

Finding Joy in the Right Place

Luke 10:1-24 / "Yeshua" § 105

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Jesus had just left the Feast of Booths in Jerusalem. While at the Feast Jesus confronted both the crowds and the Pharisees about their spiritual condition, specifically their false belief that their national heritage made them right with God. He also rebuked the Pharisees for being bad shepherds of Israel and encouraged people not to follow them.

While a few people believed in Him, the majority of the crowds and the Pharisees aggressively rejected Him, to the point of wanting to kill Him. After leaving Jerusalem Jesus gathered His disciples to send them on a mission into the surrounding cities and villages.

The Mission

The goal of the mission was for the disciples to find towns where there were people who would receive Jesus and His message. After ministering in the towns that received them they were to report back to Jesus and He would go to those places Himself. They would find some success, (**the harvest is plentiful**), but they would also face rejection and aggression, (**lambs in the midst of wolves**).

The Urgency of the Mission

The disciples were to go right away. They were to take no provisions; God would provide all they needed through the people who would welcome them into their homes. They also were to greet no one on the road. This urgency was because these would be the last 6 months of Jesus' earthly ministry. This was to be His last preaching tour. The next time He would step into Jerusalem it would be for His arrest and crucifixion. Several times in the past the Pharisees and crowds had tried to kill Jesus but His time had not yet come. He knew now that His time was drawing near and He was going to spend what time He had calling people to Himself. It's an incredible reflection of His love that He was going to spend the last few months of His earthly life going from village to village giving as many people as possible the opportunity to believe in Him.

The Disciples Return Rejoicing

The disciples returned to Jesus excited and rejoicing. The focus of their rejoicing was because of the power they had over the demonic through the authority Jesus had given them, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!". You can imagine how

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incredible it would have been to see God's power manifested through you; to see the sick miraculously healed and the demon-possessed set free. But Jesus quickly tells them that their joy is misplaced, and in fact, they should be rejoicing in something else. **“Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”** The authority that they had been given was for the validation of the message. It was a means to an end, not the end itself. Jesus tells the disciples what they should be rejoicing in is not that they had power and authority, but that their names are written in Heaven and that they have a secure standing before God. Their belief in Jesus had in fact added their names to the census of Heaven. They had the certainty of acceptance by the Father and that ought to be the highest cause for joy.

Jesus' Rejoicing and Prayer

The Father choosing to reveal the truth about Jesus to the disciples now fills Jesus with joy and thankfulness. **“I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”** “These things” that the Father has revealed to the disciples is a realization of who Jesus is, and that through believing in Jesus they have come to know the Father. **“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”** So the Father reveals the Son and the Son reveals the Father. There is no knowing the Son without the Father and no knowing the Father apart from the Son. The disciples didn't come to this realization through wisdom or through merit, it was a sovereign act of God's revelation through His grace and Jesus rejoices over it.

The Disciples are Blessed

Jesus blesses the disciples with encouragement for what they have seen. **“Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”** What they have seen is the fulfillment of the Messianic hope. They have seen the Messiah, witnessed His signs, and listened to His teaching. They have seen what the prophets prophesied about and what the great kings of Israel longed to see.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Voice of the Martyrs - This month's action pack items are bath towels, dental floss, and combs.

Ramona Pregnancy Care Clinic - Walk For Life will happen on April 10th at 8 am. Sign up to sponsor or walk in this event on the patio or online at FriendsOfRPCC.com