

Reasons We Rejoice, Part 2

Luke 10:19-20

August 25, 2019

In the tenth chapter of Luke, that's where we are. Just to bring us up to speed, the seventy-two disciples, they have returned from the mission Jesus sent them out to accomplish, going before him two-by-two into all the, cities, villages, and towns where he himself was about to go in Judea and Perea. And they have now successfully completed the assignment that Jesus gave them to do, and now, filled with joy, they've returned, and they are excited to report back to Jesus. It is amazing to see the not coincidental, but providential, how Christ, in shepherding our church, has timed what we're doing to reach out to others with the exposition of Luke chapter 10. It's just, "Lord, thank you for that," it's just perfect timing. So we're just rejoicing in that.

So the seventy-two have come into, and we're in Chapter 10, verses 17 to 20, that section right there, and they've really come back to what we might see as a mission debrief here. This is, it's a debrief as they talk about what happened on the mission and, and catch up with each other and Jesus, even in verse 21, is going to rejoice in the Holy Spirit and, and speak of their blessedness. But this is also, you might say, not just a debrief, but for us, the readers of Luke's Gospel, this is kind of like an epilogue on that mission, as Luke helps us to see a bit of commentary about the mission, things that we need to learn about it.

And what we started to see last week is that not only did Jesus enter into the joy of his disciples, but now we are seeing how he further informed their joy. That's what we're going to get into today, how he has directed their joy beyond the joy that they thought they had to an even greater degree of joy.

I had wanted to provide a real decent introduction for those who weren't able to hear last week's sermon, but then having written the sermon and seeing the length, I found there

was just too much to say today, so I have no time. So I've cut, deleted that, and we're going to jump right into the text and hit the ground running.

Letter A, we went through letter A and B last time; we've got C and D today. Letter A was joy in mission completion. And that's really Luke 10:17, that the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name." So we see the completed mission, there. We see an unexpected authority that they had, not just to heal and to preach the kingdom, which was enough, but then they found in the execution of their mission an unexpected authority to even cast out demons. So in that verse, verse 17, we've counted nine reasons for rejoicing.

And then in verse 18, letter B, joy in Jesus' observation. Joy in Jesus' observation. Jesus said to them, Luke 10:18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." And literally we said, in the, in the grammar there, while the demons were being cast out of their human hosts at the command of the seventy-two, Jesus was watching. He's watching at the same time as they're

casting out demons. He's watching the fall of Satan, the unraveling of his kingdom, "like lightning from Heaven," flashing for a moment, but then gone, disappearing.

Getting into the next verses, we have another twelve reasons to rejoice. So that was eighteen reasons last week, twelve reasons to rejoice this time. You might think the sermon would be shorter, but that's not true. So letters C and D in our outline here, verses 19-20. We're going to start with verse 19 and letter C, joy in Jesus' protection. Joy in Jesus' protection. So we've seen joy in mission completion, joy in Jesus' observation, and now joy in Jesus' protection, that is, the protection of Jesus over his people. Verse 19: "Behold, I've given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you."

In context, and in, in light of the previous verse, it's not too hard to get the interpretation, the meaning of this verse. Jesus just spoke about Satan's fall in verse 18, and this verse continues the same line of reasoning. In verse 19, Jesus here guarantees his disciples, and we'll note it's in the

strongest way possible in the Greek language, he is guaranteeing the ultimate safety of his disciples. This is really Jesus' ironclad promise of protection.

Just a quick look at a couple of things in the verse there, verse 19. First, you can divide the verse into two main thoughts according to the two main verbs, there. Jesus said, number one, "I have given you authority" and, number two, "nothing shall hurt you." Those are the two main ideas in that verse: "I have given you authority" and "nothing shall hurt you."

Those two thoughts, though, are connected to each other, and I want you to see in what way they are connected. The authority that Jesus has given to his disciples, that is actually what guarantees his intended outcome, which is the summary at the end of the verse, that "nothing shall hurt you." So another way to say it, in order for nothing to hurt them, which is the second idea, Jesus' disciples must exercise the authority that he has given them in the previous part. They have the authority, and it's in the use of that authority that they are protected. So when they use that authority that Jesus gave

them, the result is that nothing will hurt them. And that is a key biblical principle, actually. We're going to hold on to that for few minutes and come back to it.

Second thing I want you to see. The authority that Jesus gave to his disciples, we can divide the authority itself into two effects, or two outcomes. He gave them authority, number one, to tread on serpents and scorpions, and, number two, he gave them authority over all the power of the enemy. So one authority, two effects.

First, Jesus has given the authority to walk over, to walk upon these malevolent spiritual creatures, which are very dangerous, but they can walk over them without any harm whatsoever. And second, he's given authority over all the power of the enemy, which we're going to talk about. All that, though, is just enough to get us started, okay, just to clarify our thoughts on this verse. Jesus has given his disciples the gift of authority, by the exercising of the authority he has provided them, guaranteed them, with a comprehensive protection, such that nothing at all can harm them.

Okay, so with that, let's see, six more reasons to rejoice. And we're going to learn how Luke 10:19 applies to us today. So we're going to continue the numbering we started last time, so these six reasons for rejoicing, they are going to start with number 19. They were number 1 through 18 last week, 19 through 30 this week.

Number 19: the joy of Jesus' provision. The joy of Jesus' provision. When Jesus says there, "I have given..." he's using a perfect tense verb. He's pointing back to an action that was already completed in past time, but the results of that past action have continued on right into the present. Okay? So the gift that he had already given, they've had it with them the whole time. It's been ready and available for their use.

So why do we rejoice in a perfect tense verb? Because we can see that Jesus is attentive to our needs preemptively. He's preemptive in his protection of us; he's preemptive in planning for us. He has planned for, he's provided for, he's already given what we need before we, before we even know that we have

any need at all. He's taken care of it. He's, he's made the arrangements for us; he's given the gift. He's planned for and taken care of everything.

Not only that, but we know that when Jesus provides for us, what he gives is perfectly suited, it's all-sufficient to meet the exact need for which he gives the gift. "His divine power," 2 Peter 1:3, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness." He's taken care of it all; he's arranged everything. And further, when Jesus gives gifts to us, the gifts that he gives are always permanent, as in, he will never take them away. That's what James 1:17 says. It says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the father of lights, with whom there is no variation, no shadow due to change."

So the immutable gift-giver gives immutable, irrevocable gifts. That applies to this gift of authority as well, along with the outcomes of this authority. In fact, let me make one more point about the perfect tense verb. Jesus said, "Behold." Behold, is getting their attention, "know this, I have given you

authority." Now think about the timing of this. He tells them not before he sends them out on the mission; he tells them when they come back. He tells them after they've returned, which means this gift of authority, a gift that he had given them in the past, "I have given," perfect tense, completed action in the past, the results of that action continue for these disciples to the very present moment. In other words, his gift of authority remains with these disciples. It was there all the way through their mission, and when they returned, when there are no demons around, they've got that gift, and that gift is going to continue into the present. It is never to be taken away.

Now we're going to hold onto that thought and consider next, number 20. Number 20: the nature of the gift that he provided. The nature of the gift that he provided, and that's number 20 is the joy of authority. The joy of authority. What a gift! What a gift! Jesus has granted the disciples authority. It is a, it is an authority that is greater than the demonic authority. It's an authority that is greater than the authority of Satan himself.

It's interesting because Satan seems like this, almost all-powerful being, but you notice when you start knocking over the dominoes of his demonic kingdom and the hold that they have over human souls, Satan comes falling down. He's perched up on top of others. It's in, completely the inverse in God's Kingdom. God is not propped up. He is the source of all power, all authority. He's the source of all being. We're propped up on our king, not the other way around. Every other kingdom in the world, including Satan's kingdom, the king is propped up on the authority of his kingdom, not so in God's kingdom.

It's by this gift of authority that Jesus has secured both the temporal and the eternal protection of his people. In exercising this gift of authority, by faith, you can see that the seventy-two represent the first fruits of the church. These seventy-two and what we see here is something that we can hold on to and put into practice as well. Their mission had come to an end, right? But Jesus said, "Behold, I have given you authority," an authority that continues. So they represent us, they represent future generations of those who will believe. Because when we trust Christ, and when we put this gift of authority into effect, we are likewise protected.

And maybe you're thinking, you know, when it comes to personal protection, I'd rather have power, not authority. I want power to take care of myself. Let me just challenge that for a moment. The President of the United States, it's not the power that the President possesses that restrains our enemies. No one's afraid of an individual man. No one's afraid of Congress, that outnumber the President, but in number of people, this body of lawmakers with their collective strength or power. It's not the power of the number of people in Congress or the number of people in the Senate. It's not the, it's not the power of the individual man, the President of the United States, it's the authority that's the issue.

The, by the, it's, it's by the authority of the President, that he authorizes the use of force. That's what makes our enemies afraid. It's the authority of Congress to declare war. That's what keeps our enemies at bay. They may not, as individuals or a collective body, they may not possess power, strength, might of their own, but they do have an authority to project a power that is way beyond them, a power that's far greater than individual or collective strength.

Beloved, it's the same thing with us. Like these disciples here, Christians have authority from Christ, and as long as we're acting within the bounds of our circumscribed and prescribed authority that he's given us, we draw into the situation, into any situation, we draw the power of God himself. It's not our own personal, creaturely power that protects us from the threat of harm. When we face a threat from a power that's greater than ourselves, whether human or demonic, it is the infinite, limitless, absolute power of our God that responds to that threat. Like a divine bodyguard, he is the one who comes to the Christian's aid. He is the one who silences the threat, who stills our hearts and comforts us. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will," what, "fear no evil," right?

Just as we noted, Jesus has granted his disciples authority in verse 19. The gift of that authority was given in the past, and yet it remained with these disciples even after their mission. And he did not take it away. During Jesus' earthly ministry, he gave his disciples authority, and that brought divine power to bear, according to God's will to cast out

demons. That was visible evidence, visible evidence of the superiority of divine power over demonic power. That's what people needed to see.

This validated the, the coming Kingdom of God and its, its authority over illegitimate kingdom of Satan. But when Jesus died on the cross, in a turn of irony, Satan thinking he had won victory over the Son of God, in turn, he was dealt the ultimate death blow. Hebrews 2:14 says, "Through death he," Christ, "destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil." That's a turn of events he did not foresee and now the nature of the authority that is ours today, listen, we wield an authority that's even greater than the authority of these seventy-two. And you say, how's that? Listen, they had the authority to cast out demons. We have the authority to preach the Gospel.

The Gospel that we preach not only has the power to drive away the demons, but it has power to do something absolutely miraculous, and that is to save the sinner. When the good seed the Gospel takes root in a life, when it effects salvation,

demons flee as the sinner is justified, as he's declared righteous before God, never to return. All the sinner's sin is forgiven because Jesus paid the penalty that was due his sins when he died on the cross. That one stranglehold, that ace in the hole that Satan and the demons had over the sinner's life, which is death, it's been taken away. "Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?" The repenting, believing, believing sinner is set completely, totally, permanently free.

That is how this authority remains with us today. Like the seventy-two, we also exercise the authority that Jesus given, has, has given us to preach the Gospel. We drive demons away, and for us it's not just demon expulsion, which could be temporary. What we do is sinner conversion, which is permanent. We don't affect it by our own power. God does by his. And when he works, when he acts, no one can reverse his hand.

The Word of the cross accomplishes an even greater work whenever a sinner is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, whenever a sinner is converted by the power of God. We take our marching orders from the one who said, "All authority in heaven and on

earth has been given to me.” He is the one who commands us to go out, then, and make disciples. And when we do that, when we obey, when we put this into effect by faith, walking in faith, we’re protected by his power. We’re protected.

The only question, then, is this, Will we use the authority he’s given us, or not? Because if we shy away, if we’re cowards about it, we’ll never, we’ll never see this put into effect. We’ll never see the outcome of his protection. We’ll never come back with rejoicing. We’ll just stay coward in our homes, watching Netflix. Who wants that? Let’s get out there. Let’s get out there and see. Show courage. Put his authority to the test, and preach the Gospel.

Well, that was a longish point number 20, and they’re not all going to be that long, I can promise you. They’ll get a little shorter. Here’s another one, number 21. Number 21: the joy of physical protection. The joy of physical protection. The disciples rejoiced in the physical protection that was afforded by Jesus’ gift of authority, and that’s that phrase “to tread on serpents and scorpions.” Treading on serpents and scorpions. So

what are we talking about here? So treading on serpents and scorpions, do we, do we now owe all those snake-handling cults a word of apology because they were, they're, they're not so crazy as we thought they were? That treading on serpents, are they right after all?

No. That's not what we're seeing here, but I want to show you why. When Jesus speaks of serpents and scorpions, he's talking here about demons. It's a figure of speech, it's a metaphor, it's picture, a word picture. Literal serpents, literal scorpions, in my opinion, they have to be about the most repulsive of creatures known to mankind.

I know there are some who like to make pets out of them, and feed them, but you know, those people usually end up dead. You usually find them on the news. It was such a nice snake; it was such a wonderful, loving snake. And then they find it wrapped up around their owner, right? There was a time in my life when I used to track down those who smuggled drugs and humans into this country, and in the desert badlands near the

border, I'd follow sign, most often at night, cutting for sign in the darkness.

And while giving chase in pursuit of these people, it was common for me to happen upon one of these little gifts, these little creatures, coiled up, partially buried in the sand, sidewinder, sidewinder rattlesnake or some poisonous and nasty looking scorpion. And maybe it's me, but my reaction upon happening upon these things was never, "Aawww." Nothing cuddly, nothing cute about snakes and scorpions.

To me, in fact, quite the opposite. My initial gut instinct was to pull back, to recoil, and draw my gun. My second impulse was to send those creatures back into the abyss from whence they came. It didn't ever once cross my mind to put one of these little creatures in my pocket and take it home and feed it and nurture it and give it as a gift to one of my kids as a pet.

Listen, because of that natural impulse that we all feel, you're laughing because you know what I'm talking about, because most of us, all, you know, find it, find these creatures vile and repulsive and abhorrent and fearsome.

The Bible, for good reason, uses snakes and scorpions as symbols of demons. They're a very ready picture, especially for Israel. These are seventy-two Jewish evangelists that are sent out. They get this word picture; they understand that Israel wandered for 40 years in that place that Moses referred to as quote, "the great and terrifying wilderness, with fiery serpents and scorpions, thirsty ground, where there was no water."

Jesus said, "When you cast out a demon, it goes wandering in waterless places, looking for somewhere to land," and, if, if it comes back to the host and there's no new nature, there's no Holy Spirit indwelling that person, no conversion, "it finds the house swept, put in order, and he brings in seven more demons more wicked than himself," right? Waterless places, a desert.

Moses spoke of a literal wilderness, but the wilderness has always been viewed figuratively as the haunt of demons. Serpents and scorpions, creatures of the wilderness, are visual symbols of evil, demonic, dangerous spirits. We find that same imagery in Revelation 9 and 12 and 20 as demons take on the form of

scorpions and having stings and biting. The bite of a snake, the sting of a scorpion, they're vivid pictures of demonic harm, which is painful and deadly.

For all who refuse to repent and believe the Gospel, for all who follow this world, who follow the ruler of this world, listen, they're under the power and influence of these repulsive and deadly beings, these demonic spirits that intend them nothing but harm, that, these demonic spirits that delight, actually, in killing those who are created in the image of God. That's what they, that's what they, they thrive to do.

For believers, though, believers have nothing to fear. Nothing. Jesus clearly said here, "Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions." Literally, it's to walk over the top of them all, and mostly without even knowing it, without any harm coming to us, slithering, biting serpent demons, skittering, striking scorpion demons, we just walk right over them. We don't even know what it was there.

A guarantee of physical protection from demons, oh, yeah, that's a cause for joy. I'm certainly glad. We just keep on walking, trusting God, preaching the Gospel, and we're going to walk over the top of them all, like we, we're wearing very sturdy boots through which a scorpion and a snake cannot bite.

But the next reason for joy, it's even greater, far greater, number 22: the joy of spiritual protection. Twenty-two, the joy of spiritual protection. Jesus' gift of authority provides protection from, as it says there, all the power of the enemy. All the power of the enemy. So what is that about? And how is it different than the harm that comes from serpents and scorpions?

That imagery of serpents and scorpions illustrates the pain and fear of death and physical harm, being bitten by a snake and have the poison, or being struck by a scorpion, the poison flowing through, that causes all kinds of symptoms that are, that are pretty nasty and painful. That's power. It's power in a targeted, specific, destructive use. But this statement, "all the power of the enemy," it's a far broader concept. It's what Jesus

intends here, for us to think further than just pain, harm, and literal injury and death. He wants us to think about the power of the enemy and our protection, which is all-encompassing, which is comprehensive.

So just to clarify this, as we think about all the power of the enemy, what is power? What are we talking about when we refer to power? Power refers to the ability to project force, the ability to influence people, to influence situations, to make ones will come to pass. That's power. Power ensures that a cause will have its desired and intended effect. So for Satan and his demons, their power is in the ability to influence mankind, and in a very specific way. It's actually a very simple plan and strategy on their part, but for Satan and his demons, their power is in their ability to influence mankind, to get them to commit sin, to get them to stay in sin, to be deceived by sin, to continue in sin. They know that it's our sin that puts us with, at odds with a holy God. So if they can keep us pursuing sin, you know what? They'll keep us in opposition to God. That's what they want to see. They want nothing more than God, their creator as well, to turn against those whom he created in his image. This is what you might call spiritual

sadism, as they take pleasure in the pain and suffering of those created in God's image.

As I said, all unbelievers are under the influence of demons. Satan is "that spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience," according to Ephesians 2:2. They're led astray, all unbelievers are led astray and under the influence of deceitful spirits, according to the doc, doctrines of demons, 1 Timothy 4:1. All unbelievers are deceived. They think they're free, but that's just a deception. That's just a mirage. The freedom that they chase is just further and further steps into deeper, deeper prison. They're actually enslaved to Satan. They're chained to their sins, and they're speeding their way moment by moment into judgment and eternal death, eternal death, "where" they, "their worm does not die," and the pain is not snuffed out.

As believers, though, we have been set free from enslavement to Satan, set free from enslavement to sin, Romans 6:7. The weapon that demons use to project their power and exert their influence is sin, and we, according to Romans 6, we're

dead to it. God said, Romans 6:14, "Sin will no longer have dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace."

As believers, we possessing now by God's grace, we possess a new nature, we have new affections, things that we now love that we didn't love before, things that we now hate, like sin, that we didn't hate before, but loved. God has given us new affections; he's given us a will that's truly free, finally able to obey and pursue true freedom, true joy in obedience because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, because of the power of his Word.

So we're now able to stand up against demonic power. We're able now to resist demonic influence. We have authority over all the power of the enemy, to stand firm in righteousness and not enter into temptation. We're able, beloved, not to fall. We are able not to sin. We're not victims. We're not victims of our past, we're not victims of our upbringing, we're not, I can't help it because I have an addiction. None of that is true for us.

What's true for us is that we have the power to obey. We have the power to pursue freedom and joy in the Spirit and the

Word. That's what Paul tells us in Ephesians 6. That's what the full armor of God is for. "Put on the whole armor of God," why, "so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." And in particular, we're able to raise that shield of faith and keep it raised "in order to extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one." We just snuff'em out every single time. We're able not to sin. We're able to stand firm, not give in to temptation, not enter into temptation, not fall, not sin.

So the joy of authority, that's how Jesus provides us with physical and spiritual protection. Literal, physical harm, yes, so that's great, but spiritual protection not having to sin. Oh, that protects the heart, and the conscience, and the joy, and the peace, and the contentment of the believer.

And that leads to this all-encompassing promise at the end of verse 19. Number 23: the joy of total invincibility. The joy of total invincibility. Number 23. End of verse 19, there's an emphatic promise from Jesus of universal protection: "And nothing shall hurt you." You tread on serpents and scorpions all day long, you have protection over all the power of the enemy,

and nothing whatsoever shall hurt you. That's how our ESV translates it, "nothing shall hurt you." I think that's just a little bit weak, and I'd like to strengthen that for you. This is in the Greek language the strongest, most emphatic negation possible in the Greek. It's *ou me*, taking two negatives and combining them together, *oume*. So it's, nothing shall by any means at all ever hurt you. What a promise!

Not only that, but the, the mood of the verb, here, removes even the potentiality of such a thing. So what Jesus says here, if we expand it a little bit, is that whether a person or a thing, that is, not no one, not anything, not one thing, by any remote potential or possibility, will be able by any means possible, to cause you any spiritual injury, damage, or harm. You're safe.

That's what Paul wrote, which we read earlier, Romans 8:38-39, "I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers," all-encompassing, "nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation." Does that include myself? Yes, it

includes myself. I'm a created thing; I can't even walk away.

"Nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Not even possible. That's what Jesus is saying here.

One more reason for rejoicing under this heading. Number 24: the joy of restoration. The joy of restoration. What the disciples are rejoicing in, though they may not have known it here at this moment but would be revealed to them in time to come as Jesus died, rose from the dead, was ascended into heaven, as the Apostles went out to teach and they wrote letters of Scripture, they would come to see what's manifest to us clearly by the rest of the New Testament. In granting this gift of authority, Jesus has restored the order that God, from the beginning, ordained.

To elaborate on this, I want you to turn in your Bible to the second chapter of Hebrews, second chapter of Hebrews. That's to the right. If your turning in your Bible, get there, you can get there kind of quickly. But let me just, while you're turning there, set this up with just a few verses from Genesis and God's

intention. God created mankind male and female. He created male and female in his own image to be his representatives, to be his, you might say, vice regents, co-ruling.

Genesis 1:26, they were intended to rule and exercise dominion over the earth. "God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the ground.'" By, every creeping thing, I guess that would include creatures like serpents and scorpions, little critters. God continues, verse 27, Genesis 1, "So God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God also said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'"

Listen, God intended for all the creatures on the earth to line up under the authority of the ones that were created in

God's image, mankind, male and female. And they're to live in peaceful submission to mankind for their own good, for their harmony and growth, for their joy, you might say. In fact, even the heavenly, non-earthly creatures, the spiritual, angelic beings, God created them also to serve that purpose, to serve mankind. They are in submission to God, but they minister, created to minister to men and women. Hebrews makes this very point in the previous chapter from where you are, Hebrews chapter 1 verse 7, "God makes his angels winds and his ministers a flame of fire."

Listen, like wind, like fire, Angelic beings have incredible power, and like wind and like fire, under the fall, under the curse, like demons, destructive, right? But angelic beings, like winds, like flames of fire, incredible power. And God has given them their power to serve his people, those whom He redeemed. Hebrews 1:14, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" That's us.

In Hebrews 2, now, take a look at a few verses here, starting in Hebrews 2, verse 5, "Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere," Psalm 8, by the way, "'What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.'" Verse 8, "Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. And yet, at present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him."

Pause there for a second. If you're following the argument, the writer quotes from David, Psalm chapter 8, "When I consider the heavens, the stars you've made, the work of your fingers, what is man that you are mindful of him?" And then David reflects about what ought to be, what God designed from the very beginning, what he proclaimed in Genesis chapter 1, what he intends, mankind crowned with glory and honor, with everything in all creation in subjection to him. And then in verse 8, he notes how things appear to be at the very present. He acknowledges it, "We do not yet see everything in subjection to

him.” And then look in verse 9, “But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels,” namely Jesus, “crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

What we see there, he died because of Adam’s sin. He took on Adam’s death. And so what Adam lost as our representative head, what Adam forfeited through his disobedience, the death that he introduced into the world, Christ has conquered the death. He’s gained, he’s fulfilled what Adam was supposed to fulfill. And so Jesus, he is the restoration of mankind’s rightful place in God’s design. Now skip ahead to verse 14, “Since therefore, the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.”

So Luke 10:19, you can turn back there, now. What Jesus says in Luke 10:19 is nothing less than the restoration of God’s

original design. This is what is in the background of what Jesus is saying here. He is restoring God's intention for mankind. In Christ Jesus, as our representative head, God's order is being restored. And Abraham's offspring, that's us, folks, that's believers, God helps us. He puts things back in proper alignment again. He puts things back in order again, in and through him, first, and then all of us in him. And now, even the demons have to bow before the authority of those who are in Christ, those who are co-regents of Christ.

So when we go out and preach the Gospel, listen, we're able to walk by faith over the top of serpents and scorpions, and to do so without harm. We have authority over all the power of the enemy. We're able to resist temptation, any temptation. We're able to turn away from sin, and we're able to walk steadfastly in obedience to him. All we need to do to put that into effect, that authority into effect, is use it. Just use it. Just do what the seventy-two did, use the authority that's been granted to us, and you know what? Nothing shall hurt you, not one thing. He keeps us safe to the very end.

Okay, let's get into verse 20, verse 20, and look at an even deeper set of reasons for rejoicing. This is letter D in your outline: joy in divine salvation. This is where the whole thing is heading, joy in divine salvation. Our protection, spoken of in verse 19, it is grounded in and predicated upon our salvation. In order to benefit from this authority and this protection that Jesus provides, we need to be saved. We need to belong to him, to be found in him.

If we don't belong to him, if we're not found in him, you know what? We're outside the umbrella of his protection. We're on our own. But in him, saved by him, by his grace, we're protected, we're safe. And so this is what Jesus wants us to focus on, here, verse 20," Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you." Notice he doesn't take that away. He doesn't say, that's gone, that was only for a moment. He acknowledges it, "The spirits are subject to you." But don't rejoice in this, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Number 25: We'll call this the joy of deeper joy. The joy of deeper joy. After Jesus enters into their joy, after he elaborates on the realities of divine protection from demonic power in verse 19, he comes to his main point with this word, "Nevertheless." That word provides a contrast to the previous joy, directing us to an even deeper joy, a far greater joy, a superlative reason to rejoice. I love this because Jesus here is not content to leave them even rejoicing in a lesser joy. He wants to lead them to a superior joy. It reveals his heart of kindness toward us, doesn't it? His preoccupation, his love toward us, for his people, is to deepen our joy so that it's the most deeply anchored possible. "These things I've spoken to you," John 15:11, "that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be," what, "full," completed, filled up to the measure.

In his high priestly prayer that same night, he said the same thing, John 17:13, "These things I speak in the world that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves." So the joy of deeper joy. Our Lord wants us to rejoice; he wants us to have the full measure of joy; he wants us to have his joy in ourselves filled up to the measure, filled up to the brink, and he's pointing us to what? Salvation. Salvation. You know how

many of your temporal, earthly, day-to-day problems just dissipate, are eclipsed completely if you rejoice in your salvation? Remember that song, *Count your blessings, name them one by one*? Do that. Give thanks to God. Rejoice in him, and all of a sudden, all your problems, they're still there, there's a mortgage to be paid, there are doctors to visit, there are pains in your body. They're still there. All of sudden, they are put into perspective. Wait a minute. I've got to pinch myself. I'm going eternally to heaven!

Another one, number 26: the joy of eternal priority. The joy of eternal priority. This is where our joy needs to be directed to a deeper joy, so that we rejoice in an eternal priority. He's contrasted, Jesus has, he's contrasted what's happening now on earth, that is, "The spirits are subject to you." What does that mean? Points to conflict, points to a fallen world, points to what we routinely face. It points to the headlines that we see every single day, the things that discourage us, the things that make us weep. I don't know if you feel this way, but don't you just sometimes get tired of sin, whether it's your own sin or somebody else's sin? Do you just

get tired of seeing sin, the effects of sin, the ruination of sin?

Jesus points us beyond “The spirits are subject to you,” which is talking about right now. He points us to an eternal priority, the reality of what’s going on in heaven. Get your head out of the earth and into heaven. Set your mind on heavenly things, things above. He’s helping them see the greater priority of what’s eternal over what’s temporal. And again, don’t make the mistake of seeing verse 20 as, as like a rebuke here. It’s not. It’s a mild correction. It’s corrective instruction. But not a rebuke. Jesus has truly rejoiced with his disciples over the fact that the demonic spirits are subject to them. He helps them, he even goes further to help them see the full significance of that as we just discussed. So he’s not denying that joy at all. That’s a mere temporal joy. That’s a passing joy. That’s one that’s going to come to an end.

Once the devil and his angels are cast into the lake of fire, to suffer their eternal fate, it’s a fate that’s eternal, along with all unbelievers, all of them together submerged into

the eternity of the wrath of God. That's divine justice, by the way. You know why some people say, Why is hell eternal? Why is, why is the crime for committing a sin against God have an infinite sentence? Because God is an infinite being. You sin against me, I'm just a creature like you, temporal, finite, not much to me. You sin against an infinite being, the source of all being, the only just sentence for that crime against God is an eternal, infinite suffering. Don't let unbelievers ever back you off of that point. Hell is eternal, and people will suffer for eternity. And that's why this Gospel is so important. That's why this Gospel is so precious; it's why it's Gospel. Don't back off, folks.

Still, all of that, the fact that the demons are submitted to us, all of that, the demons suffering, and all of that, that whole affair is going to become a footnote in the annals of eternity. Day one in Heaven is going to open to us everlasting vistas of divine glory and wisdom and glory and power. We're not looking back. What's in heaven, that is the issue for us. What's in heaven, that is the priority. So beloved believer, get your priorities straight. Rejoice in that.

The clarity that comes from the perspective of greater priority, heavenly over earthly, eternal over temporal, listen, that enables us to see through the veil of physical reality into the Holy of Holies of spiritual reality. And obviously, this starts with what, what's most immediately pertinent to us, namely, and this is number 27 for your notes. Number 27: the joy of individual salvation. The joy of individual salvation. Where do we see that? Jesus said to them, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." He's talking about salvation, right? Names. Listen, there are many ways you can speak of salvation. I like this. But many ways to speak of it. We refer to a person as being born again, as being saved, as being rescued, as being converted, delivered. Sometimes we say of that person, She has repented, or He has believed, or She has put her trust in Jesus Christ.

We've studied Luke's Gospel, and as we have, we've heard Jesus put this salvation in several ways on several different occasions. He told the paralytic in Luke 5:20, and before healing his physical condition, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." What more needs to be said? Oh, just, let's just throw in there, "Pick up your bed and go home." He said to a

notoriously sinful woman, Luke 7:48, known around the entire town as a sinner, he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” What a relief to her conscience. Verse 50, again: “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.” To the woman who suffered a twelve-year hemorrhage, Jesus said, Luke 8:48, “Daughter.” Daughter. I love that, you’re part of the family; you’re part of our family. “Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace.”

But here, though, Jesus said to the seventy-two, “Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” The way he put that gives us three reasons to rejoice, which are going to be our, our next three points, but this first one is this matter of individual salvation. Someone’s name is their individual identity; it’s their distinct personhood. Someone’s name is the verbal symbol of their distinct identity; it’s the way we, we ourselves distinguish one person from another.

So doesn’t it encourage you that your name, your name, your individual, what you, what you sign, your individual identity, a verbal, written symbol that identifies you as you. Does it encourage you to know that that name, your name, is written in

heaven? Notice Jesus is not speaking here, though, in the singular. He speaks in the plural. He says not just your name, but your names, which gives us another joy in salvation, number 28. Number 28 is the joy of corporate salvation. So you've got joy of individual salvation; this is the joy of corporate salvation. In other words, you're not going to be alone in heaven. You're not going to be a single beneficiary of a king's ransom, kind of like the only child of a billionaire who's surrounded by toys but has no one to play with.

No, our salvation is shared. It's shared by brothers and sisters who know our joy because God has chosen to save not a person, but a "people for his own possession," a people in Christ, plural. Titus 2:14, "Christ gave himself for us," plural, "to redeem us," plural, "from all lawlessness, and to purify for himself a people," plural, "for his own possession who are zealous for good works." 1 Peter 2:9, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation." All those are plural terms; they're collective terms. "A people for his own possession chosen, so that you," plural, "may proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you," plural, "out of darkness and into his marvelous light."

Listen, this issue of corporate, the corporate nature of salvation, shared, brothers and sisters together, glorifying God together for all of eternity, deserves its entire, just its own sermon or maybe a series of sermons. And it's, it's necessary, even, to help correct this aberrant American ideal of individual autonomy, individual liberty. It's a product of Enlightenment liberalism, and individualism, and we need to abandon that in favor of the biblical view, which is to rejoice in our corporate identity, union with Christ. All of us, brothers and sisters, adopted children, heirs of God and co-heirs of Jesus Christ together. We need to talk about that. No time, though, for that sermon now. So we're gonna have to let the comment stand and move on.

Number 29, number 29: the joy of kingdom citizenship. The joy of kingdom citizenship. Jesus said, "Rejoice that your names," it says there, "are written in heaven." "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Remember the grammar lesson in verse 19 on the perfect tense? Jesus said there, "I have given you authority," which points backwards to what has already been

accomplished in the past; it's been completed in the past;
results continue in the present time.

It's the same thing here, same tense. "Your names have been written in heaven." Done deal. Written down, inscribed, engraved, as it were, in granite, not earthly granite, heavenly granite. It's a lot tougher. One translation puts it this way: "Rejoice that your names stand written in heaven." I like that. Another says, "Rejoice because your names are registered in heaven," which is similar, but it's presenting another idea that, that actually fills in the meaning here. The verb is *engrapho*. And it's not merely used as writing something down, inscribing something, even chiseling it into stone, but as one lexicographer puts it, it's of a "solemn entry in a document." The verb emphasizes, here, the element of documentation, so it's used in secular writing for an official entry. It's like inscribing something in an official list, an inventory or a public register. That's the word used here.

Gets even more specific. And here's what I think comes closest to the biblical image for us. Citing this verse, a

lexicographer named Gottlob Schrenk, I think it's a German name here, he says that in this word *engrapho*, quote, "we have a particular solemn image which carries with it the thought of the ancient custom of inscribing a list of citizens, but which is also linked with the idea of the Book of Life. The meaning is that by name, that is, persons of individual worth, those who belong to Jesus, they are God's inalienable possession, inalienable possession, citizens of the heavenly *politeia*." That's the Greek word for state, for commonwealth, body politic. We are God's possessions, never to be separated from him, and we are inscribed in the state. We're citizens of that state, of that commonwealth; we're his.

Philip Ryken, he also explains the significance. He says, "This idea of the Book of Life was deeply rooted in the culture of the ancient Near East. Kings who ruled great empires loved to keep long lists of the names of their subjects. Typically, having one's name in the book served as proof of citizenship. Roman officials would keep detailed registers of the people who belonged to their city-state and who therefore had the full rights of membership in their community." End quote.

Listen, what a beautiful, what a glorious way that Jesus has spoken of our salvation, right? What a joy to know that our names are inscribed, enrolled, registered in heaven, never to be removed. You know, Caesar Augustus, we saw that in Luke chapter 2, in the birth of Christ, said that all people must be registered. Okay, so maybe you feel some kind of an affection and warmth in your heart about being a Roman citizen, but you know what Roman citizenship also meant? Taxation. Taxation, right? The only thing sure about life is death and taxes. Taxes are coming for your, your pocketbook, they're coming for your money.

We're inscribed, our names are inscribed and registered with the citizenship in a place that doesn't need your money. Not one cent. What can you contribute to the One who has all things, who is the source of all being? He has nothing to gain from you. Our personal, individual names have been inscribed, past tense, in the registry of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven.

And that inscription can never be removed because it's been made by an authoritative, omnipotent hand, the hand of God and what he writes down, he does not erase. So the results of his eternal decree, the results of his fixed choice and decision, not only do they give us assurance for the present time, they give us an abiding, very certain hope for the future as well. Beloved, what a reason for rejoicing here. It puts everything in this present, earthly life into an eternal perspective, doesn't it?

But we have one more. Number 30. Final point, number 30: the joy of heavenly treasure. The joy of heavenly treasure. Connected to it, kingdom citizenship is, is the right of access. It's the right of full access to enter into the heavenly vault, to make use of all heavenly treasure. Ryken rightly says, "A person whose name was in the book is entitled to property and protection." We've already discussed the joy of protection, but as kingdom citizens, we also have the joy of heavenly treasure. The kingdom of heaven, as I said, is the only kingdom that does not increase its wealth and increase its holdings by taxing its citizens. The, the heavenly storehouse is loaded with infinite,



infinite, limitless bounty because it's infinitely supplied by an infinite God.

One glance into heaven's storehouse would cure us of all earthly greed, all covetousness, all desire and reliance upon something as simple and plain as money. Because, beloved, as kingdom citizens, knowing him, with God as our reward, heirs of God, we want for nothing. That's why Jesus wants to tell us in Luke 12:33, "Sell your possessions." Don't try to grasp onto all the stuff in this world. "Sell your possessions, and give it to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that don't grow old, with treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys." There's no corruption. There's no theft. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The most small-minded and small-hearted of all Christians is the one who still loves money, the one who still plays with that idolatry, the one who is still clinging to stuff. Give it up, beloved, give it up. As I said, if we had one glimpse, one peek into that vault, cure us completely. We don't see right

now, do we, with earthly eyes. We don't see with earthly eyes, physical perception, this treasure in the heavens that does not fail. Why not?

God wants us to take his word for it. He's binding us to his own heart through trust, through relationship. That's what he intends. He wants us to trust him. He wants us to read his Word and trust him evermore. He wants us to gaze intently upon the treasure that he has given us, which is immaterial, not unimportant, I mean immaterial in the non-material sense; it is the treasure he's given us in his Son, Jesus Christ. "In him," Colossians 2:3, "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Wisdom, knowledge, not tangible things; abstract things, aren't they? But very real. You put into practice his wisdom and his knowledge, and what happens? Tangible, practical things change and take place. Obedience has practical results, folks. So it's not, pie-in-the-sky-in-the-sweet-by-and-by, it really is gritty reality in the here and now. Because if Christ is our treasure, then we truly are kingdom citizens. If we have the



Spirit of Christ, then we are his. We belong to him. We have full access to heaven's infinite bounty. And the infinite bounty is God. God, our eternal reward.

Folks, we made it, 30 reasons to rejoice, all of them grounded, all of them sourced in the God who wants us to find all our joy in him. Just another 30 pieces of evidence, of testimony to the goodness of our God. He's the one who sent us his son, that we might be reconciled to him. He's the one who brings us near, that we should enter into his joy, enter into his trinitarian blessedness, which is what we're going to study in two weeks' time when we come back to the text. We're going to be brought into the love and the joy shared among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and see that this is the God who is our eternal reward. Let's pray.

Our God, our, our hearts are full, and we thank you for this indescribable gift of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There, there, are so many things, I mean, thirty reasons, we can't even get our minds around them. We really need more reflection, more, more, more study, more meditation on



these verses that we've heard from Christ and, as he deepens our joy, rejoicing with us, yes, but deepening our joy to point us to the joy of your salvation.

Thank you so much for your kindness to us in him. Thank you that you have given us yourself, that you've reconciled us to you in Christ, that our sins are gone, that our conscience is clear. That even in what our hearts condemn us, we look to you because you are greater than our hearts' condemnation. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Let us live and walk around in that reality and finding all joy in him, all joy in you. Help us to turn our eyes from this, from this finite, passing, temporal world and keep our gaze on Christ at your right hand. May he come quickly, Father. May he deliver all of us and vindicate your holy name. And it's in his name that we pray. Amen.