

I. Sending out the Twelve (Lk 9:1-11)

- A. Gave them Power to Preach the Kingdom (vs. 1-2) - Scripture presents us with two different aspects of equipping that Jesus gave them. Power and Authority: this seems to go hand in hand with the assignment; they were to cast out demons (Authority) and heal diseases (Power). It is of note that scripture differentiates demons and diseases as two different things; they were to be dealt with separately and in different ways.
1. Preach the Kingdom - As we looked at in our last session, the “good news” or “gospel” that they preached was not your typical alter call message of the western church. The message they preached was that the promised “Messiah” and His promised “Kingdom” was here.
- B. Take Nothing for the Journey (vs. 3) - The first time Jesus sends them, He commands them to take “nothing” with them. How appropriate that their entrance into ministry and understanding the Kingdom of God was that they could bring nothing with them but rather rely solely upon God's provision and grace.
1. Shake the Dust (vs. 5) - The common practice of the Jewish culture of that day was to shake the dust off their feet after walking through a Gentile town or community so that they did not retain any of their “uncleanness”. Here Jesus sends His disciples into Jewish towns and communities and tells the disciples to shake the dust off their feet if they reject their message. They were to do this as a statement concerning how God sees their rejection of Jesus.
- C. Herod is Perplexed (vs. 7) - Luke uses the fact that Herod was perplexed with who Jesus was and how to respond to Him, showing us a greater truth. Everyone was perplexed! At this point, Jesus's fame had spread to the entire region and even beyond, and there were multiple opinions as to who He was and how to respond. Luke tells us that Herod desired to see Him and kept trying to, but Jesus would not see Him. What a contrast from others who sought Jesus and whom Jesus sought. I believe we can come to the conclusion that Herod has little to no sincerity in spiritual seeking but rather the opposite.
- D. Apostles return and He Takes Them to a Deserted Place (vs. 10) - Upon finishing a focused time of giving spiritual and physical strength, Jesus takes them to a deserted place in order for them to rest and build up their spirits again.

II. Feeding the Five Thousand (Lk 9:12-17)

- A. The Crowds Followed Him (vs. 11) - The time of rest Jesus desired for Himself and His disciples is cut short, or possibly not even experienced, as the crowds (thousands) follow Him. However, Jesus responds with graciousness and hospitality; he welcomes them, exhorts them, and heals them until the sun begins to set.
- B. Send them Away (vs. 12) - The disciples are not being grumpy, but rather practical in asking Jesus to send the crowds away. The thousands of people are all around as the day draws to a close, and they need food and shelter.
- C. Give them something to Eat (vs. 13) - This must be seen in the context of what just took place a few verses earlier, where Jesus commanded them to take “nothing” for the journey as He sent them out. They had all returned with the testimony of God's provision and grace that accompanied them. No, Jesus puts that moment to the test. He provided for them, but could He provide for all these people in the same way?
- D. Miracle of Multiplication of Food (15-17) - The sheer scope of this miracle is often missed. It says that Jesus blessed the food, then broke the bread and fish and kept handing it to the disciples to hand out to the thousands of people sitting in groups. Though this happened in the practical, there are multiple spiritual and theological truths being declared here. All four gospels record this particular miracle and all reference it as THE declaration of His full deity and identity as the only begotten Son.

III. Who do you say that I am? (Lk 9:18-27)

- A. It happened while He was praying Alone (vs. 18) - As we looked at earlier in this section and in all previous chapters, everytime there is a focused time of ministry, it is preceded and followed by a time of rest for personal devotion and prayer with the father in a secluded place.
- B. Who do the people say that I am (vs. 18) - I think that the opinion of the people as to who Jesus was, is very interesting. None of the people think He is the Messiah. Why? Because He is not checking all the boxes of the popular interpretations and expectations of how the Messiah would come and what He would do.

- C. Who do you say that I am (vs. 20) - Now it's clear that the disciples would have had some of the same thoughts and doubts concerning Jesus as the one who would fulfill all Messianic promises. However, the feeding of the five thousand had clinched the question fully and completely for them and they all responded you are the "Christ (Messiah) of God".
- D. The Son of Man must Suffer, Die, and be Raised (vs. 22) - The question always is posed as to why Jesus did not want people to tell the crowds who He really was. Here He tells the disciples that they were not to tell anyone who He really was so that He would be rejected and killed. Jesus made it clear that He "Must" suffer, be rejected, killed, and raised from the dead. There were no other options. In order for Jesus to truly fulfill all the Messianic promises, He must secure the internal righteousness and give new hearts to the people before He makes all external things righteous and new.
- E. If anyone wishes to follow Me they must Take up their Cross (vs. 23) - Jesus prophesied the way He was going to die and told His disciples that they along with anyone else who wanted to follow Him, would have to die daily as well. (Phil. 3:8-19)
- F. Some Here who will not Taste Death until they see the Kingdom (vs. 27) - I believe this is in view of the following incident, the Transfiguration. The "some of you" in this verse refers to some of the disciples, namely, Peter, John, and James. The Transfiguration was a preview of the earthly kingdom of God, in which three disciples saw Jesus in the glorified state that will be His in the earthly kingdom (2 Pet. 1:16-18).

IV. The Transfiguration (Lk. 9:28-36)

- A. Took Peter, James, and John up the Mountain (vs. 28) - Luke points out that Jesus took them up a mountain, and there is endless debate as to which mountain it was. However, it is incredibly significant to the event and to the promise that Jesus just made, that "some would see the Kingdom". Every single Messianic promise speaks plainly of the place of the city of God and the throne of the King as a mountain, and the place of His tabernacle on the top of that mountain.
- B. While He was Praying He was Transfigured (vs. 29) - The scripture implies that Jesus prayed so long that all the disciples fell asleep. They were heavy with sleep as the Transfiguration began to happen.

- C. Moses and Elijah talked with Him (vs. 30) - Many wonder why it was *these* two particular men from the Old Testament, and not two others. It wasn't Abraham, David, Joshua, Joseph or Daniel; it was Moses and Elijah. It's my opinion that Moses is there because He was the prophetic picture of the leader of the greater exodus from death to life from Egypt to the Promised Land. Elijah, on the other hand, is prophesied to return and herald and prepare the way before the Kingdom can come. It can also be said that they represent the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The sum of Old Testament revelation came to meet with Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration. This scene has also led to the very popular opinion that they are likely the witnesses spoken of in (Revelation 11:3-13).
1. Speaking with Him of what He would accomplish in Jerusalem (vs. 31) - Of all the things they could talk about, they were there to talk with Jesus concerning His suffering, rejection, death, and resurrection. I believe Jesus needed this encouragement for what He was about to do.
- D. Let us make three Tabernacles (vs. 33) - Peter offers to build three booths, or tabernacles, which was actually quite significant and right. However, the timing and agenda was inappropriate and out of step with God. The "sacred tents" that Peter suggested building were the same kind that the Jews erected at the yearly Feast of Tabernacles in order to commemorate the wilderness wanderings and to anticipate the earthly kingdom. Peter knew the prophecy in Zechariah that the Feast of Tabernacles would be celebrated when Christ reigns on the earth. Apparently Peter thought that with Moses, Elijah, and the glorified Christ all standing together on the top of the Mountain, that the Messianic Kingdom was now being instituted. (Lev. 23:42-43; Neh. 8:14-17; Zech. 14:16-21).
1. Did not know what He was saying (vs. 33) - The original Greek word translated to "know or realize" literally means "unable to perceive or understand". Peter did not understand that he was out of step with God. His suggestion was not bizarre, it was actually reasonable. However, the clear context was that Moses, Elijah, and Jesus were talking about how Jesus would go to Jerusalem to be killed. Peter was not on the same page and could not understand or perceive what they were talking about.
- E. This is My Son; Listen to Him (vs. 35) - Just a moment ago, Peter proclaimed that it was good that they were there. However, as the cloud of the Fathers glory began to descend upon them all, the disciples trembled under the weight of glory and the healthy fear of the Lord. The Father now tells the disciples to "Listen" to what Jesus is telling them; Yes He is the Christ, but the Christ must suffer and die.

V. Disciples unable to deliver and understand (Lk. 9:37-45)

- A. The next day (vs. 37) - This is such an important statement as it pertains to the next scene, where the disciples are unable to cast out the demon from the boy. It was less than 24 hours since 3 of the disciples saw and experienced the transfiguration. Those 3 are surely included in the “your disciples” whom the demon resisted and refused to obey.
- B. Unbelieving and Perverse Generation (vs. 41) - If we allow the scripture to speak for itself, there are two clear reasons at play here as to why the disciples were unable to cast this demon out. The disciples were not operating in faith like they were earlier; they had embraced a level of unbelief and had become perverted and “twisted” in their hearts. Jesus is actually quoting scripture rather than bursting out in frustration. He quotes this scripture as a warning to His disciples. (Num. 14:11; Deut. 32:20)
1. Unbelieving - Even after all the signs and wonders that they saw and did in Jesus' name, they were intimidated by this particular demon. Especially when it did not immediately come out and just grew in violence. They began to doubt.
 2. Perverse - In two verses we will see the perversion that they had fallen into, it says a conversation immediately began to take place as to who was the greatest. They had stopped leaning in humility and began to equate the power and authority that they were walking in as part of their own inherent greatness or ability.
- C. Jesus Rebuked the Unclean spirit (vs. 42) - It is of note that Luke gives us great details of the epileptic symptoms of this particular demonic torment, and Matthew actually calls it epilepsy. Just a moment ago, Luke made it clear that not all sickness was demonic and we find many examples of this in scripture. However, at the same time, there are clear examples of sickness that are demonic. When we understand this, all formulas must fall by the wayside. The only thing we are left with when battling the suffering of this fallen age, is faith and humble reliance upon the One who is over it all. For it is only through Him and by Him and for Him that we are able to do anything, and without Him we can do nothing.

- D. The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the Hands of Men (vs. 44) - As everyone marveled at the greatness of power and authority that they just witnessed; Jesus looked at His disciples and implored them to really listen and understand that He had chosen to be killed and was going to be killed.

VI. Wisdom of God vs the Wisdom of Men concerning Greatness (Lk. 46-62)

- A. An Argument arose Concerning who was the Greatest (vs. 46) - I believe that this is the reason why they could not deliver the boy just a moment ago and why they could not hear Jesus when He spoke of His suffering and death. They were intoxicated by the glory of ministry and power that they were both doing and seeing. They were becoming great in their own eyes and in the eyes of those around them. They began to argue who was the greatest.
- B. Whoever Receives this Child and who is Least among you is Great (vs. 48) - Jesus drew their attention to His nature or character as a means of greatness by having them look at a little child. Especially in that culture, children were of little importance, were not threatening, unconcerned for social status, and not jaded by success and ambition. They live unashamed of their total dependence upon their parents for everything. Jesus said that the child was a representation or reflection of Himself, and that Jesus is a reflection of His Father in heaven. Jesus Himself internally is humble like a little child. Since the nature of Jesus is like one of these little children, how we treat those who are humble like children (whoever receives this child in My name receives Me) shows whether or not we affirm or believe that the nature of Jesus to be honored as greatness.
- C. We saw Someone Casting Out Demons in Your Name (vs. 49) - Still wrestling with the subject of greatness John believes that surely they must be greater than others who were outside of the 12. John tells Jesus how he stopped someone from casting out demons in Jesus name because he was not a known follower with them. Jesus makes it clear that when it comes to the giving of power and authority we are all on the same level. Jesus tells us that from the eyes of heaven there are no levels or cliques of those who are walking in power. There are simply those who are for or against the Kingdom of God.
- D. He was determined to Go to Jerusalem for His Ascension (vs. 51) - Still on the subject of greatness Jesus again shows them what it means to be great. He set his heart and face to die daily to Himself and submit Himself fully to the will of the Father. (Is. 50:7)

- E. He desired to stay in Samaria but they did not Receive Him (vs. 53) - Because Jesus was going to Jerusalem these particular Samaritans did not welcome Jesus. They didn't have good relations with the Jews, and were prejudiced against them. We may also see this as the opposition (knowing or not) that comes the way of all who desire to do God's will. Greatness is being in line with God's will.
- F. Lord do you want us to command fire to consume them (vs. 54) - James and John, outraged by the poor reception Jesus received among the Samaritans, offered to destroy the city in spectacular judgment for Jesus' sake. It's interesting and perhaps amusing that James and John were so confident that they could do this, especially after their recent failure with the demon-possessed boy. Their reaction shows why Jesus sometimes called them Sons of Thunder. (Mark 3:17)
- G. You do not Know what spirit You are Of (vs. 55) - There are two uses of the word translate "spirit" in the new testament. One speaks of a spiritual being, the other of an attitude or mindset. Here it is the later use. They were carrying a wrong heart and mindset thinking it was Godly but it was the opposite. God is abundantly clear that He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked and desires for all to be saved. Greatness is showing mercy and patience to the end.
- H. Someone said I will follow you Wherever you Go (vs. 57) - This man has said what we have probably all said at one time or another and there is no question of the sincerity of this individual. Jesus does not tell the individual "no you cant" He simply tells the truth. There are no glamor or physical comforts that are guaranteed to the follower of Jesus. Greatness is sacrificing earthly comforts to follow Jesus.
- I. Let me Bury My Father (vs. 60) - Actually, this man did not ask for permission to dig a grave for his deceased father. He wanted to remain in his father's house and care for him until the father died. This was obviously an indefinite period, which could drag on and on. The man wanted to follow Jesus, but not just yet. He knew it was good and that he should do it, but he felt there was a good reason why he could not do it now. Greatness is being wholehearted especially when it comes to giving up good things for greater things.

- J. Let me say Goodbye to those at Home (vs. 61) - The previous man offered to follow Jesus after an indefinite, perhaps long delay. This man offered to follow Jesus after a relatively short delay. Jesus stressed to this man the commitment necessary to follow Him. One must have a similar determination as a farmer plowing a field, who must do it with all his strength and always looking forward. Greatness in the Kingdom requires immediate adherence to God's will and leadership.

“O young man, when you are thinking of leaving the world, be afraid of these farewells! They have been the ruin of hundreds of hopeful people. They have been almost persuaded; but they have gone to their old companions just to give them the last kiss, and the last shake of the hand, and we have not seen anything more of them.” (Spurgeon)