

“The Seventy Return”

Luke 10:17-24

The last time we were in our Luke study was November 12, when we studied what happened after Jesus sent out the seventy disciples in pairs (cf. **Luke 10:1**), telling them in **Luke 10:8** “Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; **9** and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ **10** But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, **11** ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off *in protest* against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’”

When Jesus first began His ministry we read (**Mark 1:14-15**), “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”

Clearly the purpose for the gospel is to make people aware of their sin, and therefore, their need for forgiveness; which can only be received by those who genuinely believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

As the seventy went out, according in **Luke 10**, they were bringing the good news that God’s Salvation had come to them, and forgiveness and eternal life could be received by believing the One of whom the Seventy were proclaiming.

In **Luke 10:3**, Jesus told the seventy that they were to “be going!” They weren’t to be waiting for people to come to them, but were to take the message of Christ, being sent “like lambs among wolves,” because the world hated Christ, it also would hate those who bring the message of salvation through Him alone.

Like lambs in a world of wolves, believers today, just like the believers in **Luke 10**, must trust in the Shepherd-Savior to protect and provide for them.

The seventy would face persecution, just as the Apostles would, who, as far as we know, were martyred for the sake of Christ, all except John who was thought to have died on the island of Patmos, after receiving the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

As we read earlier, Jesus told them (cf. **Luke 10:8-11**), to stay with those who received their message about Him, and to heal all of those who were sick, both spiritually and physically, among those who received their message; but for any house or town that would not receive them, they were to shake the dust off their feet as a “testimony against” those who rejected the message of Christ.

See Luke 10:16.... The disciples were sent out to bring God’s message of reconciliation and healing to the lost and unbelieving. For someone to reject their message, was to reject the forgiveness and salvation of God. The Jews had a practice, when returning to Israel from a Gentile country: they would shake the dust from their feet and sandals, so as not to bring pagan soil into Israel. By this same gesture, the Seventy were saying that any house or village that rejected them, also rejected God’s salvation, and therefore remained condemned.

2Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”

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Luke 10:17-24

2Corinthians 5:18-21, “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Until the Lord returns, we must urgently and compassionately share the good news of salvation through Christ; for all who reject Him are condemned to an eternal hell. Like the Seventy who were sent, we also are to be going, telling unbelievers about God’s Son, so that they might believe in Him and be saved. **Matthew 28:19-20**, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe [obey] all that I commanded you.” Why do we do this? **John 3:36**, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [*believe and receive*] the Son will not see life, [*for*] the wrath of God [*remains*] on him.”

Romans 10:9-10, “*that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*”

Romans 10:13-15, “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord [*for the forgiveness of sin*] will be saved. How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without [someone telling them]? How will they [tell them] unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’” **17**, “So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

1John 5:11-13, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who *believe in* the name of the *Son of God* [*for salvation*], so that you may know that you have eternal life.” **Hear, Believe, Receive Christ!**

See Luke 10:17.... The seventy returned to Jesus full of joy, because they had power over demons. Earlier in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus sent out the Twelve (**Luke 9:1-2**), “And gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases. And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.”

Demons are subject to the name of Christ, for He is Almighty God and Sovereign Authority and Judge over All. Demons are not however subject to any human authority or power, except those who are given the authority from Christ Himself, e.g., in **Acts 19**, there were some exorcists at Ephesus who tried to expel a demon from a man (**vv. 15-16**), “And the evil spirit answered and said to them, ‘I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?’ And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them [the exorcists] and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

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The seventy return to Jesus, excited because they had authority over demons, and Jesus responds to them (**Luke 10:18**) saying, “*I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*” What does that mean? I’m glad you asked!

First of all, the verb translated “*I was watching,*” is speaking of a continual process, not just one event. And when you add the imagery of *Satan falling from heaven like lightning*, in reference to the seventy’s having had power over demons to release prisoners from their spiritual captivity, it most likely is speaking of how Jesus was watching Satan’s kingdom being destroyed, as one person at a time was freed from the kingdom of darkness and condemnation of sin, while being brought into the kingdom of light and salvation, made effectual through Jesus Christ alone!

2Corinthians 4:3-6, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus ‘sake. For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”

Luke 15:7, 10, “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” “I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

See Luke 10:19.... What does that mean? Good question. How could having power over serpents and scorpions even come close to having power over demons? Well, it couldn’t, unless serpents and scorpions are metaphors for demons. Guess what? They are, as the following passages will affirm.

Revelation 12:9, “And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”

Revelation 20:2, “And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.”

In **Revelation 9:1-11** we are told that demons like locusts are released from the abyss to come upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They are to hurt only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. And men will seek death; they will long to die, but death will not be found. The locusts had faces like the faces of men, hair like the hair of women, and their teeth like the teeth of lions. The sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.

They have tails like scorpions, and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. The king over the demon locusts, is the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek Apollyon [Destroyer].

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We are victorious overcomers by believing in what Christ accomplished on the cross and at the empty tomb.

1John 5:5, “Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

See Luke 10:20.... Jesus reminds the seventy of the greatest reason for rejoicing, not because of anything we might accomplish, even though we are doing it to the honor and glory of God; but we rejoice because our names are recorded in the Book of Life, the contact list for all those who will spend eternity in heaven with God (**Revelation 21:27**), “those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

See Luke 10:21.... You have no doubt heard it said that God has so convincingly revealed Himself to us by what He has created [for there must then be a creator: painting = painter; building = builder; watch = watch maker], that a child can see and understand and believe that God exists.

Mark 10:13-15, “And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, ‘Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it.’”

Jesus was saying that children have nothing to be proud of or to boast about, no wisdom or knowledge, or wealth or fame or power; they come to God humbly, admitting their need for Him; as all who come to God must do. And this is well-pleasing to the Father, Who has turned all things over to the Son, so that He might show us and impart to us those things that prophets and kings desired to see, and to know, and to understand; all that has been revealed to us in and through Christ.

Hebrews 11 is called the Hall of Faith, where we find the names of people who pleased God: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Samson, David, Samuel, and many others of who it is said (**Hebrews 11:39-40**), “having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they would not be made perfect.”

Wow! As New Testament believers, under the New Covenant, we have the privilege to know the mysteries of God’s Kingdom that were kept secret in the Old Testament and could only be revealed through the life, death, and resurrection, of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:7-10, “ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.”

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Luke 10:17-24

1John 1:1-10, “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”

There are two groups of people in this world: Forgiven Sinners and Unforgiven Sinners. **Romans 3:10-12**, “as it is written, ‘There is none righteous, not even one; ‘there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.’” **Romans 3:23**, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” **Romans 5:8**, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” **Romans 8:1**, “Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Again, there are only two groups of people in this world: Forgiven Sinners, and Unforgiven Sinners. Jesus turns no one away (**Romans 10:13**), “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Which one are you?

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