay attention and let it sink in.

For the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of men. Let it sink in now. They still could not conceive this.

They were still in their minds rejecting the idea of suffering. They were rejecting the idea of the cross. So let this sink in.

I'm going to be delivered into the hands of men. But they did not understand this saying as it was hid from them, and they did not perceive it, and they were afraid to ask Him what it meant. And there arose a reasoning among them which of them should be the greatest.

You see, this is again an indication they didn't understand. He's talking about His cross, His rejection, His suffering. And they're talking about themselves and the greatness that they might enjoy in the kingdom.

And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child and He set him by Him. And He said to them, Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receives Me. And whosoever shall receive Me receives Him that sent Me.

For He that is least among you all the same shall be great. If you want to be great in God's kingdom, learn to be the servant. And John answered and said, Master, we saw one who was casting out devils in Your name.

And we forbid him because he did not follow with us. The beginning of sectarianism. Denominationalism.

And Jesus said unto him, Don't forbid him. For he that is not against us is for us. Ready to stop others who don't follow along with us.

And the Lord says, No, no, no. They're not against us. They're for us.

So it came to pass when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. So he's come back now from Caesarea Philippi and he's back in the area of Capernaum. But now he's getting ready to go to Jerusalem for the last time.

And they are in their journey southward and they are coming now towards Jerusalem through Samaria. Now Jesus often took the typical Jewish route through the Jordan Valley so you wouldn't have to go through the area of the Samaritans. But this time he's coming through the area of Samaria.

The time that he should be received up he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers before him and they entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him actually to find a place for him to lodge. There was a good company of people that traveled with Jesus.

There was maybe forty or fifty people in the company that were traveling with him. And so it took preparation. It took arrangements.

People had to go ahead, buy the food, get places for them to stay and all as Jesus would move with his company. And so they went into this village of the Samaritans to make preparations. But they did not receive him because it was obvious that he was heading towards Jerusalem.

And because the time of the Feast of the Passover was approaching, they no doubt figured he was going to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Passover, which the Samaritans felt should be celebrated on Mount Gerizim. There in Samaria. And to the present day, the Samaritans still celebrate the Passover on Mount Gerizim by offering a sacrificial lamb even to the present day.

There are only about 200 Samaritans left in the world. Most of them have sort of traces of idiocy because of the close intermarriages now that are taking place between the Samaritans. They are almost extinct.

There's only about 200 left today. But on the Passover, they still offer a sacrificial lamb on the top of Mount Gerizim. And so, they felt that was the place where God was worshipped.

That was where Abraham built his altar to sacrifice Isaac. And they held that as the sacred place to worship God. And so, because of this animosity, antagonism, that existed between the Jew and the Samaritan, where they had no dealings with each other, when it appeared that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, they just wouldn't allow Him in the village.

They wouldn't give them any hospitality at all. And so, when the disciples James and John, and now we know why Jesus called them the sons of thunder, when they saw this, they said, Lord, would You have us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them as Elijah did? Of course, these guys had just been up on the mountain. They saw Elijah, you know.

And so, they were probably inspired again by what this prophet did. And so, why don't we wipe them out, Lord? Show them a thing or two. You teach them a lesson for snubbing You, you know.

But Jesus turned and He rebuked them. And He said, You don't know the manner of spirit that you are of. You don't know.

Because I didn't come to destroy. The Son of Man has not come to destroy, but to save. And here again, Jesus enunciates Himself the purpose of His coming.

And that is something that should concern us at the Christmas season. Why Jesus came. What is the purpose of His coming? Jesus, many places, has declared the purpose of His coming.

One of the purposes of His coming is that He might seek and save those that are lost. He didn't come to condemn. He didn't come to destroy.

He did come to save. But He came for other reasons too. And He tells us the reasons why He came.

And for special credit, look them up. And find out the purposes for His coming at this Christmas season. Why should I tell you everything I know? Put myself out of a job.

So they went to another village. This is the part we took for our text this morning. We encourage you to get the tape and you can get it from the tape library and we go into this particular passage.

Now it came to pass as they went in the way, a certain man said to Him, saying, Lord, I will follow You wherever You go. And Jesus basically says to him, fellow, count the cost. There are a lot of people that are touched by emotion when they come to Jesus.

They say, oh, Lord, I'll do anything for You. Jesus says, wait a minute. Count the cost.

Lord, I'll go with You wherever You go. The Lord says, count the cost. Foxes have holes.

The birds of the air have nests. But the Son of Man doesn't have anywhere to lay His head. You say you're going to follow me wherever I go? Hey, it's going to cost you, man.

Are you willing to pay that cost? Are you willing to pay the price? And that's what Jesus is just saying. Weigh the price and determine. Don't just take off without first considering weighing the price.

Now there is another who said, who Jesus said, he saw another fellow and Jesus said, hey, follow me. The first one volunteered. Jesus discouraged him.

Or at least encouraged him to count the cost before he did. But to another he said, follow me. And he said, Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father.

Now, right here, in the words, me first, you see the reason why he couldn't follow Jesus. No man can follow Jesus who is a me first man. You see, to follow Jesus, you've got to deny yourself.

And the minute you say, me first, you are disqualifying yourself from following Jesus. And so he said, allow me first. Uh-uh.

Can't allow that if you let, and if you acknowledge Jesus as Lord and you're determined to follow him, it's Jesus first. Allow me first to go and bury my father. And Jesus said to him, let the dead bury their dead.

But you go and preach the kingdom of God. You say, well, how cold and insensitive Jesus must have been. Wouldn't even allow this fellow to go and attend his father's funeral.

Why, anybody will let you off work to attend your dad's funeral. But that phrase, allow me first to bury my father, is an interesting phrase of procrastination. It doesn't mean that your father is dead.

It is a phrase that they still use to the present day that says, I want to stick around home for a while. You know, wait till my father dies and then I'll come. And it didn't mean that his father was dead and was ready to be buried because they always buried people within hours.

Actually, within two hours after they're dead, they were buried. So when he says, allow me first to bury my father, he's saying, maybe down the road a ways. I've got a few things I want to do first.

And down the road a ways, maybe I'll do it. Me first. To another said to Jesus, Lord, I will follow Thee, but let me first.

Oh, come on you guys. Learn your lessons. Can't be that way.

It can't be me first when I'm following Jesus. Let me first go bid those farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said to him, no man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

It takes a commitment, a total commitment to Jesus Christ. It may cost family relationships. You can't go forward looking backward.

Now, in chapter 10, we read of this commissioning and the sending forth of the 70 in contrast to the 12 of chapter 9. After these things. Now, he's on his way towards Jerusalem. And the Lord appointed another 70 also and he sent them two by two before him into every city and place where he himself would come.

So, they were to go as advanced teams in the villages that he would be passing through as he is on his way to Jerusalem. And therefore, he said unto them, the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

Now, go your ways, and behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. Don't carry a purse, nor script, nor shoes, nor greet any man in the way. And into whatsoever house you enter, first say, Peace, or Shalom, be to this house.

And if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it. And if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain eating and drinking the things that they give.

For the labor is worthy of his hire. And just don't go from house to house. Remain in the house and eat and drink what they give you.

The labor is worthy of his hire. And in whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you, eat the things that are set before you, and heal the sick that are there. And say to them, The kingdom of God is come near unto you.

They were advanced messengers to go before Him to do His work, the work of the kingdom and the healing of the sick and the proclaiming of God's good news to man. In whatsoever city you enter, if they receive you not, go your way out into the streets of the same city and say, Even the very dust of your city which cleaves on us, we do wipe off against you. Notwithstanding, be sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come near to you.

There are people who the kingdom of God has come near, or they have come near to the kingdom and have never entered in. And that is always to me a tragic thing. That Herod Agrippa should say to Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian.

He came near to the kingdom of God, but he didn't enter. And the Lord said, If they don't receive you, just go out into the street, dust off your shoes in front of them, and say, We dust off the dust of this city that it might remain. But know this, the kingdom of God came near to you.

And I say unto you, that it will be more tolerable in that day, that is the day of judgment, that is to come for Sodom, than for that city. The sin against light is the greatest sin that man can commit. God holds us responsible for the knowledge that we have.

God does not hold a man responsible for knowledge that he does not have. To whom much is given, much is required. To whom little is given, little is required.

God is fair in judgment. Now, for this city, it would be more tolerable than Sodom, because the kingdom of God came near. They had the exposure, but they did not enter in.

And thus, for that city, it would be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city, because Sodom did not have the same exposure to the truth. That's just the fire bell, don't worry about it. Sunday school's on fire, but we've got a good system to evacuate the kids.

No, to tell you the truth, there's some rotten little junior high school kid that slipped out of his class and broke the glass. And when we catch him, Romain will deal with him. And it would be better for him.

Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! Now, these are two cities around the Sea of Galilee where Jesus had ministered, where His light did come. Who rejected that light? They rejected the kingdom. For if the mighty works that had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, instead of being destroyed by the subsequent invasions of Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great.

But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon and at the judgment than for you. Interestingly enough, the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida are both totally obliterated. In another denunciation, Jesus also said, woe unto thee, Capernaum! It also was obliterated.

They just recently in the last few years even found the site of Bethsaida. It was so totally obliterated. Woe unto you! And judgment surely came upon Bethsaida, upon Chorazin, upon Capernaum.

And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell. He that heareth you... Now He's talking to His disciples, still commissioning them as they're going. He that heareth you, heareth Me.

He that despises you, despises Me. And he that despises Me, despises the One that sent Me. Now this is true for everyone that the Lord commissions to go out and do His work.

If the person hates you, you should not take that personally. They only hate you because of the One you represent. Because you are a representative of Jesus Christ, they actually hate Him.

And thus they vent their hatred of Him upon you. But if they hate Him, then they hate God. They hate the One who has sent Him.

Now He that heareth you, heareth Me. He that despises you, despises Me. We are so identified with the One who has sent us.

And the seventy returned again with joy. He had sent them out in advance, and now they were coming back and they said, Lord, it was neat, even the devils were subject unto us through Thy name. In the name of Jesus, we do have authority and power over the demon spirits.

And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. God, help us.

Let that sink into your heart. You as a child of the kingdom. The power that God has made available to us over all the power of the enemy.

That's why Martin Luther wrote, The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not at him. One little word will fell him. That name or that word above all words.

The name, the power, the name of Jesus. And yet we see the church so often trembling before the forces of darkness. We need not to tremble.

The Lord has given us authority and power over every power of the enemy. But it's time that we start exercising this power and using it. And nothing shall by any means hurt you.

You remember when old Paul was there cast up on the shore after the shipwreck and they were building the fire and this poisonous viper fastened on Paul and the natives said, wow, he must be a murderer or something because even though he escaped the storm, the gods aren't going to let him live. And Paul just shook the thing off into the fire and they kept watching him because they knew that he should soon go into convulsions and die. And as he just kept sitting there warming himself and talking and all, then they changed their mind.

They said, he must be a god. Nothing will hurt you. You know, I do believe that we are sort of, oh, there's a word that I can't quite pull it in.

But I don't think that until God is through with us that not much can happen to us. I really feel that God has a purpose for my life and until that purpose is complete, God is going to preserve me. Now, I don't go out and just live recklessly and drive 100 miles an hour down the freeway because, oh, you know, God's got a purpose and God's purpose is fulfilled.

Nothing can happen to me. Nothing can hurt me until God's purposes are fulfilled. That's stupid.

God also gave us brains and prudence. But I do feel that there is sort of a divine protection over a person who is walking according to the purposes of God and that nothing can happen to you until your purpose is fulfilled. In the book of Revelation, it tells us about the two witnesses whom God sends to bear witness during the time of the Great Tribulation and it said, and when the days of their testimony were complete, the Antichrist had power over them to slay them.

He didn't have that power until their days were complete. I feel that until the days of my testimony and witness are complete that I'm sort of indestructible, that God is going to keep me, God is going to preserve me until His purposes are fulfilled and the minute the purposes of God are fulfilled and I have finished my testimony, I believe God is going to be gracious and good to me and take me home immediately. The minute He is through with my witness here upon the earth, why would He want to leave me here any longer once I have finished those purposes? So I have that confidence.

My life is in God's hands. And until His purposes are complete, I'm going to be around. Not necessarily around here.

I don't know that God wants me to always be around here. It would appear that way right now, but who knows? I don't know. I live from day to day.

And you see, I am not my own to say where I am going to preach or in what manner or whatever. I'm His servant. And as His servant, I have to wait upon Him for instructions.

And He's the one who guides me. And He has a plan and a purpose. And He is working in me to prepare me for those works that He wants me to do for Him.

And when they're finished, I'm going home. So, Jesus said that I have given you power over all the power of the enemy. Nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Oh, interesting. Because every, well, not every one of them, but the 12 apostles, with the exception of John and Judas, were all martyred. Some of them in very vicious ways for their witness of Jesus Christ.

But not until they had finished their testimony. Now, Herod stretched forth his hand against the church and he beheaded James, one of these that Jesus was talking to. And when Herod saw that it pleased the Jews, he had Peter thrown in prison intending to bring him forth on the next day and no doubt to execute him.

But that night, an angel of the Lord came to Peter in prison and woke him up and said, Peter, put your sandals on. Let's get out of here. And Peter followed the angel as the doors automatically opened in front of them and closed behind them.

And Peter walked right out of the prison. And when he was out on the street, the angel left him. And Peter said, Whoo! I guess it isn't a dream.

It's real. I'm out. Wow! And he headed for the house of John Mark's mother where the church was having a prayer meeting praying that the Lord would help poor Peter in prison.

And he knocked on the door and the young girl came to the door and she said, Who is it? And he said, It's Peter. And she got so excited she didn't even unlock the door. She ran back and told those who were praying, Oh God, help poor Peter.

Peter's at the door! And they said, Oh, you've seen a ghost. You know, you're crazy. Don't tell me it was their prayer of faith that released Peter.

It was God's sovereign work. God wasn't through with Peter yet. Yet, there came a day when God was through with Peter's witness and Peter, when they came to execute him, said, Fellas, please do me one favor.

They said, What is it? He said, Well, He said, You're going to crucify me, but don't crucify me in an upright position. I'm not worthy of that. That's the way my Lord was crucified.

Crucify me upside down. And so Peter was crucified upside down. But, not until he had finished his testimony.

God will preserve you. Nothing will hurt you. He's got a purpose and a plan for your life.

But Jesus said, You're rejoicing the devils themselves. You don't rejoice in this. Not that the spirits are subject unto you.

Don't rejoice in the phenomena. Don't get all excited over the phenomena that you see. But rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

You want to rejoice over something? Rejoice over the fact that, Hey, you're a citizen of the kingdom. Your name is written in the rules of the heavenly kingdom. That's what you need to rejoice in.

And in that hour, Jesus rejoiced. In the spirit. And that's an interesting phrase in it.

He rejoiced in the spirit. Have you ever rejoiced in the spirit? It's an exciting experience to rejoice in the spirit. When God's spirit is moving upon your heart and just to be rejoicing in the spirit is a beautiful experience.

And Jesus rejoiced in the spirit and said, I thank you, Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. That you have hid these things from the wise and the prudent. And you have revealed them unto these babes.

Even so, Father, for it was good in your sight. Jesus is looking at these simple people. He sees their excitement as they're saying, Oh, Lord, it was glorious.

Oh, we had such a neat time. The devils were subject to us. And you know, we were doing this and oh, you should have seen that.

And the Lord was saying, Oh, you know, that's good. But don't rejoice really in these things. Rejoice that your name's in heaven.

You're part of the kingdom. And then he just, Oh, it's so beautiful. See these simple people.

They're not, they weren't the Pharisees. They weren't the rulers. They were just plain, simple people.

He said, Oh, Father, so great that you hid these things from those self-important people. You've revealed them unto these babes because it seemed good to you. I'm glad that I'm just a simple person.

God is so good to make me just a simple person. I hate complexities. I had a lady in my church one time that used to call me up and say, Now, Pastor Smith, the other day when you said good morning, what did you really mean by that? When I say good morning, I mean good morning.

I don't mean anything else. I don't speak in, what is it? Double entendre? I don't even know the word. I don't have hidden meanings.

I don't try to use subtleties and complexities and hide the true meaning. I say what I mean and I mean what I say. I'm not smart enough, you know, to speak in these subtle kind of things and say one thing and really mean another.

You can't really know what I mean until you discern it and study it and find the hidden meaning in what I said. I'm not that way. Jesus wasn't that way.

And it's tragic that a lot of people try to make Jesus that way in their interpreting of the Scripture. Now, what did Jesus really mean by this? And then they get into the spiritualizing of the Scripture where they lose the sense of it all together. Jesus meant what He said.

And He said what He meant. And you can just believe it and trust it. Father, I thank You that You've hid these things from those big shots and You've just revealed them to these babes.

Oh, so it seemed good in Your sight. And then He said, All things are delivered to Me of My Father. Quite a statement, isn't it? All things are delivered to Me of My Father.

And no man knows who the Son is, but the Father. And who the Father is, but the Son. And He to whom the Son will reveal Him.

No one really knows who God really is except those whom Jesus has revealed the truth of the Father to. No man can come to the Father except he is drawn. So if you have been drawn to God through Jesus Christ, be thankful.

Because unless there was that work of God's Spirit in your life, you'd have never have made it. And He turned again to His disciples and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. How blessed it is for a person to see, to understand the things that you see, to have the same understanding, to perceive these things.

And I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see the things which you see, but they didn't see them. And to hear those things which you hear, but they have not heard them. Many important people would give everything to have what you have in that glorious relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Oh, he said, you're blessed that you've seen these things and that you've seen them. Now there was a certain lawyer who stood up, tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus said to him, What is written in the law? How do you understand it? And he answered saying, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. And Jesus said, that's correct.

Do it and you'll live. But he wasn't satisfied. He was wanting to justify himself in front of the others.

And he said, well, who is my neighbor? And Jesus said, there was a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among thieves, which stripped him of his clothes and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise also a Levite was at that place, and he came and looked at him, and he passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and he saw him, and he had compassion on him. And he went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil in and wine.

And he set him on his own beast, and he brought him to an inn and took care of him. And on the next day, when he was leaving, he took out two pence and he gave it to the host, and he said to him, take care of him. And whatsoever you spend more than this, when I come again, I will repay you.

Now, which of these three do you think was his neighbor to the man who fell among the thieves? And he said unto him, The one that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go and do likewise. Who is your neighbor? Whoever is in need.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Who is my neighbor? The man who is in need. Now, of course, subtly, Jesus is again making an outsider the hero of the story.

You see, the priest and the Levite do nothing in all of their self-righteousness. They do nothing. Who is the one that helps him? A hated Samaritan.

He becomes the hero in the story. The one that they have such strong racial prejudice against is the one that Jesus lifts up in the hero's role. Knowing good and well that it would irritate them.

But he didn't care. Now, it came to pass. It's an interesting phrase.

Luke uses it over and over again. Have you noticed that whenever he introduces a new little scene, he usually introduces it with a phrase and it came to pass. One of Luke's special little phrases.

Now, it came to pass as they went that he entered into a certain village and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet listening to his words. Now, we know from other Gospels that this is Mary and Martha who lived in Bethany with their brother Lazarus.

So, Luke doesn't identify this village nor does he identify the sisters anymore than Mary and Martha, but we know from other accounts that it is Mary and Martha from the city of Bethany, the sisters of Lazarus. And Martha was cumbered about with much serving. Now, the big crowd came in.

Jesus, you remember, I said, traveled with a lot of people and here were at least 70 traveling with him because he sent them out two by two to go in the villages ahead of him. So, imagine this crowd coming in for lunch and Martha was cumbered with much serving. And frantic, she came to him and said, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Order her to help me.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Oh, Martha, Martha, you are so full of care and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful and Mary has chosen that good part which will not be taken away from her. What was it? Sitting at the feet of Jesus and learning. You know, so often we get so concerned about our serving God.

And we get so busy in activities and we get so worried and encumbered in our service for God that we forget the better part of just sitting at the feet of Jesus and learning. God help us that we don't fall into that trap of over-involvement in service to the extent that we don't have time to just sit and worship at His feet as we learn of Him. Next week, we'll go on.

Chapters 11 and 12. May the Lord be with you. May the Lord bless you.

May the good hand of our Lord be upon your life. And may you experience that power in your life. And may you experience the rejoicing in the Spirit.

And above all, may you have that joy of just sitting at His feet to learn, to worship, rather than being encumbered about and full of care and troubled about what I'm gonna get Aunt Jane and Uncle Charlie. It's an easy time of the year, isn't it? To be a Martha. You better take time to be a Mary.

Because you never can be a good Martha until you've learned to be a good Mary. Sitting at the feet of Jesus. May that be your joy, your strength, your delight this week in His name.

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