

Reasons We Rejoice, Part 1

Luke 10:17-18

August 18, 2019

Luke 10:17, and we're getting into another section, here, which is a very joyful section of this tenth chapter. Jesus appointed seventy-two disciples, as we've been studying. He sent them ahead of him two-by-two into every town and place where he himself was about to go, and you need to realize that that was not the first time that they'd been with Jesus. He'd been training them for many months, probably a year or more, throughout Galilee; and here in this passage he's enlisting them and sending them with instructions. We've been studying those instructions for the past number of weeks. He's given them instructions, and then he has sent them off.

And based on the verses, especially the verses, the passages we've covered the last couple of weeks, with warnings of judgment, with woes upon unrepentant cities, you might think

that the mission that these seventy-two disciples are about to embark upon is going to be fraught with difficulty and massive challenge, great opposition. In fact, they were stripped of everything, money bag, knapsack, even an extra pair of sandals, nothing but the clothes on their backs. They are going out utterly reliant upon God to provide for them and protect them. And Jesus even told them in verse 3, "I'm sending you out as little lambs in the midst of hungry wolves." Again, after what we studied the last couple of weeks, comparing these cities that they knew, friends, family that they knew in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum when he compares them with the judgments that fell on Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. Remember, we got some prophetic perspective about all that going into those Old Testament texts and looking at the severity of those judgments. Greater judgment is about to fall upon those three cities he named.

So we're expecting the seventy-two to head out into troubled waters. As they go through the land, they're going to face great difficulty, because after all, baby lambs don't fare all that well when they visit wolves' dens. They just get torn to pieces. Beloved, perhaps you feel that way for yourself. As

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the Lord has commissioned us as well as a church, as he's sent us out into this secular, very secular hostile world against the Gospel, he's sent us out as well to make disciples. We know this, there has been talk about this, and seeing it all around us, there is a moral revolution underway in the Western world. It's affecting every area of public life. Politics, hardly know whom to vote for anymore. Education, where do we train up our children and grandchildren? Business, even businesses and corporations are trying to virtue signal by getting on the right side of history and siding with all the moral revolutionaries.

All of our culture, every cultural conversation, all of that. We live in this world. We're not of the world, but we are certainly in this world, and so all of these things in the culture and society around us really do set a tone in our relationships, don't they? I mean, they occupy the subjects of the conversations we have with friends and family, around Thanksgiving, around Christmas, around weddings and funerals, and all types of family gatherings. We face these pressures, don't we?

The fear of social reprisal, angry reactions against what we believe as Christians, what we practice as Christians, about the way we view the world, which is so contrary, made more apparently so every single day, it seems, so contrary to the world. We can all feel the strangling, gagging presence of tyranny that is starting to settle over our land, to choke out honest conversation, to choke out any protest, any different opinion. For many people in this country, freedom-loving people, their complicity in the moral revolution is through their silence, through the fear of man, afraid of what other people are going to think, and so they just close their mouths and ride out the storm and let the revolution happen.

Christ turns to us, though. He turns to his people. He turns to his blood-bought Church, and he tells us, Go. Go. Luke 10:3, "Go your way. Behold I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves." Go. I know it's dangerous. I know they're ravenous. I know they want your blood. Go. In fact, if you back up one verse, Jesus doesn't merely command our outward compliance with his command to go; he actually commands our inward desire. He says in Luke 10:2, "Pray earnestly to the Lord



of the harvest, to send out laborers into his harvest." We pray about what we long for.

Even unbelievers pray about what they long for, O Lord, don't let me get into that trouble, let me get that promotion. O God, help me with this and I'll serve you forever. They pray, even unbelievers pray for what they want. How much more do we pray for what we want? And Jesus commands our desire, here. He commands our longing. "Pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest." Why? So that he'll send out laborers into his harvest. So whether it's our outward obedience or our inward thoughts, passions, zeal, desire, he commands us, Go. Don't worry about what it looks like out there. Go.

Listen, if we will obey his Word, not just outwardly, looking to and doing our duty, but with no heart in it really, if we'll obey his Word inwardly, with zeal for the Lord, with a passion for holiness, with a desire, a longing, even, to see God worshipped, to see Christ and his name high and lifted up, if we'll go with an inward zeal and passion to hear his Gospel proclaimed throughout our city, throughout our region,



throughout our state and nation, you know what we should expect is going to result from our obedience? Joy. Joy. Invincible, uncontainable, cannot-keep-the-lid-upon, joy, our joy.

That's what we find here in the next section as these seventy-two missionaries return from their mission, being sent out as lambs in the midst of wolves, yeah, but they come back, and as we read these verses, starting in verses 17-20, we find so many reasons for joy. They are rejoicing, and they need, we need to see this and see this very clearly. In fact, as we read, I'm going to read through verses 17-20, see how many reasons for joy that you can come up with as we read these few verses in the text.

Look at what it says there, verse 17, "The seventy-two 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 have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice

in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'"

Isn't that marvelous? I mean, what reasons for joy, so many significant reasons for joy! And I'm, I'm guessing you found quite a few; you probably lost count because I'm reading too fast, and you couldn't process it all or catch up. But there's more. Let's keep reading. Notice how Jesus himself actually enters into the joy of his disciples in the next section, verse 21. "In that same hour," So at the same time, the same time this is happening, that he's speaking, verse, verses 18-20, same time he's saying that, in the same hour, "he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, '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. 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.'

"And then turning to the disciples he said privately, '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.'" Notice that Luke, in writing, recording all of this, he's brought us to the woes of verses 13-16 into the beatitudes of verses 17-24. He's made this radical shift, this transition, swinging from one set of emotions to another. From the depths of woe to the heights of great, great joy and rejoicing. And it all begins with these seventy-two disciples, these missionaries, ambassadors, emissaries, and they're returning from their mission, having completed their mission. And, by the way, having been successful in their mission. Jesus is here with them alone. And we get to listen in, as it were, to part of the mission debrief that he conducts with them.

I don't know how many reasons for rejoicing you came up with as we read those verses. I've obviously had a, a week's head start ahead of you, a bit more time to reflect on the text than you did, and I came up with, in verses 17-20, thirty reasons to rejoice. I'm sure there are more to be found, but what we're going to do today, it's going to be a little bit

different, I'm going to move verse by verse and give you all thirty reasons to rejoice. Okay? It's going to provide us with reasons, a number of reasons, that you and I also can rejoice. Now, are we going to get through all thirty? Probably not. You know me. But listen, thirty reasons to me in these times don't even seem like enough reasons to rejoice. I want even more. And there are more to be found, but there are just thirty reasons here. Man, do we ever need to keep our minds focused on reasons for rejoicing.

That's what Paul famously told the Philippian believers in a passage or two that every Christian should memorize and meditate deeply on. In fact, take a quick look at Philippians chapter 4, Philippians chapter 4, very quickly, just as we, by way of introduction here. Paul began in the previous chapter, in Philippians chapter 3, and he commanded the Philippian believers about joy. He said, "Finally, my brothers rejoice in the Lord." You say, But I'm feeling really down. I'm feeling upset and troubled. It doesn't matter. You actually have the ability in Christ by the Holy Spirit to rejoice, to overcome feelings of doubt and anxiety and worry and frustration and anger. You have

the power in Christ by the Holy Spirit, through his Word, to rejoice.

That's why Paul can command you that way, "Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord," he says in chapter 3. He says, "To write the same things to you is no trouble to me," it's just putting pen to paper, but it's also "safe for you." It's safe. Interesting, isn't it, to rejoice in the Lord is safe. It's a discipline that keeps our minds safe. It keeps our hearts settled and contented. It keeps our souls healthy in the Lord, to rejoice, which is why Paul warns of what, that which endangers our joy in the next verses in chapter 3, but then he returns to the same command in the fourth chapter 4.

Look at it there, Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord," what does it say? "always." Not just sometimes, not just when you, not not just when the going gets tough and you need to look at that little memory verse that you've put on your refrigerator. Not when the kids are running you ragged, or when the dishes are piling up, but the laundry hasn't been done for two weeks. Not just when you haven't got the promotion, or you

got the promotion but then it was taken away because some guy stole it. Not, not just, not just the times that are really difficult. Paul says, "Rejoice always. And I will say again," he says, "rejoice." In case you're stuck in the always part, I'm going to say it again, Rejoice.

Now listen, just a quick theology about joy, and a clear up a misconception here. Joy is not happiness as we understand happiness, though the two are connected. Happiness as we know and understand that concept in our language and in our culture, happiness is really dependent on changing circumstances and unreliable situations. We could be happy with a new friendship, rightly so, but then we lose the happiness when the friendship is tested, or worse, when it sours and friends become disloyal. We can be happy with strong bodies and good physical health but then be turned, to have that happiness taken away whenever we suffer in some physical way. We could be happy with a promotion at work, but lose the happiness when the enticement of that promotion, the extra pay, actually has led us into a gilded cage of enslavement to a really bad job. We could be happy when our favorite sports teams win, but inexplicably depressed when they lose. Listen, joy is not happiness.

Joy, biblically defined, is an abiding sense of gladness and delight that is anchored deeply into the unchanging essence, eternal and infinite, the holy and powerful reality of the ever-blessed triune God of heaven, the only God who is. Knowing God is joy. Trusting God's promises, which are an extension of his fixed nature, that's how we remain anchored into that transcendent, absolute joy. "Rejoicing in the Lord always," if you look at Philippians 4, means that we have, in verse 5, we have a gentle, kind, forbearing way about us because we always know the Lord is at hand. The Lord is near. We need not fear, we need not be anxious, we need not worry because the Lord is there; the Lord is near.

Joy means we're not anxious about anything, as the verse says, because we're daily often even hourly in communion with the living God "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." We don't mull our troubles around in our tiny little heads. That does no good. Instead, we "let all our requests be made known to God," and when we do that, verse 6, "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding," which is tantamount to the effect



of this transcendent joy and rejoicing, that peace of God, "will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Look, we know God and we rejoice in him. We "cast all of our cares upon him because he cares for us." Isn't that amazing that a God as great and eternal and infinite and powerful, who is the one who created all of this that we see and know the ground we stand on, the air we breathe. He is the one who is sovereign over every single cell in our bodies. He planned our life, the beginning of it and the end of it and everything in between, including the trials. He's got it all in hand. He sustains everything and that God cares for us, individually. His eternal peace envelopes our hearts and our minds, forming a barrier between us and all true soul-killing trouble. And he settles us in pure, unmitigated joy.

Well, there's more to say about that, and we'll save that sermon, sermon for another time. But back to Luke, chapter 10, verses 17-20. What we learn from these verses, we get thirty reasons to rejoice. Thirty reasons that protect us from sorrow and discouragement in a world that is quite frankly, completely

losing its mind. So I've got nine reasons in verse 17, got nine reasons in verse 18, and then I got six reasons in verse 19, and six in verse 20, and if I've done the math correctly, that's 30. So a little, just a little heading for each verse, and then I'll start to unpack the reasons.

First of all, letter A, we'll call it capital letter A: Joy in mission completion. Joy in mission completion. And this is in verse 17. "The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!'" Now just a quick comment or two before we look at the first nine reasons to rejoice that are found in this verse. First, notice that the seventy-two return with joy, and we really don't know the specifics or the timing or the circumstances of their return. We don't know how long they were away. We don't know if they returned two-by-two at various times, checking in, going out, if they were at various places, or if they returned in twos or in groups or all at once, or what.

Whatever the case, we know that at this point we can suppose that Jesus and his twelve Apostles, they kept this

mission tightly run, well-organized; that's what we've seen all through the text, is how Jesus organizes and thinks about everything, every detail. Provides good oversight; there's good communication going from Jesus to his twelve Apostles, to the seventy-two pairs of missionaries. They gathered, somehow, the full group of the seventy-two at the very end. We're not told the specifics because really those specifics are not as important as what Luke wants us to focus on here.

Second thing, just by way of introduction. Luke records here one thing that caused the disciples to rejoice. But not everything. We can understand they probably had a lot to say, as you might imagine, but this one reason they have given for rejoicing, it actually encapsulates a whole host of reasons that we can infer from the one, as we'll soon see. One reason that they give turns into nine reasons for us, and that is the way with Scripture. The more you meditate upon it, the more you reflect, the more you think deeply about it and make good observations, the more you find how infinite, how deep the Scripture is.

Third thing: When the seventy-two report back, they say, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name." Notice here, they're tacitly affirming several things just in that one sentence. Number one, the Lordship of Christ. Number two, the power and authority of Christ. And number three, the honor of representing his name. So Christ's Lordship, his power, his authority, his honor, those are reasons for rejoicing for those who truly love and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, the emphasis in their statement there, which is why Luke records it, and what they seem here to be most thrilled about. It says they say, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name." And there's emphasis there in the Greek, "even the demons are subject to us in your name." In other words, Hey! We expected, based on what you told us, in verse 9, we expected to heal people of their diseases, and that's awesome. And then do some Kingdom preaching, which is awesome. You didn't tell us that we would have authority over the demons, too! You'll never guess what happened! And on they go, telling story after story of demons fleeing. The authority that Jesus granted to them, the power that they will, they were able to exercise while they were on this mission, totally exceeded their expectations. It's way

more than what they expected, more than Jesus told them, them about, and they're rejoicing about it. Can you imagine? Of course!

Now with that bit of introduction in mind, here are the first nine reasons to rejoice. I'm going to move pretty quickly with not a lot of repeating, so we've got to move pretty quickly, not repeating, but you're going to have to stay alert and concentrate. So ready? Here we go.

Number one: The joy of preservation. The joy of preservation. The seventy-two returned. That is to say, every single one of them. All of them returned. Even though Jesus had sent them out as lambs in the midst of wolves, without any money, any money, any knapsack, no sandals, they made it back safe and sound. Turns out the instructions that Jesus gave them were sufficient. They actually worked. Not one word of Jesus' instructions had failed them, and so not one of them was lost. That's worth meditating on.

Number two: The joy of trusting and obeying. The joy of trusting and obeying. The seventy-two returned, which means they obeyed Jesus' instructions. Why? Because they trusted Jesus. On the part of these disciples, they demonstrated faith in Jesus. They tested his words through obedience, and they found protection and provision in his promises all-sufficient, perfect, brought them home safely. That's what every child should learn in Sunday school, right? "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus," and we might add, and to be provided and protected and cared for and kept safe and kept happy and kept joyful, in Jesus. Trust him, believe, and do what he says. Obey him. Very simple lesson.

Number three: The joy of mission success. The joy of mission success. They returned with joy; that is to say, there's no shame when they returned. There's no shame in his presence; there's no making excuses for any failure; there's no concern that they've departed from his instructions because somehow they came up with a better idea that became innovative and they thought, I know! We'll bypass Jesus' instructions for this case because this case is special. Nope. They didn't do that. They did what he said. They succeeded in their mission. They trusted

Jesus, they obeyed his Word, they accomplished what he sent them out to do, and the result of obedience is joy.

Now I want to slow down, here, on this point number three. So we've talked about the joy of preservation, the joy of trusting and obeying, and here number three, the joy of mission success. And I want to slow down on this point for a moment because success is so highly regarded in our culture, in our evangelical context, but so often misunderstood in our evangelical context at the same time.

You'll notice in what Luke records here, there's no account of the mission itself, there's no record about any of the specifics, there's nothing but white space in between verses 16 and 17. Actually, I have a heading in there that says, "The Return of the Seventy-Two," but that's written in by the translators and the producers of this Bible. There's white space in between those two verses. Luke doesn't give us any details. There's no count of the number of responses. There's no count of the number of receptive versus non-receptive towns. There's certainly no count of the number of decisions for Christ.

Know what that means? This tells us that the doing of the mission is the success of the mission. The doing of the mission is the success of the mission. You want to have success in the mission? The Great Commission? The Gospel? Just do what Jesus says. You'll have success. Doing what Christ commands, doing his will according to his instructions, that is what defines success for the Christian. Notice it's nothing external, it's certainly nothing countable, it's nothing that's measurable by men, nothing quantifiable. God's ways are not our ways.

Oh, how I wish Christians would learn this most basic principle of ministry success. Success is not counted in numbers of people. Success is not counted in the size of buildings or the number of buildings or the breadth of the campus. Success is not counted in the number of programs and community outreaches. It's not counted in the size of the offering or the annual budget. Success is not counted in terms of influence, reach, impact, breadth of ministry or any external outcome or apparent effect. Success is counted, though, in terms of faithfulness to Jesus Christ, which is something really only God can see in the

heart of every individual. Any other view, beloved, is manifest evidence of pride.

That's why Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 and then in verse 5 as well. He said, "This is how one should regard us: as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it's required of stewards that they must be found," what? "faithful. When the Lord comes," verse 5, "he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart, and then each one will receive his commendation from God but not until then." Don't count, don't judge your brother, don't criticize, just look at yourself in the Lord, before the Lord and look at your own heart, what you truly know. Do you trust? Do you obey? Do you do his will in his way, or do you not? If you don't, it's okay. All of us are blown it in some way. Just repent of that. Understand that the Christian life is the life of repentance. We must keep growing and growing and growing.

A few verses later, in 1 Corinthians 4, Paul said, "I've applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit,

brothers." Paul, the Apostle, the mighty Apostle, Apollos, the man who was said to be "mighty in the scriptures," eloquent, reasoning, great preacher. Paul says, "I've applied all these things to me and Apollos." He told them earlier, "I planted, Apollos watered." Okay, so we did some gardening work, but God is the one who gave the growth. God is the one at work; we're just like planting and watering. We're nothing.

So what did he want them to learn by that? Well, he tells us, "I've applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, so that you may learn by us not to go beyond what's written, that none of you may become puffed up in favor of one against the other." Oh, how much we commit this sin, don't we? Making comparisons. Listen, success is trusting Jesus. Success is putting faith in his promises, and our faith is manifest when we do his will. Now that's something that can be seen. That's something that's observable, when he do, we do his will his way, and then we leave the results to God. Anything else, though, comes from sinful ambition and arrogant pride.

If I could narrow it down, put this into Luke Gospel terms, make this really simple, we need to learn to define success in Luke 9:23 terms. Success is denying self, taking up our cross daily, and then following Jesus as Lord. Success for us is to deny ourselves and take up Jesus' cross daily and follow Jesus as Lord, which brings us to a fourth reason to rejoice.

Number four: The joy of Lordship. The joy of Lordship. The first word, notice, that comes out of their mouths is what? A formal address to Jesus as Lord. And in so doing, these disciples have acknowledged their place and his place. There's a right relationship here that's acknowledged between the one who is Lord and Master and those who have the blessing of being his subjects, his servants, his slaves. And when we walk in obedience to his Lordship, you know what? We're happy slaves. We find that Jesus calls us not just slaves, but friends. So the joy of Lordship.

Number five: The joy of Gospel friendship. The joy of Gospel friendship. They rejoiced, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name." That could only have been revealed

if they'd found receptive towns, that they might engage in the ministry that Jesus commanded to do in receptive towns in verse 9, which apparently they did. Remember, find Gospel friends, that's verses 5-7, and then partake of their hospitality in verse 8, and then get to work healing the sick and proclaiming the Kingdom. They were engaged in that work when they find they're able to cast out demons in his name. So they had Gospel friends. They had partners in the Gospel. There's a joy in Gospel friendship; we've talked all about that. So it's while they were engaged in that ministry that they discovered the power they had to cast out demons in Jesus' name. It all happened in cooperation, though, with Gospel friends, with Gospel partners, which leads to a fifth, or a sixth point.

Number six: The joy of unexpected blessing. The joy of unexpected blessing. Again, we just mentioned this. The disciples rejoice saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us." So it's while obeying Jesus that they discovered greater works are available to them, greater powers, more than they could ever ask or imagine. So keep that in mind, beloved. If you are always or often reluctant to step out in faith, you will be remanded to a mediocre Christian life. If you are a reluctant

believer, shying away from obedience for lack of courage, you're going to have a mediocre, uneventful Christian life.

But listen, if you're bold in faith, if you're running to do what Jesus commanded, then your life is going to be full of unexpected, unanticipated blessings from the Lord, known only those who are boldly obedient. Please file that away. And if you lack courage, you're not alone. All of us, because of sin and the sin nature, we tend toward cowardice. We tend toward the fear of man. But we can't excuse it. We need to call it what it is, sin. And say, God, I repent of cowardice. I'm going to give myself wholly to your work. Just give me the courage by your Spirit and your Word to do so, and he'll, he'll answer that prayer. He'll give you strength and courage.

And that leads to a seventh reason for joy: The joy of victory in battle. The joy of victory in battle. The British SAS have a motto: Who dares wins. Make that your motto, beloved. Who dares, who puts God's Words to the proof, engaging in it, doing it, obeying it, if you dare to do that, you win. You win! The joy of victory in battle, they rejoiced, saying, "Even the

demons are," what? "subject to us!" They're describing here an instance, really for seventy-two of them, instances, of victory in spiritual warfare.

The translation there, "The demons are subject," that's not, it's not wrong, but the word subject does not seem strong enough. The word is *hupotasso* and in the active voice it means to bring under firm control or subordinate, but here it's the passive voice, the demons are subject or are brought under firm control. And you know, for demons this is not voluntary submission that they put themselves under the control. The demons have to submit here. It's what the demons must do. As creatures who must bow at the feet of their Creator, they're subordinate to Christ's authority, they're subject to his power, and they must, therefore, submit to the name of Christ.

Listen, that is spiritual victory, to experience that, to see that. These disciples are doing ministry out on the front lines. They watch demons flee from them, and they not only realize they are engaged in spiritual warfare, here, but they realize they have the upper hand. But wait, they're running

from, from us in Jesus' name! They're winning spiritual battles; they're claiming territory for the Kingdom of God and Christ. Beloved, that happens every time if we share the Gospel. It happens every time, when we share the Gospel. Notice I didn't say, when a sinner repents and turns to Christ. That happens, too, but when we share the Gospel, when we preach the Gospel, when we proclaim the truth; every time no matter what the apparent outcome, that's victory. Demons flee. They writhe in pain at the name of Christ whenever God's Word is proclaimed. So you want to stick it to the man, the devil, preach the Gospel. Tell the truth. Preach the Word. Share it with other people. Tell people what you're studying in the Word. Just silence the enemy.

You're going to find this victory in battle, number eight, though: The joy of Kingdom supremacy. Kingdom supremacy. In this victory, the disciples rejoiced in seeing and participating in the beginning and the end of demonic tyranny. At this point, they don't know the full significance of what they're seeing. Jesus is going to tell them, but the fleeing demons represent the downfall of Satan's rebel kingdom.

I don't know if you've been following international news. We've sort of seen that over the past few years, illustrated with ISIS. American coalition forces killing, capturing ISIS fighters, taking territory in Syria, Iraq. For the Muslim, they understand and interpret that taking back of territory that once belonged to that terrorist, self-proclaimed terrorist caliphate, with every mile of ground that ISIS lost to coalition forces, it de-legitimized the claim that ISIS had that they had a caliphate under which all Muslims needed to unite and submit. Kind of similar here. Every spiritual victory over Satan represents the defeat of Satan, the diminishment of his illegitimate claim over the souls of men. And instead, it proves the supremacy of the Kingdom of God that we preach as we take back more and more and more territory, as more souls are won for the Kingdom.

Number nine: The joy of Kingdom honor. So you've got the joy of victory in battle, but the joy of Kingdom supremacy in number eight, and number nine, the joy of Kingdom honor. In acknowledging Jesus as Lord of the Kingdom of God, in exercising the authority and the power of the King, healing the sick, casting out demons in his name, coming as heralds of the Kingdom to announce the heavenly Kingdom. Listen, what an honor! What an

honor to be representing him. They're rejoicing in this massive honor that is bestowed upon them. The demons are subject to us as we preach and teach and cast out demons in your name. They represent him; that's what in your name means. They are representing him. And Jesus has granted these disciples, mere men, like you and me, the high, holy honor of representing him, who is the King of God's holy Kingdom. That's our honor as well, beloved. It's our honor as well.

Well, listen, all of those joys unfold when we consider what it means to complete the mission. Every time we engage in Great Commission ministry, that this Great Commission Christ has given to us, when we trust his Word, when we do his work in his way, without too much difficulty, I think you'll see how these joys apply to us as well in our own mission, our own time and our own place. When we're engaged in Great Commission work, Matthew 28:18-20, to make disciples of all nations, we go out and evangelize sinners, unbelieving sinners. We teach them the Gospel, we want them to know and understand enough that they know and understand, when they're baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, they, they understand



something of Triune God, Trinitarian theology. They understand something of the nature of God.

So we teach unbelieving sinners, we baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then we take those new Christians, and we teach them to observe everything else Jesus commanded. Why? Because we want to hold it over their heads? No! Because, like the psalmist in Psalm 119, "Oh, how I love your law." Christians love obedience. Christians love to practice what Jesus taught. Why? Because we love to walk in wisdom, we love to walk in truth, we love to see it worked out in our lives, see it, we love to see wisdom pervade our family atmosphere, so that we parent according to the book, so we do marriage according to the book, so we do all of life and godliness and everything according to the book. It's not a burden for us. "I run in the pathway of your commands," the psalmist says, "because you have set my heart free." That's what freedom is, is to do what Christ has commanded.

So we teach unbelievers, we teach, bring them to the Gospel. We teach believers, discipling them, helping them to grow as

disciples. We have the honor, the privilege, and the joy that comes from trusting Christ, obeying his Word, going out on his mission. We, too, put his word to the test. We'll prove him faithful. We'll prove his promises true, his instructions reliable, his wisdom insurmountable and he will preserve us, protect us. He'll keep us safe from harm. He'll give us success in the mission. And then we rest, leaving the results to him.

Like the farmer who plants seed, and seed fell way over there where he wasn't even gleaning, where he wasn't even gathering and harvesting, and he sees over there, wow! A whole other patch of corn growing up over there. I didn't know anything about it. Many of the seeds of the Gospel, though, you and I plant, beloved, we may never see the fruit of it. We may die first, and then seeds will grow up later on. Listen, we leave the results to him. We learn the benefits of his Lordship, and we find Gospel friends serving the same Lord, partnering with them in the work. This leads to unexpected blessing beyond all that we can ask or imagine when we test his word and prove it to be true. We gain victory after victory after victory in spiritual warfare. We see the authority and the power and the

supremacy of the Kingdom of God above all, and we have the honor of representing our King.

That's verse one. Nine reasons down, nine verses down, only three more verses and 20, 21 reasons to go. Moving to verse 18. We saw joy in the mission completion. Now we will see joy in Jesus' observation. Joy in Jesus observations, that's letter B there. So here's where we see Jesus participating in the mission of the seventy-two. He would follow after them, visiting the receptive towns that they had visited before him. But in verse 18, we see that he wasn't just with them after; he wasn't just participating after. He was with them all along. He's engaged in the mission with what we might call active oversight. He said to them in verse 18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." "Saw him fall like lightening from heaven." Again, just a few words to explain that before we get into nine more reasons.

First, what is Jesus talking about, here? Is he referring to Satan's fall from heaven at the very beginning, like before Genesis 3 or is he referring to something after that? Perhaps he's talking about the temptation in the wilderness, when Satan

failed to tempt and cause Jesus to sin. Or perhaps Jesus is looking far off into the future, maybe prophetically pointing ahead to Satan's ultimate demise when he is cast into the lake of fire in Revelation 20, verse 10. Well, by virtue of his divine nature, we know that Jesus the Son of God, he was there as the second person of the Trinity to watch Satan's fall, in gen, before Genesis chapter 3. He's ever-present; he's in a timeless essence as God, and in his, in his omniscience and in his omnipresence, he's able to see and be there at Satan's final judgment in Revelation chapter 20, even though in time and space from our perspective that hasn't happened, yet.

But the question is what is Jesus talking about here, in this context, Luke chapter 10? What does he intend the seventy-two to understand about what he's saying? How would they take his comment? And the interpretive key is found in the verb there, I saw. It doesn't come across as well in the English. It's *theoreo* in the Greek, variously translated as, saw, watched, beheld, observed, looked on. But what's interesting about the verb, which is hard to see in English, the verb indicates here, a continuous action in past time. So for you

Greek students, it's the aspect of the imperfect tense, continuous action, past time. Okay, so what?

Okay, so when Jesus says, I saw, he's saying, I was watching, I was observing Satan's fall. It's, get this, while the seventy-two are out on mission, I was watching, I was observing Satan fall, simultaneously. So while they're getting into receptive towns and they're healing and they're preaching and, lo and behold, they get to cast out demons, too, Jesus is watching on. As at that moment, Satan fell. Godet, Frederick Godet, the commentator, says, "While you were expelling the subordinates, I was seeing the master fall." That's the sense.

Second point of introduction: In what way is Jesus seeing Satan fall? Like, like how is this actually happening to him in his experience? Is it through a vision? Is it some kind of mental perception? I, I don't see any record, really, in the Scripture of Jesus having visions, per se. but it's kind of like when the devil, during the temptations in the wilderness, Luke, chapter 4, he took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. How did Jesus perceive that? What

was the experience like? Frankly, we don't know. We just don't know. I mean, what is it like for Jesus to be the God-Man?

Divine nature, human nature together in one person, it's one of the many mysteries of the Incarnation, this hypostatic union, two, two natures, one human, one divine, one person. Just some things we can't know or comprehend; we just take what it says there.

Third thing: What we can know is that Jesus is describing the sudden, precipitous fall of Satan, and not just of Satan himself but, but of his entire kingdom. The Greek word *satanas* is a transliteration of a Hebrew word which sounds just like *satan*. Satan literally means adversary, one who withstands, one who stands against. It can be translated as a proper name, Satan, with a capital 'S', the forked tail at the end, referring to that fallen angel, supernatural enemy who opposes God and man and angelic hosts as well.

But just a, just a footnote here in Luke's Gospel, this is the first time we see the name Satan appear in Luke's Gospel. Up to this point, that evil one has been referred to as the devil.

From here on, he'll be referred to as Satan, the Adversary. And it's probably to emphasize the adversarial nature of Satan's entire existence. He lines up as God's adversary, which is foolish from the start. And now that we belong to God, he's our adversary as well. Jesus speaks here of Satan literally, as a personal being.

But Satan stands for, not just himself as a singular individual entity, he stands for the entirety of his kingdom, the way, the part, can stand for the whole. When we say Washington was in conversation with Moscow, we understand two cities aren't, kinda, coming together. We understand that, the part, represents the whole, right? Satan represents the entirety of his kingdom, so when Jesus names Satan, he's talking about him as the master, and the master represents the kingdom itself, Satan's rule, his kingdom, all his demon agents, every aspect of his influence. So like lightning striking out of the heavens, sudden, startling, not only is Satan himself falling, the whole thing is coming down as well.

So while the seventy-two disciples are engaging in their assigned mission, Jesus participates in their mission from the vantage point of supernatural oversight. He enters into their joy, here, letting them know, while you were watching Satan's subordinates fall, I was watching Satan, like lightning from heaven, fall. It gives us another nine reasons to rejoice.

We've already used numbers one through nine, I'm going to continue the count with number 10. Number 10: The joy of Jesus' friendship. The joy of Jesus' friendship. They, these disciples had to have rejoiced in Jesus' response even though he has more to say in verse 20, which is mildly corrective. Look ahead to verse 20. He says, "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you." That's mildly corrective, but it's not slapping them down. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." He's just pointing them to a, he's instructing their joy, he's directing their joy. He's not rebuking them for rejoicing over the submission of the demonic world. He's actually standing there with them, and we see him here treating them like friends. He's rejoicing with those who rejoice, like good friends entering into their joy.

You can almost imagine him here as they're talking. They're telling all the stories, and he's just kind of smiling, and he's just, he's just waiting patiently for them to finish telling him all their stories because he's got a story to tell, too. He says, you know, yeah, yeah, okay, I heard ya, all right, yeah, okay, no, that's a good one, too, yeah, oh, okay, great story about the, yeah the demon did what? Okay, great! Now let me tell you what I was seeing. You know what I was seeing while the demons were all running from all of you? I was watching Satan, the master, fall from Heaven like lightning. Boys, the whole kingdom is coming down! He's rejoicing in this with them, very exciting, very exciting.

Further, number 11: The joy of Jesus' oversight. When Jesus said, "I was watching," the disciples had to rejoice in the, in the comfort that that brought them. What, what, you saw? You, you were there watching? Look, while Jesus is on overwatch, nothing is going to touch them, nothing. They're able to do their work in peace and safety, with peace of mind they know that Jesus is always watching over them. Folks, that's a comfort to us as well, isn't it? When we're engaged in Gospel mission, Gospel ministry, making disciples, he's always watching over us

because he always cares for us because he promised, "I will never," what? "Leave you or forsake you." If you're doing my will, doing my will in my way, preaching the Kingdom, making disciples, I'll never leave you. That is not a promise, by the way, to be ripped out of its context and taken into your life in whatever you want to do. Do your own will, do your own thing, oh, Jesus said he'll never leave me or forsake me. Uh, uh. It's got a context. It's attached to other verses. But it's a comfort to us, if we'll just boldly go out and do what he tells us to do. He's with us. He cares for us.

Number 12: Look here, not only the joy of Jesus' oversight, but the joy of Jesus' insight. The joy of Jesus' insight. Jesus has here provided the disciples with insight that they could never have known on their own. This is the true *inside scoop*. This is coming from the Son of God himself, the one who knows all things, who sees all things, who understands all things, and then, get this, he tells them about it. He brings them into that inner circle. What a privilege to be brought in to the divine counsel, the divine sight.

Number 13: The joy of special revelation. The joy of special revelation because that's what they're getting with his insight. As with all of holy scripture, so, too, Jesus reveals what's going to provide height and depth and length and breadth to the disciples' joy. What they knew, what they observed, what they had by their own experience that only took them so far, isolated incidents that they, they could observe as pairs of disciples going out. That only took them so far. Jesus special revelation that he provides, even greater reasons to rejoice. Supernatural revelation is reason enough to rejoice, and what he says in the content of that revelation brings another reason for joy here.

Number 14: The joy of Jesus' interpretation. These thirty-six missionary pairs, as I said, they were only able to see in part, individual experiences of demonic expulsion, individual battles that were won. Jesus, though, as the general over-it-all, he sees the whole battlefield. And he's there to interpret everything for them. Only he has the insight and the interpretive knowledge to tell them what all this meant.

Listen, that's what we have in the New Testament. The Gospels record the life of Jesus Christ, give us the historical facts, the record, the sanctified record of what actually happened, but we also have the interpretation of those facts, by the Gospel writers themselves, first, but also in the rest of the New Testament. That's what the epistles are for, to interpret the meaning of what the Gospels tell us. We know what happened, and we also know the meaning of what happened, and that is huge, and that is what Jesus is providing right here for these seventy-two. So he tells the seventy-two not only of the demons fleeing, but that their master is falling, too. This is Satan's downfall, which is another reason.

Number 15: The joy of fallen tyranny. The joy of fallen tyranny. The significance of what Jesus revealed as the disciples were witnessing the beginning of the end. This is Satan's demise, his illegitimate rule, his cruel tyranny over mankind is coming to a decisive end. Jesus came, Hebrews 2, "to destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and to deliver all those to, who through the fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." So no more tyranny.

Satan's fall has commenced, which brings us then into number 16: The divine perspective, so the joy of divine perspective. The joy of divine perspective. From a human perspective, and you get this as you look at headlines all the time. Aren't they discouraging? Aren't they sad? As you, as you get to know friends and neighbors, family members who are caught up in the fallen world, how much sin ravages their lives, aren't you heartbroken and heart-sick over that? From a human perspective, Satan's *coup d'etat* may seem successful at times. He may seem in his power and influence to be unstoppable. But listen, it's not true. It's just a mirage. What comfort, what peace we find in knowing what Jesus has revealed here, which is a divine perspective on Satan and his kingdom and his influence. Satan's kingdom is falling, and the fall is like lightning. His rebellion is brief, bright but it is brief. It disappears into eternal darkness. His fall is sudden and startling, but like lightning it's gone in a moment.

Number 17 brings us to reflect on the past and the joy of prophetic fulfillment. The joy of prophetic fulfillment. The disciples rejoiced in the beginning of this prophetic fulfillment, the downfall that Satan, was promised about Satan

ever since Genesis 3:15. We talked about it with, in regard to Ezekiel 28, but listen to this out of Isaiah 14:12-14, "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn. How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low. You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights in the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

"But, you're brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit." What Jesus sees here in the demise of Satan, it's nothing less than prophetic fulfillment. It gives these disciples, and it gives us, reasons to rejoice. As each word of Scripture finds its proper fulfillment, we gain further and further confidence as our faith is confirmed. Our hope is consummated moment by moment as we're assured that our trust is never misplaced. God will accomplish all his good pleasure.

Finally, number 18, reason number 18: The joy of divine justice. The joy of divine justice. In Mary's song right at the very beginning, Luke 1:51-52, she rejoiced that God has scattered the proud, brought down the mighty from their thrones, and when she said that and sung those verses, it hadn't happened

yet. She's speaking with faith. She's singing with faith because she believed the words from Gabriel, the angel, that the Son of the Most High would be born and pass through her womb, come into the world. God has scattered the proud, brought down the mighty from their thrones.

Listen, Satan, his demonic subjects, his human subjects as well, the lot of them are proud, and they refuse to bow the knee to God. All of them are clawing for some kind of temporary feudal pre-eminence on small, tiny little earthly thrones. Pretty much every day we scroll through our news feeds and see headline after headline, case after case of the destructiveness of the human lust for power and autonomy, selfish ambition, covetousness, greed. But the demonic love of evil, it's as vile as it is cruel. Particularly acute in cases of demonic possession.

One case we've studied, fairly typical of demonic cruelty, a father tells of a demon that made his son mute, and it says in Mark 9, "Whenever it seizes him, it throws him down, he foams at the mouth, grinds his teeth, becomes rigid...and it often casts

him into the fire and into the water to destroy him." That's what demons do. They're not playthings. They're not funny little spirits like you find, find up at that hotel, up in Estes Park. Let's go on a little ghost tour and see the playful spirits. What? What? Are you crazy? The demons want to do that to you. To hear, see Jesus say here, "I was watching Satan fall like lightning from heaven."? For the believer, what a relief to know that God is going to hold Satan accountable, that justice is going to be done, and the judge of all the earth will do what is right. Beloved, there is joy in divine justice.

Just recently, much has been made of the fact that Jeffrey Epstein, the predator, he hanged himself in his prison, and everybody says, No justice. Where's the justice for the victims? Where's the, where's the sense of justice for the families? He ran from justice, and he escaped justice in his prison cell, hanging himself. Listen, for those of us who are believers in God's word, he thought he was fleeing justice, and he woke up before the angry Judge of all the earth. There's no escape from justice.

Beloved, you and I would also die and wake up in the presence of the angry judge of all the earth because there's no escape from his justice. Every thought, every word, every deed, every sin we've committed whether by omission or commission, every sin has a just and infinite punishment. But for us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ by God's grace, we stand justified. We will die and stand before that throne of the judge of all the earth, and he will look at us and say, righteous before me! You belong to me, and you are just as acceptable to me as my beloved Son, here at my right hand. He died for you. All your sins are gone, and I love you and embrace you as a son. "Come, enter into the joy of your Master."

It's another nine reasons we just gave to rejoice. We're going to come back next time and finish up the list, but we covered 18 reasons today, right? So 12 more, 12 more coming next week. Let's pray as we turn our attention to the Lord's table.

Father, thank you so much for reasons to rejoice. Thank you so much for what you have done for us in Jesus Christ, that we can come before this table, claiming his broken body and his



blood shed for us, to bring us into this New Covenant, where you've made us new creations in Christ, giving us a new nature, one that longs to do your will, that rejoices whenever you tell us, Go. Go. We rejoice not only to do that externally as our feet run to do your will, but our hearts rejoice to do your will, and we join with these seventy-two in prayer and every other brother and sister around the world who pray, "Lord, send more laborers into the harvest." We need your people. Let us participate in the joy of the harvest by preaching and proclaiming your name, for it's in the name of Jesus Christ we pray, amen.