

SENT TO HARVEST Luke 10:1-20

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

–We so easily sing the words! Have we considered THE COST?

Jesus is addressing the *cost* of following Him, in light of developing rejection.

He is on His way to Jerusalem to die.

It will cost them everything to identify with Him and follow Him.

Many of those wanting to identify with Jesus don't realize the nature of the commitment required and what it might cost them personally (9:57-62).

PRIVILEGE OF DISCIPLESHIP–but also, THE COST 10:1-20

When they realize how much it's going to COST them, . . .

Some choose to return to the old life

rather than pay the price of following Jesus.

Others choose to identify with Jesus and follow Him.

They become His *ambassadors*, sent to represent Him and to prepare the way for His arrival.

They go out two by two—which provides companionship, protection, encouragement, and a double-witness.

Not to be confused with sending of the 12.

A larger group, sent throughout cities of Judea, not Samaria.

Seventy (72 ??) "*others*"—anonymous disciples of Jesus.

Though not called "*apostles*," they're sent (*apostello*) with a commission to represent our Lord, as the apostles were.

His authority is vested in them.

They're dependent on the support of the towns where they're sent.

Though their mission is unique to their time—designed to prepare for Messiah's coming—underlying principles of THEIR mission apply to OUR mission also, as Jesus' followers, and as His representatives today.

Our mission is different, but basis of our commission is similar!

CHOSEN TO REPRESENT HIM 10:1-12 10:1-2

Series of warnings/exhortations for those sent to represent Him.

Harvesting is hard work.

A lot to do and few to help.

We could never do it alone. 10:2

Rather than pray for easier work, pray that the Lord will send workers to join us.

We must trust God to provide workers.

Recruiting representatives to proclaim good news wasn't result of recruiting drive!

GOD provides workers needed in response to our prayers

It won't happen as result of tear-jerking appeal.

GOD sends out workers! He raises them up.

God motivates people to do what He commands us to do.

Twisting arms won't do it!

It's prayer that works! –God sends them out!

God sends workers to work His harvest.

He often uses people who understand need and pray about it.

The great need of missions isn't for money.

It's laborers.

Laborers won't go until God moves them.

God doesn't send them until we ask Him.

We're part of that process!

Harvesting is dangerous.

We're like lambs in a pack of wolves. 10:3

We must trust the Lord, our Shepherd, to protect us.

[We depend on reception given by the cities where we're sent.]

We must not be loaded down with stuff. 10:4

-Trying to meet our own needs—take it all with you—ready for any contingency!

An urgent task—concentrate on getting the job done—not on taking everything!

Travel light and dedicate ourselves to the task.

Don't carry a load of supplies, nor stop people along the way for help.

We must trust God to meet our needs.

We're to bring a message of peace to house and cities where we're received. 10:5-6

[When we're received into a house, . . .]

We aren't to shop around looking for the "best deal!" 10:7-8

-not to move on looking for other places, or the best deal.

Accept hospitality offered in 1st place we're welcomed.

Barclay: *The Teaching of the 12 Apostles* points to a problem that later became common:

Some prophets wandered from town to town.

If a prophet stayed in the same town for more than 3 days without working, he was considered a false prophet.

If a prophet asks for money or a meal, he's a false prophet.

A laborer is worthy of his hire, but the servant of a crucified Master doesn't seek luxury.

We're to dedicate ourselves to proclaiming the kingdom of God.

[Because of our relationship to the kingdom of God and our role as His representatives]

We become the basis of judgment on those cities. 10:9-12

Vss. 9 & 11—*"the kingdom of God has come near."*

It doesn't matter what people do about it—it is near—whether they like it or not!!

If they receive it, they get the blessing (9)

If they don't, they're judged; they still know it has come near (11)

They'll know it's been there! —One way or the other!

JUDGMENT ON REJECTING CITIES 10:13-16

Those who reject our message have less excuse than the cities God destroyed previously because of their extreme perversion

Divine judgment against the cities of Judea that reject Him will be worse than that pronounced against Sodom, and Tyre and Sidon.

They have greater responsibility because they have a greater revelation of God's work.

Emphasis is on hearing what God says. 10:16

Listening is contrasted with rejection—

—The one who hears you, hears me

—The one who rejects you, rejects me

—The one who rejects Me, rejects the One Who sent Me.

REJOICING OVER GOD'S WORK THROUGH US 10:17-20

When they return, they check in with the One Who sent them.

They're accountable to Him.

Along with privileges of discipleship come responsibilities.

We're accountable for how we use resources God entrusts to us.
In other passages (Parables of Talents) our Lord teaches that we will be held accountable for how we use the Master's resources.

One day He will ask us what WE have done with the Gospel He has committed to us.

Have we been faithful, or faithless?

1 Cor. 3:13; 2 Cor. 5:9: we stand before Him, and give account for what we have done with the stewardship He has placed in our hands/

Have we been faithful, or faithless?

Christ's representatives enjoy authority over Satan's forces 10:17

We acknowledge that God deserves the glory.

It's done in Jesus' name—not ours! **10:18**

Our victory is part of a greater spiritual battle in which Satan, the adversary, will be defeated.

John 12:31-32: *"Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."*

Rev. 12:9-10: *"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. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now the salvation, and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death."*

Jesus' authority assures US of victory against the opposition.

However, *that isn't the basis for our greatest victory or rejoicing.*

It appears they have focused attention on the spectacular.

"Look at all the great things that are happening!"

Jesus tells us that isn't the right focus.

**We're not to rejoice over our power,
but rather because we belong to God's kingdom.**

There's nothing wrong with rejoicing.

This isn't a prohibition of celebration.

He rejoices because He sees this as part of the greater spiritual triumph in the war against the enemy.

He reaffirms, if not increases, the authority He has given **10:19**

But we aren't to glory in that.

Performance isn't the issue here!

Idiom indicates they're rejoicing about the spectacular, ahead of secondary importance of rejoicing about our position in Christ.

If we're going to get excited about something,

it should NOT be over the spectacular,

It should NOT be about our power,

It should NOT be about our privileges,

It should be because of our position in Christ

It should be because of our place in God's program

—which we've received by His grace, through faith!

Spurgeon: Joy which needs moderating—the spectacular, performance-based, works-oriented joy—joy of gifts, power and success.

Joy which needs exciting—joy based on what we have because we're in Christ
Our names have been indelibly engraved in heaven.

That's a *greater* reality than spectacular show put on before the public eye.

And, it is true of *all* genuine believers!

All who trust Christ have our name recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life,
where it can never be erased throughout all eternity!

That's cause for celebration!

Spurgeon: "If thou wouldst rejoice in thy name's being written in heaven, not only be assured of the fact, but meditate much upon it. Let this be frequently in thy mind, "My name is written in heaven: I am one of His redeemed, and He writes me down among His dearly purchased property. He knows me, looks upon me, and regards me as His treasure. I am not my own, I am bought with a price, I belong to Him." . . .

What if thou be rich! Rejoice not in this, for riches take to themselves wings and fly away, but rather rejoice because thy name is written in heaven.

If thou be a man of learning, thank God for thy knowledge, and use it for His glory; but, nevertheless, rejoice not in this, for what is earthly knowledge often but learned ignorance? Rather rejoice because thy name is written in heaven.

If thou be a person of position in the church, thank God if thou mayest glorify Him thereby; but rather rejoice because your name is written in heaven.

Are you strong and in good health, be grateful for the privilege; but rather rejoice because your name is written in heaven.

Turn this inspired text round another way, and if you have any sorrow, or if you mourn the absence of any earthly good, do not lament too bitterly; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

You are poor. Well, be not despondent, for your name is written in heaven.

You are despised, and your name is cast out as evil, but rejoice none the less, for it is written in heaven.

You have but few gifts and abilities, but your name is written in heaven.

You could not stand up and edify a multitude, but your name is written in heaven.

When you die your departure will make but a small gap in the church's ranks, but **your name is written in heaven.**

Barclay: "It will always remain true that a man's greatest glory is not what he has done but what God has done for him. It might well be claimed that the discovery of the use of chloroform saved the world more pain than any other single medical discovery. Once someone asked Sir James Simpson, who pioneered its use, "What do you regard as your greatest discovery?" expecting the answer, "Chloroform." Simpson answered, "My greatest discovery was that Jesus Christ is my Savior."

Even the greatest man can say in the presence of God only,

"Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling;

Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace;

Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

We're called to serve the living God.

We're called to be His representatives!

BUT, even greater, we can rejoice because *our name is written in heaven, where Christ is now seated at the right hand of the Father.*

What more could we ask for?

Yet, while we are here, we have a mission.

We are called to announce good news

Have we been faithful, or faithless?

Our ministry to each other in the body of Christ is to “*consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,*” to encourage one another to be all God wants us to be.

How can we encourage one another to be faithful?

That's one of the main reasons for our flock groups and small group ministries.

God has given us an appointment as His representatives—His ambassadors

With privileged position comes responsibility!

Are we faithful in carrying out the responsibility God has given to us?

How can we encourage one another to be more faithful?