

The Lord of the Harvest

Luke 10:1-9; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 3-12-17

The Preparation (1)

This took place after what we see in Luke 9. The Lord Jesus appoints seventy men who of the rank and file of His followers. He may have appointed 70 as symbolic of the elders who helped Moses (Numbers 11:16-25) or, more likely, reflecting the 70 nations of the world listed in Genesis 10. Luke is concerned about presented the Lord Jesus as an able and willing Savior for the world. Some translations have seventy and some have seventy-two because of differences in manuscripts. Interestingly enough, there are 70 nations listed in the Hebrew text of Genesis 10 and 72 nations listed in the Greek text of Genesis 10 (LXX). They probably went in pairs because of the need for assistance and accountability as well as the principle of two or more witnesses to the truth (Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; Acts 13:1-3). The Lord sent them ahead of Himself because He has chosen to prepare His way through appointed men who bring the good news (Malachi 3:1; Romans 10:13-15) We need to work together. Believe that as you go, Christ will follow. (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 10:13-15) What we have come to know and experience of Christ is meant to be shared. We should see ourselves 'sent out' at our baptism. We should follow our Lord's directives as we go.

The Prayer (2)

Here the saving of souls from sin for satisfaction in God through Christ is pictured as the harvesting of a crop that requires workers to do the hard work of reaping the harvest. It is clear that God is the Lord of the harvest and that Jesus is that God who is the Lord (1)! We are commanded to pray and to pray specifically for God to 'thrust out' workers into the harvest of souls. It is clear that we are often reluctant to be involved in the Lord's work (Exodus 4:10, 13; 1 Kings 18:7-16; Esther 4:9-17; Jeremiah 1:4-7). Know that you are prone to ignore and resist this calling. (Exodus 4:10, 13) Pray for laborers. We should pursue gospel conversations in dependence on the Lord of the harvest. (Colossians 4:2-4) There is plenty of work to go around because of all the souls that God is saving – you are needed (Acts 18:9-10)! So be involved in the 'work of the Lord'. (John 6:29; 1 Corinthians 15:58) You cannot truly believe the truth and use the truth to excuse your disobedience to God's command. (ie, why pray and witness if God is in charge and has ordained what is going to happen? Because God said so!)

The Power (3)

We find out later in the passage what they are to go and do. The picture of the lamb and wolf is one of danger and helplessness, as well as patience and gentleness in the face of opposition (2 Timothy 2:24-26). The wolf is not the worst person imaginable but a person is hostile to the reign of God over their lives (Ezekiel 2:3-7; John 15:20; Matthew 7:15; John 10:12. The Lord says this to let us know that our work will not be easy and we cannot accomplish it in our own power. It indicates that faithfulness is what is needed and success may involve suffering. It highlights the reality that God pursues our good and the good of others in ways that are difficult and costly, but we need not doubt His goodness and love for us. Expect gospel conversations to

be hard. (Ephesians 6:10-20) Believe that success is faithfulness not fruitfulness. (Isaiah 6:8-13) Gospel conversations must be pursued not simply ‘happened upon.’

The Provision (4, 7-8)

The money belt was a bag or purse for carrying money. The bag was a traveler’s bag for clothing and other articles. To take no shoes means to take no extra shoes. The point is that they were not to make provisions for themselves by taking extra supplies, but were to trust God to provide for them. Later on the Lord would change His instructions to let them know that this was only a temporary state of affairs (Luke 22:36). Eastern greeting rituals could be long and involved and therefore, would delay an urgent mission. The seventy were to not to be unfriendly but to avoid any delay. Jesus is on His final journey to Jerusalem and time was short! The labor in view here is the ministry of the gospel (Deuteronomy 25:4; 1 Corinthians 9:8-12; 1 Timothy 5:18). It is to be supported materially. The point is to be thankful for whatever provision is made and to not be concerned about ‘clean’ and ‘unclean’ foods in the households of Gentiles (they were entering Trans-Jordan where a lot of Gentiles lived). The prohibition with regard to not moving around is meant to keep the focus on the work and to prevent looking for better accommodations. Trust God for your provision and protection. (Psalm 23) The gospel ministry is worth supporting. (Galatians 6:6-8)) Avoid trying to increase riches through gospel ministry.

The Proclamation (5-6, 9)

The blessing is a kind of heartfelt wish: ‘May the peace of God come to this house through my stay and ministry of the gospel.’ What is in view here is the expectation that whoever receives you into their home is open to or welcomes the gospel message or ‘message of peace’ preached (see Matthew 10:11 – ‘worthy’ through faith in the gospel). Therefore, the blessing is to be given, ‘Peace be to this house.’ If indeed, there are people in the home that receive the message of the gospel and enjoy the peace of God then the blessing will be fulfilled but if the message is rejected, the blessing will be void. The seventy were to ‘do’ the gospel (through good works, ie, healing) and ‘speak’ the gospel (message of peace, good news of the kingdom of God and the way into it through Jesus). To say the kingdom has come near is to say that they have heard the good news that is the door into the kingdom (Romans 10:8). The kingdom of God is God’s reign of perfect righteousness, joy and peace that He has promised to all who trust in His King (Romans 14:17; Psalm 2) Engage people with a heart that desires their peace. (Ezekiel 33:10-11) Make sure you care for people’s material and financial needs as well as their spiritual needs. Use whatever God has given you to bless others and further the gospel. Proclaim the good news of peace and the kingdom of God. (Isaiah 52:7; 61:1-3; Acts 8:12)

Conclusion

1. Pray for laborers in the Lord’s harvest of souls.
2. Pursue gospel conversations in dependence on the Lord of the Harvest.
3. Beware of The Shack. It is an attack on all that we have seen in this passage!