

Luke 7

Healing the Centurion's Slave — 7:1-10

When He had completed all His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum— Jesus came down from somewhere in the mountains to Capernaum, a city on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

*And a centurion's—*A Roman soldier in charge of 100 other soldiers. Of significance is that he is a Gentile, not a Jew.

- *slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die—*this slave was, most likely, a Jew. A fellow Roman would not have been a slave. The centurion *highly regarded* this slave, a term of endearment, he was loved like a son. Matthew tells us this slave was paralyzed and in a lot of pain, and Luke says he was *about to die*.

When he [the centurion] heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.

- The parallel account is in Matthew 8:5-13. Matthew's account gives the impression that the centurion himself talked to Jesus. Luke's account says two different delegations were sent to Jesus, and the centurion even makes the point that *I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You*.
- Remember that the gospel writers are only giving partial accounts of the incidents in the life of Jesus. And they are giving them from different perspectives. If all the facts were recorded, apparent discrepancies would be avoided.
- Matthew often abbreviated situations, telling the beginning and ending. The elders who came were speaking for the centurion, so Matthew could have just credited the centurion with the message. For example, Matthew 27:26 says of Pilate, *...Jesus he scourged and delivered over to be crucified*, but we know he did not personally scourge Jesus, but he did so through his agents.

*When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him; for he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue"—*The centurion is not named, but we know a lot about his character:

- We know he was a Gentile who cared about the Jewish nation, to which he had been sent as a soldier of the occupying forces in Israel.
- He could have used his power to appeal to Jesus to come, but instead he was very humble. He told Jesus, *I am not worthy....* Although the Jews thought he was very worthy. They even praised him for building their synagogue in Capernaum (a very expensive gift, the foundations of which exist even today, with another later synagogue built on top of it).
- The centurion appealed to the mercy of Jesus for healing the servant, not upon human power or worthiness. And the centurion did not ask for anything for himself.
- Typical of the Jewish elders, they thought good works made a person worthy, especially if the works were for the Jews. As is often true today, Christians think that big donors should receive "special handling" by religious leaders.
- The Jewish leaders thought Jesus should come and heal because of who the centurion was and what he did for the Jews, not because of the slave who was suffering. They were totally self-serving, not compassionate.

*Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy for You to come under my roof”—*The centurion obviously knew a lot about the Jews and their religion, having built their synagogue. Therefore, he did not expect Jesus to come and have contact with him, a Gentile. He was not offended by these laws nor did he challenge them by insisting Jesus come to his house. This was a very humble thing for a military superior to do for a captive people.

*for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, ‘Go!’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come!’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this!’ and he does it”—*The centurion was a man of authority, yet he did not have the authority to heal a dying man. But he recognized that Jesus did have that authority. A man of authority only needs to speak, and his command is obeyed. So Jesus, who had greater authority, only needed to speak, and the servant would be healed.

*Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, “I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith”—*This must have been so encouraging to Theophilus, the Gentile to whom the book was written. Jesus is here praising the faith of a Gentile, even saying He has not found such great faith among the Jews.

- Matthew, written for a Jewish audience, also adds that in the kingdom, many Jews will be absent while many Gentile will be present (8:10-12).

When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

Raising the Widow's Son — 7:11-17

*Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain—*Nain is a village south of the Sea of Galilee, in the Jezreel Valley. It is located on the north side of the Hill of Moreh. In Nain, one could look about three miles north to the cliffs of Nazareth.

Spelling the acronym ONES, on the Hill of Moreh:

- **O**phrah—on the west, the hometown of Gideon about 1300 years earlier (Judges 6:11).
- **N**ain—on the north
- **E**ndor—on the east, home of the witch, who brought up Samuel from the dead at the request of King Saul about 1000 years earlier (1 Samuel 28:7).
- **S**hunem—on the south, home of the woman whose boy Elisha raised from the dead about 800 years earlier (2 Kings 4:8).

*and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd—*most likely a happy crowd, expecting Jesus' next miracle. Most likely, because Capernaum was at least 20 miles away from Nain, and because, as is also common today, they buried bodies the day the person died, this young man was probably not even dead when Jesus started His journey to Nain.

*Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her—*here was an opposite kind of crowd, mourning the death of a widow's only son—no joy, no hope, no expectancy. With her husband already dead, her son would have been her means of support.

*When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, “Do not weep”—*Notice, she did not ask for nor expect anything. All the initiative was taken by Jesus and not in response to faith

but only in response to grief and human need, and His own compassion when He saw that grief. God's sovereignty activates His power according to His will.

- Faith was always present in salvation but not in all miracles.
- Sometimes we may tell a mourner not to cry because it makes us feel uncomfortable. But Jesus said these words because crying was unnecessary and inappropriate because her son was not to remain dead.

And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!"—Touching the coffin would normally have defiled a Jew. But the second Jesus touched it, the young man became alive. Also, This shows Jesus' authority that He could halt a funeral procession.

- *For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself* (John 5:26). Life originates in God the Father and God the Son. *For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes* (v. 21). Evolutionists like to trace life back in time, but eventually they come to the place where they must ask: "Where did that first spark of life come from? Can life come from non-life?" The answer is "No." Life comes from life. God has life in Himself, and He gives life to whom He wishes.
- *an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment* (John 5:28-29). One day, all the dead will be raised. What are the "good deeds"? *"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent"* (John 6:29).

The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

Fear gripped them all—both crowds of people.

and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!"—Perhaps it reminded them of the similar miracle the prophet Elisha had performed near that very area.

and, "God has visited His people!" —Through a prophet, but they still do not acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah or as God Himself.

- Contrast this to Martha, when Jesus raised her brother Lazarus from the dead, she said of Jesus, *"I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God..."* (John 11:27).

This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district.

Thoughts and Applications

1. These miracles proved Jesus was God. No one had ever done what He did. Healing without even being with the person healed and raising a boy by just speaking a word.
2. These miracles are the backdrop for the questions of John the Baptist in the next verses.
3. The faith of the centurion pleased Jesus. God wants Christ to be the object of our faith. The centurion did not expect Jesus to heal or order Him to heal. He left the whole situation up to Jesus and Jesus' authority to do whatever He pleased. Be careful when we pray that we are not demanding or expecting Jesus to do what we desire. Our attitude needs to be "Not my will but your will be done." He's the One with the authority to do as He desires.
4. The Jews thought Jesus should heal the centurion's slave because the centurion was worthy. Anything we receive from God is a gift, it is not because we deserve it. *Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...* (James 1:17; see also Ephesians 2:8-9).
5. The centurion's faith focused on God meeting the need of someone else, not for his own self-indulgence (such as the prosperity gospel teaches today—God wants you healthy and rich).

6. It seems like the centurion's faith was a growing faith. He had already demonstrated this by his love of God's people and his building of their synagogue, where they read and learned about God's Word. Faith in Jesus was the next step for him (similar to the centurion of Acts 10:22).

Some contrasts between the two incidents:

Centurion: (a) he was rich; (b) he was a Gentile; (c) he was a man; (d) Jesus healed his slave; (e) the slave was dying and in pain; (f) he pled for healing; (g) he exercised faith; (h) Jesus wasn't physically present; (i) No public response mentioned.

Widow: (a) she was apparently not rich; (b) she was a Jew; (c) she was a woman; (d) Jesus healed her son; (e) the son was dead; (f) no request was made for healing; (g) The widow exercised grief; (h) Jesus was present and touched the body; (i) great response described.

John the Baptist and Jesus — 7:18-35

The disciples of John reported to him [John] about all these things—Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples (Matthew 11:2). Luke already mentioned in 3:20 that John was in prison, isolated from the society and what was going on. John's total ministry time was approximately one year.

Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?" When the men came to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, 'Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?'"—John's ministry was one of preparing the way for the Messiah. He already gave testimony, at Jesus' baptism, that Jesus was the Son of God (John 1:32-34). Yet, when John heard Jesus' message and the miracles Jesus was doing, he wondered if Jesus was indeed the Messiah. Why?

- Jesus was not doing what John supposed the Messiah would do, namely, bring about the kingdom and deliver Israel from Roman rule. Instead, there is no mention of Jesus doing any such thing.
- John is trying to force Jesus to declare Himself as the Messiah. And if He doesn't, then John will look for someone else.
- But Jesus did not want people to follow Him because He **said** He was the Messiah. He wanted them to **conclude** He was the Messiah because of what He taught and the miracles He performed.
- Also, if Jesus was the Messiah, and John was the forerunner of the Messiah, John must have wondered why he was in prison. He had admitted at the beginning that Jesus must increase, and John must decrease—but decreasing didn't mean prison in his mind. It didn't fit with his idea of the coming kingdom.
- John has not sent his disciples to follow Jesus but to try to change what Jesus was doing.

Thoughts and Applications: John's reasons for doubt are common even in believers today:

1. He was experiencing a personal tragedy. John was faithful to his calling as a prophet. Surely the Messiah had the power to free John. When the Messiah came, bad things should have happened to bad people, not to good people. John was like Job. His doubt came from his inability to understand **why** God had allowed this negative circumstance into the life of His faithful servant. However, every circumstance in the believer's life is subject to the sovereign purpose of God, whether it is perceived as deserved or undeserved.
2. The popular thinking of the Jews at the time was that the Messiah would establish His kingdom and throw off the yoke of the Romans. Even after Jesus' resurrection, the disciples asked Him, "*Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?*" (Acts 1:6). Illegitimate, unbiblical expectations can only lead to doubt and loss of joy when they are not

met. The cure for that doubt is to read, study, understand, and meditate on God's revelation in the Scriptures (Joshua 1:8).

3. John's doubt stemmed from incomplete revelation. The Old Testament did prophesy the Messiah as the suffering servant (Isaiah 53) and as the coming King. However, it didn't state that there would be at least 2000 years between the two comings and that the disobedient Jews would be rejected and the church would be established, made up of both Jews and Gentiles. Today, we have the opposite—all kinds of people claiming to have new revelation from God. The cure is the same as #2—read, study, understand, and meditate on God's Word. It's the only way to know what is true revelation.
4. John's message was one of the coming judgment from God and calling for repentance (Luke 3:3-17). But Jesus, instead of bringing judgment upon unbelievers, brought to them healing and compassion. This did not make sense to John, who called for sinners to repent in order to avoid the Messiah's soon and sudden judgment.

At that very time [when John's disciples came] He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind—Jesus had refused the Pharisees' similar requests (Matthew 12:38-42) because they asked in unbelief. John, however, was seeking to know the truth and asking in faith.

And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM—What Jesus was doing was foretold in the Old Testament (Isaiah 26:19; 35:5-6; 61:1; Daniel 12:2).

"Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me"—John had to rise above his personal tragedy, the popular views of his day, his lack of complete revelation, and his wrong expectations and put his faith and trust in the convincing evidence that Jesus was the Messiah.

Thoughts and Applications: Like John, we need to have complete confidence (faith) that God is in sovereign control of the events in our lives. We know God is good and He loves us. There are no accidents or victims. We are called to be obedient and live our lives for Him no matter what is required of us, to even willingly die for Him, as John was called to do.

Verse 24—*When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John*

- *"What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? John was not someone who swayed in the breezes of popular opinion. He had firm, unshakeable convictions, that even led him to confront Herod about having his brother's wife, which led to his arrest and eventual execution. It was a passionate commitment to the truth that made many people journey for miles to the wilderness to hear him preach (Matthew 3:3).*
- *"But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!—"soft" is translated "effeminate" in 1 Corinthians 6:9. It's the frilly type clothing worn by the nobility. John, however, wore a simple garment made of camel's hair and a leather belt (Matthew 3:4). Instead of the fancy delicacies of the royal palace, he ate locusts and wild honey.*
- *"But what did you go out to see? A prophet?—For sure, the people did consider John to be a prophet. He was held in such high regard, some even thought he might be the Messiah (Luke 3:15). John had all the characteristics of a prophet: he powerfully proclaimed the Word of God,*

he confronted sin, he warned of coming judgment, he called for repentance, and lived a life of self-denial—reminiscent of the other Old Testament prophets.

- *Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet*—He was not only a prophet himself, he was the fulfillment of prophecy, he was one who was prophesied to come (Malachi 3:1): “*This is the one about whom it is written, ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.’*” While the other prophets predicted the Messiah would come, John announced that the Messiah had arrived. He had the privilege of not only seeing the Messiah but also of talking with Him and hearing the Father’s audible testimony concerning Him. John was the bridge between the age of promise and the age of fulfillment. He was the last and greatest of the Old Testament prophets and the first preacher in the New Testament.
- *“I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John*—as a human, he is the greatest one to ever live.
- *Yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he*—But being in the kingdom of God, even if you are the least one, is greater than being the greatest human to have ever lived.
- *When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God’s justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John*—Therefore, the “common” people agreed with Jesus and His message as they had agreed with John and his message of repentance, having also been baptized by John.

Verse 30—*But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John*—So the ministry of John literally divided the nation.

- The religious leaders rejected John’s message. They were self-righteous, thinking they were spiritually superior to the common people. No way would they admit they were sinners.
- Also, many responded to John’s message for just a while. Jesus said John “...*was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light* (John 5:35). They were glad to have a prophet among them (after 400 years of no prophets), but did not respond favorably to Jesus. They even ended up changing their view of John because Jesus wasn’t the Messiah they hoped for. If they rejected Jesus, they had to reject John, the forerunner of Jesus.

To what then shall I compare the men of this generation—Jesus is not talking about the people of verse 29, who had been baptized by John. He was referring to those of verse 30, who had rejected God and did not receive John’s baptism, namely, the *Pharisees and the lawyers*, i.e., the Jewish leadership, the generation of men living at the time of Jesus’ ministry.

- *and what are they like? They are like children who sit in the market place*—in this illustration, Jesus likens the Jewish leadership as children who sit and refuse to play with the other children. [They did not have “parks” etc. to play in, so they would play in the center town square or marketplace.]
- *and call to one another, and they say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance*—This would be the dancing at a wedding, a place of rejoicing and celebration—obviously representing Jesus, and His dining with sinners and tax gatherers, seen as “partying” and not “fasting” by the Jewish leadership.
- *we sang a dirge, and you did not weep*’—This would be the mourning at a funeral, a place of weeping—obviously representing John the Baptist and his ascetic lifestyle and call to repentance

For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine’—Notice the addition of “bread” and “wine.” Else it would read “eating nothing and drinking nothing.” Rather, it refers to

John's diet of locusts and wild honey. His ministry would be the dirge in the story. He told people of the coming wrath and judgment of God and that they needed to mourn over sin and repent.

- *and you say, 'He has a demon!'*—The Jewish leaders' conclusion about John, i.e., he is evil, not of God, was an extreme conclusion. John living in the wilderness, they may have compared to the strange behavior of the demoniac living in the tombs at Gerasenes (Luke 8:26-27). Especially when John was put in prison by Herod, his ministry was perceived as a failure. So much so, there is no public outcry recorded when he was beheaded. It was John's message that they hated. They did not see themselves as sinners in need of repentance.

The Son of Man [Jesus' favorite designation of Himself, used more than 80 times] *has come eating and drinking*, namely, with the sinners and tax gatherers

- *and you say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'*—again, an extreme conclusion. Whereas John was a loner living in the wilderness, Jesus traveled throughout the society, even going to weddings. We see this celebration with Jesus' Triumphal Entry.

Yet wisdom [i.e. the wisdom of God] *is vindicated* [proven true] *by all her children*—Jesus here has brought the ministries of John and of Himself together as both being the wisdom of God.

Thoughts and Applications:

1. As John questioned his own prophecy, Peter tells us that *...the [Old Testament] prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, ...things into which angels long to look* (1 Peter 1:10-12). Prophets had revelation from God, but that did not mean they could rightly interpret that revelation or that they had understanding of other prophecies, no matter how much they sought to understand. God told Daniel, *...conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; ...and knowledge will increase* (Daniel 12:4). Even angels do not have that understanding.
2. Part of John's problem was his isolation in prison. We need to be talking to other believers, listening to multiple teachers/preachers to discern the truth. When John sent his disciples to Jesus, he got more information, which helped him understand.
3. John had unrealistic, inaccurate expectations of God. John tried to change Christ to conform to his expectations, rather than to change his expectations. Be careful to not have expectations which are not in the Scriptures.
4. The messengers can have vastly different styles, but the message must be the same. Some may be more personable. Others may seem aloof. But what is their message? Is it true to God's Word? For example, some think Charles Ryrie is a boring teacher, but the content of his words are awesome and true to the Word of God. Some people are drawn to Joel Osteen because he is so personable, that big smile!, but his words do not conform to the Word of God.

Worship by the Unnamed Woman — 7:36-50

Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him—The Pharisees had already decided Jesus was a blasphemer, so this was just an event for them to gather evidence to use against Jesus. Jesus understood that the Pharisee was a hypocrite and that his intentions toward Jesus were evil. Yet Jesus graciously reached out to this sinner, giving him an opportunity to believe.

- *and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table*—reclining on their elbows, with their feet away from the table. Verse 40 tells us this Pharisee was named Simon.

“The similarities between the three gospel accounts [Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John

12:1-8] and that of Luke are superficial. The name Simon is as common in the ancient world as “Smith” is in our phone books. “Simon the leper” is hardly synonymous with “Simon the Pharisee.” In fact, a link between the two would be unthinkable to a Pharisee. Luke’s incident appears to occur much earlier in Jesus’ ministry than that of the others, which occurs just prior to our Lord’s death (thus serving as a preparation for His burial). In Luke’s account, “Simon” silently protests; in the others’ accounts, the disciples protest (John narrows the protest down to Judas). Simon the Pharisee could not grasp how Jesus could let such a sinful woman touch Him, while the disciples were troubled by the waste of the perfume, which could have been sold so that the money could help the poor.

All things considered, I believe that the incident described by Luke in his gospel is different from that described by Matthew, Mark, and John” (Deffinbaugh, *bible.org*).

And there was a woman [unnamed] in the city [unknown, but still in Galilee, 4:14–9:50] who was a sinner—most likely a prostitute, known for her sinful lifestyle in this city. This is not Mary Magdalene, who is introduced in 8:2. If it was Mary, Luke would have named her here, not later.

- *and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster [expensive marble quarried in Egypt] vial of perfume*—it was her plan to anoint Jesus’ head with this perfume—because the container was expensive, the perfume probably was also, using it instead of the common, less expensive, olive oil.

Normal hospitality, as Jesus entered the house, would be to greet Him with a kiss, to wash His feet, which get dusty from walking in sandals on dirt roads, and to anoint his head with oil. Simon did none of those things when Jesus entered his house (verses 44-46).

and standing behind Him at His feet—she would be standing out near the feet, away from the table, waiting for an opportunity to anoint Jesus’ head. For sure, the Pharisee did not notice her standing there or he would have thrown her out, as she was the lowliest of the lowly in their society.

- *weeping, she began to wet [“to rain”] His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head*—Her tears would make streaks on his dusty covered feet, which she wiped with her hair and not a towel. As we know from Jesus washing the disciples’ feet, this was something only a lowly slave would do (John 13:6f). Also, a Jewish woman who loosened and exposed her hair would be indecent.
- *and kissing His feet*—used to describe the father’s kissing of the prodigal son on his return home
- *and anointing them with the perfume*—This wasn’t a quick thing, she kept doing it (verse 45), perhaps to try to remove all the dust from his feet, using only tears as water. She was honoring Jesus in a place where the host only wanted to dishonor Him.

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner”—His inner thoughts of disapproval must have been written all over his face and in his eyes as he gazed at the woman. But she doesn’t seem to notice or care. Jesus, however, knows what the Pharisee is thinking. His reasoning was:

- If Jesus were a prophet, He would know people’s character (But Jesus not only knew the woman’s character, He knew Simon’s character and what he was thinking!)
- If Jesus knew this woman was a sinner, He would have nothing to do with her. (He, as a Pharisee, interpreted holiness as separation from sinners. Therefore, he didn’t think Jesus could be holy because of He allowed her to touch Him.)

And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher."

"A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?"

Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."—Yet both were unable to pay and were graciously forgiven. What was available for the sinning woman was also available to the Pharisee, if he would accept it.

Turning toward the woman—All this time, Jesus had His back to the woman and was talking to Simon. Now He turned His back to Simon and faced toward the woman, although He was still speaking to Simon.

He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet. You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.

- Simon did not show Jesus the minimum courtesy of washing His feet. This woman not only washed His feet, but she did it with her tears and her hair.
- Simon did not kiss Jesus' face, but the woman did not cease to kiss Jesus feet, which, at least at first, were dirty from walking.
- Simon did not anoint Jesus' head with oil. The woman anointed his feet with expensive perfume.

"For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much—yes, she has many sins, but like in the parable Jesus told, she loved much who was forgiven much.

- *but he who is forgiven little, loves little—*The Pharisee did not consider himself a sinner and did not love much, in fact, he showed no love to Jesus at all.

Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven." Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this man who even forgives sins?"—As we saw before, the Pharisees know only God can forgive sins. But they are calling Jesus a "man." They don't conclude that Jesus is God.

And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace"—It was not her works that saved her. Her works demonstrated her faith in Jesus. She came in faith to Jesus, believing He would accept her worship and not tell her to leave. The good works were a result of salvation, not the cause of salvation.

Thoughts and Applications:

1. Jesus said, *...the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out* (John 6:37). Jesus, at His first coming, came to save sinners. At His Second Coming, He will come as Judge, and it will be too late to come to Him for salvation.
2. Simon was more interested in passing judgment on God than he was on God's judgment of Him. He thought his home would be more righteous by keeping "sinners," like this woman, out than by inviting "sinners" in. He saw sexual sin as unforgivable but his pride as acceptable.
3. The Pharisee saw sinners a lot the way we see an AIDS victim. There is no cure, so we stay away from them. But if we had a cure, we would seek them out to cure them. The Pharisees have no cure for sin, so they stay away from sinners. Jesus has the cure for sin, so He was seeking sinners so He could cure them.

4. The worship of Jesus by this woman was at Jesus' feet. So in Revelation, the Apostle John is falling at Jesus' feet in worship. True worship is to fall at Jesus' feet, it's not about us.
5. Worship was about what the woman gave Jesus, not her asking Jesus for anything.
6. Her worship involved her emotions.
7. It's interesting that Luke does not record one single word spoken by the woman. The best worship may be wordless.
8. There were many reasons why this woman could have stayed away from Jesus: she was not invited, she was not wanted, she might be asked to leave, she would be scorned by the "righteous" Pharisees, there would be hypocrites there—but none of these things kept her from Jesus.

Luke 8

Contributing to their Support Out of their Private Means — 8:1-3

Soon afterwards, He began going around from one city and village to another—another trip throughout the Galilee region

- *proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God*—Remember, in Nazareth, He told them that's what He was doing (Luke 4:18).
- *The twelve were with Him*—Before, He had not yet selected the 12. Now He had, and they had left their jobs and were with Him, continually observing and learning.

and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and sicknesses: Mary who was called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out—Mary was prominent at the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:47; John 20:1-18), but this is the only other mention of her in the gospels. The fact that she had demons does not mean she was an immoral prostitute.

- Many of the women traveling with this group were those whom Jesus had healed. Rabbis refused to teach women, so these women, traveling with the group surrounding Jesus, listening to His teaching, contributing to the support of the group was very unusual.
- *and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward*—also a witness to Jesus' burial and resurrection (Luke 23:55; 24:10).
- *and Susanna*—only time she is mentioned

and many others who were contributing to their support out of their private means—

- Judas kept the money box and distributed the funds (John 12:6; 13:29).
- These women help meet needs (such as daily food) that Jesus did not meet in a miraculous way.
- This gave the men and women the opportunity and privilege of having a part in His ministry.
- This became the precedent to the later missionary journeys where the believers supported Paul and their teachers.

Thoughts and Applications:

1. Ministry costs money. Even Jesus' ministry had cost money. He and His followers had physical needs which people were privileged to participate in meeting those needs.
2. They were not only supporting Jesus, they were supporting the whole ministry team—the disciples and whoever else was traveling with them.
3. Luke gives greater attention to women in his accounts than do the other New Testament authors. Women are described in a very favorable light.
4. Jesus differentiated the ministry of women from that of men. He did not choose women as apostles. He did not send out women. He did not use women in ministries which caused them to teach or to have authority over men (1 Timothy 2:11-12). Jesus did not allow His culture, which suppressed women, to dictate how He treated women. Neither should we allow our culture, which is liberal, to dictate how women are treated. Women are not honored by treating them like men. We honor them by dealing with them as the special creation of God with a complimentary, not a competitive, role to play with regard to men.
5. One's spirituality or significance to Christ is not measured by prominence, power, or position but by one's heart for God and devotion to Him. These women were spiritual because they wanted to be with Jesus and to give what they could to Him.

The Parable of the Soils — 8:4-15

When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him—From Matthew 13:1-2, we learn that Jesus “went out of the house” and was teaching from a boat off the shore of the Sea of Galilee, probably near Capernaum where He usually stayed.

He spoke by way of a parable—This parable is also found in Matthew 13:1-23 and Mark 4:1-34. This is the first and primary parable of all parables. It explains the responses to all the other parables.

- A parable means to put one thing alongside another for comparison. Jesus put a story alongside a spiritual truth to make that truth more clearly understood. Parables could be short or long. They also had the benefit of making the spiritual truth more easily remembered.
- As the Pharisees have rejected Jesus and His teaching, from this point on, Jesus spoke in parables to the crowds so they would not understand (v. 10). Without the explanation, a parable can mean anything or nothing. Jesus said to His followers, “*To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven*” (Mark 4:11-12).

Thoughts and Applications: The Bible tells us at least two reasons God doesn’t want them to understand:

1. To understand and reject Jesus results in more judgment—*How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant...* (Hebrews 10:29). Less understanding means less judgment.
 2. During the Tribulation, *For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness* (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).
- *With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples* (Mark 4:33-34). His disciples included the Twelve and the others around Him who wanted to understand. *As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables* (Mark 4:10).
 - This parable makes it clear that it is not the Word of God, the Gospel message, nor the skill or methodology of those proclaiming it, but it is the condition of the hearer’s heart that is the determining factor. Solomon said, *Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life* (Proverbs 4:23). Jesus said, *For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart* (Matthew 12:34) and *But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders* (Matthew 15:18-19). The Bible describes the heart as:

Wicked (Proverbs 26:23)	desperately sick (Jeremiah 17:9)
Perverse (Psalm 101:4; Proverbs 11:20)	evil (Genesis 8:21; Jeremiah 3:17)
Insane (Ecclesiastes 9:3)	unclean (Jeremiah 4:14)
Deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9)	disloyal (1 Kings 15:3)
Errant (Psalm 95:10)	unrepentant (Romans 2:5)
Unbelieving (Hebrews 3:12)	blind (Romans 1:21)
Deceived (Isaiah 44:20)	hardened (Ephesians 4:18)
Proud (Proverbs 16:5; 21:4)	greedy (2 Peter 2:14)
Foolish (Romans 1:21)	idolatrous (Ezekiel 14:3-4)
Rebellious (Jeremiah 5:23)	stubborn (Jeremiah 5:23)
	Dull (Acts 28:27)

“The sower went out to sow his seed—scattering the seed by hand

- *and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up—*between the plowed furrows would be paths which the farmers would walk on to gain access to their fields. Or even travelers would use the paths. The seeds on the path would be trampled under foot, or because the path was hardened from people walking on it, the seed would lay on top for the birds to eat.
- *Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture—*This would not be rocks on the surface because obviously, the farmer would remove those. But sometimes the dirt on top was good, but underneath there were rocks or a rock bed, so the thin layer of topsoil would not retain enough moisture for the seeds to survive very long.
- *Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out—*The farmer would remove all the weeds he could, but there are always weed roots which survive. The weeds would grow faster than the good plants, blocking the sunlight and robbing the moisture, thus choking out the seeds.
- *Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great—*Matthew and Mark refer to a crop of thirty, sixty, or one hundred. Luke only mentions the 100. The point is that seed doesn't just reproduce itself. It produces 100 times itself.
- *As He said these things, He would call out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear”—*i.e., a call, an invitation, to those individuals who want to understand what the parable meant, which is exactly what the disciples ask in the next phrase.

*His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant—*those who seek God will find Him.

*And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND—*The “mysteries” or secrets of the kingdom of God is hidden from those who do not believe so they will not understand and be accountable for rejecting what they understand to be true.

This parable does not address who is sowing the seed or to whom we should sow the seed—the seed is sown in dirt in all the soils—or how it is to be sown. Those are not the points of the parable. When the seed of the Word of God is sown, these are the possible responses:

Verse 11—*Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God—the Bible*

- *Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved—*These are people who have never been open to the Word of God. These are not necessarily atheists. Some are very religious, such as the scribes and Pharisees who seem to be in this category. Other sins that would keep them from believing are pride (James 4:6) and the love of sin (John 3:19).
- *Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away—*The quickness of their response indicates a lack of depth. They do not really understand what the Word of God and the Gospel entails. It's due to selective hearing. They only hear what they want to hear and respond positively to that and only believe for a while. In fact, their joy may convince many that their conversion is real. But it's perseverance that shows genuine saving faith (John 8:31; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 3:14). Emotion is not an indicator of spiritual reality. In time of testing,

these people abandon Jesus (see 1 John 2:19). When the suffering of trials and tests come, they reveal whether faith is real or superficial.

- *The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity*—This soil appears good—it’s not hard-packed, there is no underlying rocks. But there are other impurities, hard to find. Whereas the rocky soil failed because of suffering, the thorny soil fails because of pleasure. These are people who have a more complete understanding of the cost of discipleship but they are not willing to pay the price. It’s not lack of knowledge but lack of commitment, lack of dedication. Their priorities are the things and pleasures of this life so they bring no fruit to maturity (see 1 John 2:15-17).
- *But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance*—These people understand the Word of God, they are committed to being a follower of Jesus, and mature in Christ, so they bear fruit.

Thoughts and Applications:

1. For sure, the people in the first soil are not believers, and the people in the fourth soil are believers. The question is, what about soils two and three? Some think they are, some think they are not, some think that is not the point of the parable (to distinguish the saved and unsaved). Sometimes I think they are saved, but not maturing in Christ. Other times I think they just appear saved and are not really saved. [If they are saved, they are always saved. Those who are saved are elected to be saved. They cannot undo that, as they did nothing to become elected.]
2. If soils two and three are not saved, then we’d have to say that they appear saved at first. They may even have a joyous emotional response. But soon their lives show they were not really saved. Either the suffering of trials or the pleasures of life choke out whatever response they had to the Word of God, so there is no assurance they were indeed saved. For example, suppose as a teenager you go to camp. At the evening campfire, you, as well as your friends, emotionally respond to the gospel. But when you go home, you become involved in the things of life, and over time, you forget all about that experience. Another life example, suppose you are with your family, and they all want to go to an amusement park, they are excited, and you say, “Sure, that sounds like fun.” But then as the day approaches, and you realize what it involves to do that, your worries choke out your commitment to go.
3. Let’s suppose soils two and three are all genuine true believers. In soil two, they do trust Christ, but are never disciplined or taught. Their faith has not grown from being in the Word. So when trials come, they don’t have strong faith to see them through. The same with soil three. The person gets caught up in their career, their friendships, their families, other things of the world. They are not disciplined or taught. Yet these people give testimony that they are saved, even after years and years. They can tell you the Gospel, they have assurance they are going to heaven, but we see no spiritual maturity.
4. One thing we know for sure, God intends for us to receive His Word, understand it, learn it, mature and grow, hold fast to it, and bear the fruit of a mature believer in Christ. When you read the Word, or are being taught the Word, prepare your heart to receive it. Let it bear fruit in your life. The more you mature in the Lord, the more your faith will endure in times of trials and in the pressure of the pleasures of the world. If you are not in the Word, then you are not a healthy, strong believer. Your faith will not stand firm.

Take Care How You Listen — 8:16-18

The emphasis here, again, is on hearing the Word, or listening to the Word, i.e., understanding it

- *Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light*—The purpose of light is to give light. The purpose of hearing the Word is to produce the fruit of the Word (as the fourth soil), not hide it.
- *For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light*—It seems to me that He's talking about what kind of soil you are. If you are full of thorns and the Word does not bear fruit, time and truth will eventually reveal that, it will become known. (See 1 John 2:19.)
- *So take care how you listen* or what you understand. If you understand the Word, it's supposed to bear fruit in your life. If it doesn't, you haven't listened at all.
- *for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him*—Like the fourth soil, the seed of the Word produces 30, 40, or even 100-fold in your life. But if you are listening, like the 2nd and 3rd soils, and the seed has been sown in your life, but there are no roots, etc. then even the seed which was sown to you is taken away.

Thoughts and Applications

For example, suppose you come to Bible study, and are really convicted by a particular portion of Scripture. If you do not go home and apply that to your life, then what you heard, understood, and agreed with at Bible study will be taken away from you. You will forget all about it.

The Real Family of Jesus—8:19-21

And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You—Mary and Joseph did not have sexual relations until after Jesus was born (Matthew 1:25). But after Jesus was born, they did have other children. Mark 6:3 says his brothers are named James, Joses, Judas and Simon, plus sisters (plural). Jude, the writer of the book of Jude, calls himself the "brother of James" (Jude 1), the author of the book of James, also Jesus' half-brother, who later became head of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13f). During Jesus' life, they did not believe in Him (John 7:5). But after Jesus' resurrection, He specifically appeared to His brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7). And Acts 1:14 tells us His brothers were in the room with Mary and the apostles when the Holy Spirit descended.

Thoughts and Applications

That Mary remained a virgin after giving birth to Jesus first appeared in the apocryphal literature of the second century.

- The Catholics argue that the brothers mentioned above are children of Joseph before he married Mary. There is no evidence of such a marriage. Also, if that were the case, one of these older brothers would be the rightful king of Israel, not Jesus.
- Some say these were cousins, not brothers. But there is a Greek word for cousin (*anepsios*) which Paul used to refer to Barnabas' cousin Mark (Colossians 4:10). That word is not used here in Luke.
- Psalm 69, a Messianic Psalm, says in verse 8, *I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother's sons.*

- That Joseph does not appear here or anywhere in the New Testament after the incident in the Temple when Jesus was 12, suggests he was dead by this time. Jesus assigning the care of Mary to the Apostle John at the cross (John 19:27) further confirms that Joseph was dead.

*But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who **hear** the word of God and **do** it”*—It wasn’t the human connection with Jesus that mattered, it was the spiritual connection. Mary and the brothers eventually will have that, and they will become His mother and His brothers.

- Again, if you hear the Word and do not do it, it’s like putting a light under the bed or under a container. What use is it?

Crossing the Sea—8:22-25

This account is also recorded in Matthew 8:23-27 and Mark 4:36-41.

- *Now on one of those days*—Mark says it was the evening of the day He taught the parable of the soils.
- *Jesus and His disciples got into a boat*—Mark says there were other boats with them, too.
- *and He said to them, “Let us go over to the other side of the lake”*—They were in Capernaum, on the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee, heading for the eastern side of the lake.
 - The Sea of Galilee is called the Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1), the Sea of Chinnereth (Numbers 34:11), and the Sea of Tiberias (John 6:1). It is 8 miles at its widest point, and 13 miles long. It’s shaped like a harp. It’s a freshwater lake. The Jordan River, coming down from 9,000 foot Mt. Hermon in the north, is its main source of water. It is about 141 feet deep and its surface is about 690 feet below sea level. (It is the lowest freshwater lake on the planet.) It is about 30 miles east of the Mediterranean Sea. The Jordan River flows out the southern end about 60 miles and drops 1300 feet to flow into the Dead Sea.
- *So they launched out. But as they were sailing along He fell asleep*—This is the only place that records Jesus sleeping.
- *and a fierce gale of wind descended on the lake*—Matthew describes this as “a great storm [shaking]” (*seismos*, from which we get the English word “seismology”).
- *and they began to be swamped and to be in danger*—The Sea of Galilee is the bowl of a dormant volcano. Suddenly a wind will come from the north down the Jordan River, which slices through the hills surrounding the lake. This wind will swirl around inside this bowl. Very suddenly, I’ve been told, there will be waves as high as 10 feet. As fishermen, they knew the danger they were in.
- *They came to Jesus*—They had seen Him raise the dead, heal sicknesses, control the fish in the sea, so they came to Him—can He calm the wind and the sea?
- *and woke Him up*—That’s interesting. There’s a “fierce gale of wind,” water swamping the boat, and Jesus slept through it all and they had to wake Him up.
- *saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!”*—Mark records someone saying, “Teacher, don’t You care if we drown?” (4:38). The tone here sounds like the disciples rebuking [sharp disapproval or criticism] Jesus because He was sleeping while they were in danger. Although they had seen Jesus heal other people, this is the first recorded miracle that actually involved them. They themselves were in danger of dying. Also, Jesus had already told them they were going *over to the other side of the lake*. They didn’t believe Him.
- *And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves*—Mark 4:39 records Jesus as saying, “Hush, be still.”
- *and they [wind and surging waves] stopped, and it became calm*—Both Matthew and Mark record the adjective “great” or “abundantly” calm. Usually when the wind stops, the waves

slowly stop surging, but in this instance, there is now an absence of wind, and the sea is like glass. Even the sudden quiet after the storm must have been almost eerie.

- *And He said to them, “Where is your faith?”* A tone of rebuke to the disciples. This experience did not create faith, it tested faith. Jesus never rebuked anyone for having too much faith.
- *They were fearful and amazed, saying to one another, “Who then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?”* The only thing more terrifying to the disciples than the storm was having the Creator and controller of the storm in their boat with them. Later, when Jesus calmed another storm on the Sea of Galilee, the disciples worshipped Him, saying, *“You are certainly God’s Son!”* (Matthew 14:33).

Thoughts and Applications: Jonah’s disobedience put him in a storm. Here the disciples’ obedience put them in the storm. But God is the same both times. He controls the storms of this world. There is no guarantee that He will deliver us from these storms—in fact, many believers have died in the storms. But the point is—we need to come to Jesus in faith that He knows what is best, and if it is to deliver us, He has the power to do that.

- As probably mentioned before, their faith came from hearing the words that Jesus taught (Romans 10:17). Then that faith was tested by this experience. The experience did not create the faith.

The Gerasene Demoniac—8:26-40

“The Bible is the only source of accurate knowledge about the supernatural realm, and it is foolish and futile to seek such knowledge elsewhere (Isaiah 8:19-20)” (MacArthur). There are not stories of demons in the Old Testament, and outside of the Gospels and Acts, there are no references to demon possession in the New Testament. During Jesus’ life, He attacked the demons, they did not attack Him. Only during the future time of the Tribulation and the Second Coming of Christ will overt demon activity exceed that of the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry. And as we approach that time, we should expect the birth pangs to increase (Matthew 24:8), i.e., a greater increase in overt demonism. That doesn’t mean they are not active during all that time. For example, Satan is described as a disguised angel of light in 2 Corinthians 11:14-15.

Jesus Arrives

- *Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes—or Gadarenes, modern day Kersa, in the eastern hills above Galilee*
- *which is opposite Galilee—on the eastern shore, about in the middle, where there are steep hills, right down to the shore.*
- *And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons—*Matthew records that there were two demon-possessed men (8:28). Mark and Luke focus on one of these men. What happened to the other man is not recorded, although it seems like we can assume he was also delivered from the demons, however, perhaps he did not become a follower of Jesus, as Luke has an emphasis on Gentiles who did follow Jesus.
- Refer to the handout sheet on demon possession from chapter 4.
- Matthew 8:28 tells us *they were so extremely violent that no one could pass by that way.* Mark 5:3-5 says, *And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him. Constantly, night and day, he was screaming among the tombs and in the mountains, and gashing himself with stones.*

- *and who had not put on any clothing for a long time*—demons can possess the body, mind, and voice of unbelievers. This man was probably a Gentile, as this was a Gentile area, generally known as the Decapolis (10 cities).
- *and was not living in a house, but in the tombs*—the hillside is covered with caves, commonly used as tombs

The Deliverance

- *Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, “What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me”*— Obviously, the chief demon was the spokesman. While the men most likely were not aware of who Jesus was, the demons were, and fell before Him. Jesus had already condemned these fallen angels in eternity past. This demon was afraid Jesus would judge it before the appointed time (Matthew 8:29). The demons are aware of prophecy and when their judgment will happen and they will be cast into the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10). Christ’s first coming was not that time of that judgment.
 - It seems that torment for the demons would be to not be able to do evil.
- *For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man*—Jesus had the power to order the demons to leave the man. This proved Jesus’ deity, as only God is more powerful than angels and fallen angels (demons).
 - Angels are superior to humans in intelligence and power (2 Peter 2:11) and experience. They have been alive through all of human history. They live outside the realm of the physical. Yet they can enter the realm of the physical.
- *For it had seized him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert*—it sounds like the demons came and went into the men.
- *And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion”; for many demons had entered him*—“Legion” is a designation of Roman soldiers that could have as many as 6,000 men. Evidently, these men were possessed by thousands of demons. There were 2,000 pigs in the herd (Mark 5:13), so there could have been that many demons indwelling these men. No wonder they were so powerful.
- *They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss.*
 - The abyss is also called the bottomless pit (Revelation 9:1-11). It is where the worst of the demons are imprisoned, some of whom will be released for a very brief time during the Tribulation. Others wait there for judgment (2 Peter 2:4).
 - The abyss is also the place where Satan (and I assume all the other demons) will be bound for the 1000 years of the millennial kingdom on earth. At the end of the 1000 years, Satan (and his demons?) will be released to deceive the people on earth into fighting against Jesus, who will then cast them into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:1-10), where *they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*
- *Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons implored Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission*—again, demonstrating Jesus’ divine power over the demons. They could do nothing without His permission.
 - This also shows how desperate the demons were to remain in the physical world, even if it meant possessing animals. It seems they want (or need?) physical bodies in order to do their evil work. Their power seems to be dependent upon dwelling in physical bodies (Matthew 8:16; 9:32-33; Acts 8:6-7; 16:16).
 - This also demonstrates that demons can and do possess animals. Think about that!!

- There are degrees of wickedness. There seems to be a chief demon in this story, the one doing all the talking and negotiating. Matthew 12:43-45 speaks of a demon bringing seven other spirits more wicked than himself.
- Demons have the power to cause dumbness (Matthew 9:32-33), blindness (Matthew 12:22), insanity (Luke 8:26-35), personal injuries (Mark 9:18), great physical strength (Luke 8:29), and suffering and deformities (Luke 13:11-17).
- They have two motives: to hinder the purpose of God and to extend the authority of Satan.
- Why were there swine, as the Jews do not eat pork? As already mentioned, this is a Gentile area.
- *And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned*—with the same self-destructive frenzy that characterized the demon-possessed men.
 - This demonstrated that the demons left the men.
 - This also demonstrated Christ’s authority over them. They had no choice but do what He gave them permission to do.
 - It also shows, again, how evil and destructive they are. They want to kill and destroy.
 - By the way, a pig weighs between 100-300 pounds, and up to 700 pounds if pregnant. Just think of the waves in the Sea when 2000x300 pounds = 600,000 (that’s about 300 tons) hit the water!! And what happened to all the bodies—did they sink? Probably.
- *When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they ran away and reported it in the city and out in the country. The people went out to see what had happened*—Matthew 8:34 says the whole city came out to see what had happened.
- *and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they became frightened.*
 - Some say the people were mad over the loss of the pigs, but there is no mention of either the owners of the pigs or the pigs themselves in the rest of the account.
 - The people want to see Jesus and see the man who was demon possessed.
 - They found the man, now sane, not in the tombs but sitting calmly at the feet of Jesus, and with his clothes on.
 - Just as the disciples were afraid of the storm but then more afraid of the One who controlled the storm, the people were afraid of the demon-possessed man, but now more afraid of the One who controlled the demon. *Frightened* is the Greek word *phobeo*, from which we get the English word “phobia.” It’s extreme fear.
- *Those who had seen it [probably the herdsmen] reported to them how the man who was demon-possessed had been made well. And all the people of the country of the Gerasenes and the surrounding district asked Him to leave them.*
 - This shows that miracles don’t create faith.
 - These people were like the hardened soil, the things of God could not penetrate their hearts.
 - They’d rather have a dangerous, destructive, uncontrollable demon-possessed man than have Jesus. There is no word of thanks to Jesus for delivering them from these from these tomb dwellers. “What a sad comment on man’s fallen and unregenerate state it is, that man should feel more at home with demons, than with the Christ who has the power to cast out demons” (Gooding).
- *for they were gripped with great fear*—Gk. “abundant phobeo”
- *and He got into a boat and returned*—There is no record that Jesus ever returned to this spot

- *But the man from whom the demons had gone out was begging Him that he might accompany Him, but He sent him away, saying, “Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you.” So he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him.*
 - An illustration of the narrow gate—only one man believed in Jesus. The rest turned away.
 - For Theophilus—an example of the Gospel going to the Gentiles, and even of a Gentile who believed.
 - Those who do believe in Jesus have a responsibility to share what God’s done for them with others. All believers are to be evangelists.

Thoughts and Applications

1. No matter what Satan promises, here is an example of what he delivers: bondage, rage, self-mutilation, insanity, dwelling with the dead, tormented, screaming.....
2. Both the demons and the people were afraid of Jesus. The demons were afraid Jesus would send them away, the people were afraid Jesus would stay and sent Him away.
3. As unbelievers, the people were also under the influence of Satan and his demons (John 8:44), and they did not want deliverance. They wanted to remain in their sinful lifestyle, apart from God (see 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19).
4. This same kind of attitude will be in the people during the Tribulation. *They blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory* (Revelation 16:9). We see that attitude today. People are angry at a God who is not tolerant of their sinful behavior.
5. There is one man going throughout this territory giving witness of what Christ has done. Don’t be surprised if you are the only witness where you are, also. There is only a remnant who are saved. Even Elijah said, *“I alone am left”* (1 Kings 19:10). Remember, Noah went into the ark a minority but came out a majority!!

Jairus’ Daughter and the Woman with the Issue of Blood—8:40-56

- *And as Jesus returned [to Capernaum], the people welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him*—most likely, those in the boats who experienced Jesus calming the sea returned to Capernaum with the news—maybe some even saw what happened in the Gaderenes.
- *And there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue [in Capernaum, which Matthew helped build]—a respected leader, devoted to the religion of Judaism*
 - Most likely, the crowds parted for this official to approach Jesus
- *and he fell at Jesus’ feet, and began to implore Him to come to his house; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying*—Jairus faced Jesus, bowing at His feet, not as a synagogue official but as a grieving father.
- *But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him*—which would make it very difficult for this woman to even get near Jesus, especially in her weakened condition. Earlier, Jesus’ mother and brothers could not get near Him because of the crowds (Luke 8:19).
 - The delay this woman caused could and would prove fatal to Jairus’ daughter.
- *And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years*—interesting, the young sick girl is 12 years old also. While this family for 12 years enjoyed watching their daughter grow, this woman had 12 years of misery and suffering.
- *and could not be healed by anyone*—Mark 5:26 tells us interesting information: *she had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all,*

but rather had grown worse. The effects of blood loss would be fatigue and lack of strength, and maybe even fatal as the condition worsened. If it was like her menstruation, it might have been very painful, too.

- *came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak*—This unnamed woman approached Jesus from behind, did not worship Him, didn't talk to Him, and definitely did not ask to be healed. The Greek word for "touched" is "cling to" (see John 20:17). "Fringe" are tassels on the bottom edge of their robes.
- *and immediately her hemorrhage stopped*—This is most likely a female issue, embarrassing to talk about, and something that made her unclean and therefore untouchable (Leviticus 15:19, 25-27). She couldn't go to the Temple or the synagogue. No one in her family could touch her, and everything she touched would be ceremonially unclean. She was an outcast in the society and in her own family. Her situation was hopeless—except for Jesus.
- *And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?"*—Jesus wouldn't let the woman be anonymous.
- *And while they were all denying it*—How could they deny it? The crowd was *pressing against Him*.
- *Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You."*—Sense almost a kind of rebuke from Peter. Like "Duh!!" Besides, they were trying to hurry to the home of an important official of the synagogue, and Jesus stopped to ask this question?!?!?
- *But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me."*
- *When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.*
 - Jesus wanted the woman to be face-to-face to Him. This is where people of faith belong, worshipping at Jesus' feet. Only those who are unbelievers want Jesus' back turned to them.
 - The woman came to Jesus, believing He could and would heal her. It wasn't easy for her to do, but she put her faith into action. She touched Jesus in faith. The crowd just pressed against Him.
 - Jesus wanted to make this woman's faith and healing public. Jairus already bowed before Jesus, but Jesus wanted this woman to also bow before Him, acknowledging Him as God.
 - Jesus not only restored her physically, He restored her spiritually to God, and socially, by making her healing known publically.
- *And He said to her, "Daughter [John 1:12, "children of God"], your faith has made you well [Gk. sozo = salvation, Luke 17:19]; go in peace."*
 - If this remained a secret, she could have gone home healed but guilty because she had stolen this healing from Jesus, having taken it without His permission, and she thought, without His knowledge. That Jesus said, "go in peace" was also a gift from Him.
- *While He was still speaking*—to the woman, the reason for the delay
- *someone came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore"*—Obviously, they believed where there was life, there was hope, and that Jesus did not have power over death.
- *But when Jesus heard this, He answered him [Jairus], "Do not be afraid any longer; only believe, and she will be made well."*
- *When He came to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother*—This is the first time these 3 disciples are singled out from the rest of the disciples. But it will happen many others times after this.

- *Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, “Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep”*—The Jews do not embalm bodies and have the funerals the same day as the death (as do the Arabs). So this funeral had already begun when Jesus arrived.
 - Here Jesus also gives a new definition and view of death—it’s temporary, so the Bible refers to it as “asleep” (John 11:11-14; Acts 13:36; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-15; 5:10; 2 Peter 3:4). While the body sleeps temporarily in death, the soul/spirit does not. *To be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord* (2 Corinthians 5:8).
- *And they began laughing at Him, knowing that she had died*—Matthew 9:23-25 and Mark 5:40 says the scorers and mourners were put outside before Jesus dealt with the death of the daughter.
- *He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, “Child, arise!”*
- *And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat*—Jesus did not perform a miracle when normal human effort was sufficient.
 - Notice she was not only raised from the dead, but she was also healed from whatever had caused her death. She was raised in perfect health.
- *Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.* Obviously, everyone would see the raised girl. But Jesus was trying to restrict His reputation so people wouldn’t flock to Him for healing, etc. He was there to preach the Gospel. When the crowds pressed in on Him, He couldn’t teach, so He would have to find a lonely place to teach the disciples.
- But Matthew reports, *News of this spread through all that region* (Matthew 9:26).

Thoughts and Applications

1. Jesus is not limited in what He can do. Just because He healed the woman doesn’t mean He has no power left to raise the daughter. God can give and withhold as He desires (Job 1:21). But He will never run out of power.
2. This account is similar to Lazarus. There, again, Jesus was delayed, ending in death. But that delay with both Lazarus and Jairus’ daughter resulted in a greater miracle. The woman didn’t cause the delay, Jesus did. Raising someone from the dead is a greater miracle than healing someone of a sickness. Sometimes God may let your situation continue so that in the end, He will get more glory. Or, for example, in 2 Peter 3:9, Peter says that Jesus has not judged and destroyed the world yet because He *is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance*. God has reasons for what we perceive as “delays.”
3. Jesus healed out of His compassion for hurting people. But the Gospel of eternal salvation was so much more important than deliverance from an earthly sickness or even death. Earthly things are temporary. This little girl will die again. Then what?

Luke 9

Sending Out the Twelve — 9:1-6

And He called the twelve together—We know from 8:1-3 that there were others traveling with Jesus. But here Jesus separated the 12 from the others for this special instruction. Up to now, Jesus has been the only One preaching and healing. Mark 6:7 says they were sent out in pairs. Matthew 10:2-4 tells us the pairs who traveled together were Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, James and Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

Thoughts and Applications: Now He was going to multiply His ministry by using these 12 men. I think it's one of the hardest things to do—to delegate, to give others the ability and authority to do your job. It's a risk. Obviously, the disciples would not do as good a job as Jesus did. But it's the best way to learn. Jesus was going to leave them soon. It was part of their training.

A two-fold ministry:

1. *and gave them power (ability) and authority (the right to exercise the power) over all the demons and to heal diseases*—From Matthew 10:8, we know this included the power to heal lepers and even raise the dead. Doing these miracles authenticated their message. Today, the message should be tested against the inspired, infallible Word of God.
 2. *And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God*—the Messiah had arrived, and entrance into the kingdom was through repentance (Mark 6:12) of sin and faith in the Messiah.
- *And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece*—They were to trust God and see the Lord provide.
 - *"Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city*—The hospitality of the people demonstrated their faith in the Messiah and the gospel.
 - *"And as for those who do not receive you, as you go out from that city, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them"*—This was an expression of rejection and protest (Acts 13:50-51; 18:6).
 - *Departing, they began going throughout the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere*—most likely in the Galilee area

Thoughts and Applications: There's two reactions when confronted with the Gospel:

1. Receive it, and receive those who bring the gospel message to you. Romans 15:27 says, *if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things*. For the disciples here, they were fed and given hospitality.
2. Rejecting the message and the messenger. If they reject you, *Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces* (Matthew 7:6).

Herod's Interest in Jesus — 9:7-9

- *Now Herod the tetrarch*—Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. Antipas ruled Galilee from 4 B.C. to A.D. 39, so his rule was throughout Jesus' entire ministry. Antipas was the one who imprisoned John the Baptist (3:20) and had him executed (9:9).
- *heard of all that was happening; and he was greatly perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead ... Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded"*—So if John had come back to life, Herod would probably be in danger, as he is the one who had John killed.

- *and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen again*—They singled out Elijah because Malachi, in the Old Testament, ended foretelling Elijah’s appearance as the next event.
- *but who is this man about whom I hear such things?”*—The question of the identity of Jesus is the most important question ever asked. The answer each person gives will determine his or her eternal destiny.
- *He kept trying to see Him*—He was not a genuine seeker, though. Luke 13:31 says some Pharisees warned Jesus, *Go away leave here, for Herod wants to kill You*. Herod did not see Jesus, however, until Jesus was sent to Him from Pilate as a prisoner (Luke 23:7). Even then, though, *he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him nothing* (v. 9).

Thoughts and Applications

Herod lived in the area where Jesus ministered for months. He was preaching, healing, raising people from the dead, literally in Herod’s back yard. If he really wanted to see Jesus, it seems like he could have. But Herod wanted to see Jesus on his terms, Jesus bowing to Herod as king. Jesus would not do that. How many people reject Jesus because they want Him on their terms. He’s available, but you need to come to Him on His terms.

The Feeding of the 5,000 — 9:10-17

This was Jesus’ most extensive miracle. It’s one of only two miraculous events reported in all four gospels (Jesus’ resurrection being the other miracle). After creation itself and the Flood, this is the largest work of divine power. It’s the high point of Christ’s ministry in Galilee, and the last great opportunity for its people to believe. Jesus would soon leave to minister in Tyre and Sidon, the Decapolis east of the Sea of Galilee, and then south to Judea and Jerusalem. This miracle was so huge in its impact, that the people wanted to make Jesus king by force (John 6:15).

- *When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself*—After an intensive time of ministry, especially of traveling, it’s good to have a time of rest.
- *to a city called Bethsaida*—on the east side of the Jordan River, on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee, but maybe ½ mile inland from the shore. Peter and Andrew (John 1:44) were from there, as were Philip (John 12:21) and possibly Nathanael (John 1:45).

Thoughts and Application: Bethsaida, along with Chorazin, are described by Jesus as deserving more judgment than Tyre and Sidon (Luke 10:13), Gentile pagan cities. Why? More miracles and teaching were done there. With more knowledge comes more accountability and more judgment.

But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing—though they followed Him for miracles, He knew that it was the Gospel that they desperately needed. He had compassion on their souls as well as their bodies.

Now the day was ending, and the twelve came and said to Him, “Send the crowd away, that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside and find lodging and get something to eat; for here we are in a desolate place”—It seems like the disciples had a complete disconnect from all the miracles they had seen as well as what they themselves had performed on their just-completed tour. Rather than trust Jesus to deal with the need for food, they thought only of a human solution.

John gives us more information about what happened: *Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?” This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii [a year’s wage for a common worker] worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.” One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?”* (John 6:5-9). They were thinking about the situation but had no solution to offer. It’s interesting that from Jesus’ perspective, this was a test for the disciples. He wanted them to realize it was a humanly impossible situation. What was impossible for man was possible for God. *But He said to them, “You give them something to eat!” And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people”* [Almost in a mocking tone—obviously they do not have enough money to do that—even if they had the money, where would they get that much food? And how would they prepare it? It’s already late in the day. (*For there were about five thousand men.*)—Including women and children, perhaps 20,000 people. Have you ever prepared food for 10 people? For 100 people? For 1,000 people? For 10,000 people? For 20,000 people? Van Andel arena holds 10,800 people. Now picture feeding twice that many people.

And He said to His disciples, “Have them sit down to eat in groups of about fifty each”—would be approximately 400 groups of 50. *They did so, and had them all sit down*—in spite of them not knowing where they would get the food, they obeyed Jesus and organized the crowd into groups.

Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed [eulogeo—gave thanks] them, and broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the people. Notice it was already baked bread and prepared fish. As with His miracles, Jesus gave them legs that walked, adult eyes, adult arms—here, it was cooked food.

And they all ate and were satisfied—the verb *chortazo*, used as fattening up animals, who gorged themselves until they could eat no more. [Interestingly, used of the birds in Revelation 19:21 who eat the flesh of the unbelievers Jesus kills when He returns.]

and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, twelve baskets full—exactly 12 baskets left, enough to feed the disciples, who had been serving the food to the people.

Thoughts and Applications

Reminds me of Ephesians 3:20, *Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.* No matter how many people were there, Jesus provided enough for them to gorge themselves as well as 12 baskets leftover—abundantly more than they asked for or thought.

- It’s good to look at every situation in your life as a test from God—are you going to be obedient? Are you going to trust Him?

Who Do You Say that I Am? — 9:18-22

At this point, the disciples had been with Jesus for about 2 ½ years. They’ve seen Him heal, raise people from the dead, still the storms, feed thousands of people. Now was their “exam.” They are at Caesarea Philippi, on the far northern border of OT Israel, near Dan)—see Matthew 16:13; Mark 8:27. This was as far away from Jerusalem and the hostility of the Jewish leaders as Jesus went.

- *And it happened that while He was praying alone*—As mentioned earlier, praying is one-way. There’s no indication Jesus was having a “conversation” with God the Father. Praying, by definition, is from us to God. Notice He was alone. Jesus also taught that prayer is primarily a private, secret thing between you and God (Matthew 6:5-13).

- *the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, “Who do the people say that I am?” They answered and said, “John the Baptist, and others say Elijah; but others, that one of the prophets of old has risen again”*—what conclusions does human wisdom have? They were not lacking information. They had seen the evidence of who Jesus was. But were they willing to come to the correct conclusion?

Thoughts and Applications

If a person said Jesus is God, then they have to be accountable to Him. But if they call Him a prophet or other religious leader, they don't have that accountability. Another reason people didn't claim He was God was: *Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God* (John 12:42-43). People can believe in a “deity” (whatever that means—that's the point, they can define “deity”), but Jesus was a real, historical person. First John 4:2-3 says, *every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist.*

And He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Where you will spend eternity—in heaven or hell—depends on your answer to that question. John wrote, *These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name* (John 20:31).

And Peter answered and said, “The Christ of God”—“of God” is possessive, i.e., God's Messiah. Matthew 16:16 records Peter's reply as: “You are the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God.” Sometimes the disciples would doubt Christ's plan, as He started talking to them about His death, but they never doubted His person, who He was.

Thoughts and Applications

Only believers believe this. Matthew 16:17 says, *Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*” In Matthew 11:27, Jesus said, *No one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.* John 6:44 says, *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws Him.* There's nothing you can do to create faith in Christ. He's the One who draws you to Himself.

But He warned them and instructed them not to tell this to anyone—Now that the disciples have declared who Jesus really is, you'd think this is the time to tell everyone. But Jesus *warned and instructed* them not to do so, both strong, stern commands.

- *saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day.”*

Thoughts and Applications

The disciples were not sent out with the message of Christ until after His death and resurrection—that is the heart of the Gospel. Notice the word “must.” Christ's death was part of God's plan, that could not be changed. Jesus was *delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God* (Acts 2:23). This is the first mention in Luke of His being killed. Notice also, however, that He *would be raised on the third day.* I'm sure they understood the words, but didn't understand the words.

True Discipleship — 9:23-26

And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me—the supreme goal for believers is not to develop their self-confidence, or to get a better perspective of their life—it’s to follow Christ no matter how severe the that life may be. John the Baptist described it as, “He must increase, I must decrease.” Your cross is whatever your life situation is. It may be physical, emotional, or mental struggles. It may be a family member, a friend, or your job. Each morning, when you wake up, say “no” to yourself, your desires (to rid yourself of that cross, for example) and take up that cross situation. You need to bear it that day, and follow Jesus, who bore His own cross. To follow Christ is to keep His commandments (John 14:15, 21, 23-24).

For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it—Paul wrote, I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me (Galatians 2:20). Jesus gave Himself up for us, so we can live. Now He asks that we give up our life for Him. Paul wrote, whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ (Philippians 3:7-8). Here are some lines from a poem: “When you never refer to yourself in conversation, or to record your own good works, or itch after commendation, when you can truly love to go unknown—that is dying to self.”

For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world [all that your passions hunger for, your eyes covet, and your pride demands—1 John 2:16], and loses or forfeits himself? Because they are not saved.

“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words [i.e., rejects, despises], the Son of Man will be ashamed of him [rejects] when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels—the Second Coming of Christ as King of Kings. Next, we get a glimpse of that glory.

The Transfiguration of Jesus — 9:27-36

But I say to you truthfully, there are some [Peter, John, and James] of those standing here [disciples] who will not taste death [die] until they see the kingdom of God.”

Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain [Mt Hermon] to pray—possibly because of the requirement of the law that on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed (Deuteronomy 19:15).

Up to now, the disciples had been waiting for the promised kingdom, they had seen the power of the kingdom every time Jesus cast out demons, healed, raised the dead, etc. But now they would actually briefly enter the kingdom itself.

- *And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different—As Matthew described it, He was transfigured (metamorphoo—“metamorphosis”) before them; and His face shone like the sun” (Matthew 17:2). Similar to the description of Jesus in Revelation 1.*
- *and His clothing became white and gleaming—i.e., “emitting light,” like lightning*

And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah

- These two represent the two great periods of the Old Testament: the Law and the prophets
- Moses had been dead for 1500 years and Elijah gone about 800 years
- The bodies of these men were never found. Michael the archangel and Satan fought over Moses' body (Jude 9) but God buried Moses so his body would never be found (and be used as an object of worship). Elijah did not die but went up by a whirlwind to heaven.
- This shows that a person does not “soul sleep.” These men are conscious beings, with bodies, and with the same identity they had when on earth.
- In thinking of the future, these two represent believers of the church age, too, where some will die (as Moses did) and others will be taken (as Elijah was) at the Rapture.
- Another possibility is that these two are the two witnesses in Jerusalem during the Tribulation.

who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem—This shows that Christ's death was part of God's eternal plan. The disciples found it hard to accept, but these two men understood the plan of redemption and the reason Jesus was to die.

Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep—it sounds like it was an involuntary thing. “Overcome” (a perfect [past action with future consequences] passive [done “by”] participle [-ing], lit. “having been put to sleep by [God], they were now sleeping”)

- *but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.*
- Fulfilling Jesus' prophecy of verse 27 that they would not die until they saw kingdom of God

And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—obviously the disciples did not recognize Moses and Elijah. They must have realized who they were from the conversation or from being introduced to them

- — *not realizing what he was saying* —We can't know Peter's motive, but it seems like he is suggesting that this was beginning the kingdom, reflecting his desire to bypass the cross and make the current situation permanent.
- Peter was outside his normal element of this world and in the supernatural realm, yet he did not hesitate to offer suggestions to Jesus about what should be done!!

While he was saying this—While Peter was interrupting Jesus, Moses, and Elijah, God interrupted Peter

- *a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud*—This cloud was a visible representation of God's presence in the shekinah glory (Exodus 13:21; 16:10; 24:16; 40:35; Numbers 16:42; 1 Kings 8:11).
- *Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My Son, My Chosen One*—as at Jesus' baptism, the voice of God gives testimony to who Christ was.
- *listen to Him!*—especially about what Jesus was saying about His coming death
- *And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen*—because at this point, they could not preach a glorified Christ without the truth of His death and resurrection

Thoughts and Applications

The cloud seems like a visible picture of the Christian life—God's presence overshadows us.

- God said Jesus is His Son. Listen to Him, as recorded in God's Word. But many people don't do that. They listen to other people, other religions, other theories, etc.

- Notice God was talking to the disciples, not to Jesus. There was no “conversation” between God and Jesus.

The Contrast — 9:37-45

On the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him. And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, “Teacher, I beg You to look at [“pay special attention to”] my son, for he is my only boy, and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming at the mouth; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him as it leaves— Matthew 17:15 says the demon tried to kill the boy by throwing him into open fires and pools or wells of water. Mark 9:17, 25 says the demon afflicted the boy since he was a child and made the child deaf and mute.

Thoughts and Applications

Demons like minds with empty space (see Matthew 12:43-45). The people with the most empty space are children and old people. Best protection against demonism is to fill your mind with the Word of God.

- Also notice how much physical injury demons can do: convulsions, foaming at mouth, mauling, deafness, mute, attempted suicide.
- Everyone outside the kingdom of God is under the power of Satan—it is only a question of degree (see Ephesians 2:2).

*“I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not”—*Mark 9:29 records Jesus saying, *“This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.”* Evidently, the disciples had not prayed about it. When the disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out this demon, Jesus answered *“Because of the littleness of your faith”* (Matthew 17:19-20). “This kind” indicates there are different kinds of demons, obviously of different strengths.

And Jesus answered and said, “You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you?” Jesus seems to be addressing this to the disciples. Jesus was disappointed in their constant failure to believe in what He told them.

Bring your son here.” While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father. It’s interesting that in Mark 9:25, Mark records Jesus as saying, *“and do not enter him again.”* If the son does not become a follower of Jesus, he would be susceptible to being demon possessed again—though not now because Jesus forbade it.

Thoughts and Applications

The glory was on the mountain, the tragedy was in the valley. On the mountain, Jesus was displayed in His majesty. In the valley, Satan displayed his ugly, cruel violence. There are two sons: one is God-possessed, the other is demon-possessed. One in whom His Father was well-pleased. The other whose father was tortured over the condition of his son. One Son was the destroyer of demons. The other son was destroyed by demons. The Son of God was killed, rose from the dead and ascended back to His Father. The other son was delivered from the demon and returned to his father also.

[MacArthur]

*And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing—*Apart from God, what Jesus was doing was unable to be explained. The admiration of the crowds was temporary. In about six months, the crowds were going to cry out, “Crucify Him!”

- *He said to His disciples, “Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men”—*Jesus didn’t want the disciples to get the wrong idea from the crowds’ reactions. Jesus was not at this time going to set up the kingdom and become the King. He was going to die. Before the kingdom had to come the cross.
- *But they did not understand this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this statement—*Jesus told them what would happen, but yet He didn’t explain it in detail. It was too much information for them to handle. So He told them in pieces. As we saw in the parable of the soils in chapter 8, understanding has to come from God. It was not until the Holy Spirit came that He taught them what it all meant (John 16:13-14).

Lesson in Humility — 9:46-50

1. *An argument started among them as to which of them might be the greatest—*They are still focused on the crown instead of the cross. On glory, not suffering. Still anticipating the imminent arrival of the kingdom, and their place in it. Jesus was talking about His personal suffering, they were talking about their personal glory. In starting the church, they needed to be unified and supportive of each other. Pride destroys relationships.
 - Maybe they were even comparing what each had accomplished on their recent preaching and healing tour (9:1-6). Paul wrote, *When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding* (2 Corinthians 10:12).
 - *But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart—*Don’t forget—God not only knows what you do and say but what you think. Remember, Satan fell from heaven because of what he thought (Isaiah 14:14). *Your mouth speaks from that which fills the heart* (Luke 6:45).
 - *took a child [the lowliest person in the society, with no “rights”] and stood him by His side, and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great”—*You don’t even deserve to be in heaven, let alone be the greatest in heaven. Our age is not about greatness. We are equally brothers and sisters in the body of Christ, and He is the Head.
2. *John answered and said, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us”—*i.e., he’s not part of “our” group. This must have been especially irritating to them in light of the previous experience of not being able to cast out the demon in the child of verses 37-45.
 - *But Jesus said to him, “Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you”—*Evidently, this person was not a false teacher, just part of another group of believers. Jesus knew that. But we have to test people like these to discern if they are truly of God or not.

Thoughts and Applications

The sin of pride—the soil in which all other sins sprout, take root, and grow. It’s the opposite of self-denial, which Jesus just talked about in the previous verses. Humility is the soil in which all the other Christian virtues grow. God said, *to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word* (Isaiah 66:2). Pride was particularly true of the religious leaders of their day, who enlarged the tassels of their robes and their phylacteries (Matthew 23:5), who made a public spectacle of their fasting (Matthew 6:16), praying (Luke 20:47), and almsgiving (Matthew

6:2). They knew nothing of humble servant leadership (Matthew 20:26-28). Proverbs 16:5 says, *everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord...* Proverbs 21:4 says, *a proud heart... is sin.* James 4:6 says, *God is opposed to the proud, [He] gives grace to the humble.* It is satanic in our culture to consider pride a good thing: “I’m proud of my school,” “I’m the proud parent of a student,” “We’re proud of our team.” Or to change “pride” into “self-esteem”—changing the word but not the definitions. If you use the word “proud,” know that what you just said is a sin and an abomination to God!

Lesson on Mercy — 9:51-56

This ends Christ’s Galilean ministry. Starting in verse 51, Jesus heads to Jerusalem and His death. *When the days were approaching* [“to be fulfilled” or “completed”] *for His ascension* [events including the cross, resurrection, and ascension], *He was determined* [fixed, immovable, or firmly established] *to go to Jerusalem*—Up to now, Luke was focused on Jesus’ coming. Now the book focuses on Jesus’ going, His leaving the earth, via the cross in Jerusalem. Galilee is no longer His base of operations. Jesus didn’t go directly to Jerusalem, but He was determined to be there for Passover, the day He would give His life as the Passover Lamb.

and He sent messengers on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem—This was not the usual path to Jerusalem. From Galilee, the Jews would go south through the Jordan Valley to Jericho and then up into the hills to Jerusalem, by-passing the Samaritans, the road going directly south through the hills. But Jesus did go that way to talk to the Samaritan woman in John 4.

- The Samaritans were half-breeds. When the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C., they sent Assyrians into the country who inter-married with those Israelites still in the country, who had not been deported. These half-breeds become known as Samaritans. If Jews did go through Samaria, they would carry their own food so they wouldn’t have to eat food defiled by the Samaritans.
- The inter-testament Maccabean ruler John Hyrcanus had destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim, and it had never been rebuilt. The Samaritans refused to recognize the Jewish temple in Jerusalem as the proper place of worship. So they rejected all who worshiped there.
- So the Samaritans rejected Jesus, not because they knew who He was and what He did, but because He was on His way to the temple in Jerusalem.

When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” —Jesus had already named these two “Sons of Thunder” (Mark 3:17).

- They probably had the idea because of what Elijah had done near here, about 800 years previously. He called down fire on the men King Ahaziah, of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, sent to Elijah (2 Kings 1:9-16).

But He turned and rebuked them, [and said, “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them”—not in the oldest manuscripts] *And they went on to another village.*

- These people were not rejecting Christ’s gospel message or Him as the Messiah. They were simply rejecting Him because He was a Jew going to Jerusalem to worship.

Thoughts and Applications

Mercy (undeserved non-judgment) is a **work** of God, not His character. Things like love, holiness, truth, etc. are part of God's character (He always has them). His works are sometimes given and sometimes not given. Here, He gave the Samaritans mercy. But Bethsaida and Capernaum, He said, would receive great judgment because they rejected much knowledge about Christ (Luke 10:10-15).

Lesson on the Cost of Discipleship — 9:57-62

- As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*
 - Obviously, Jesus knew this man had an inner motivation of grandeur and comfort. He wanted to be in on the benefits of following Jesus, but not the sacrifices. But Jesus pointed out that even foxes have holes and birds have nests, but Jesus has no home. The Creator had fewer creature comforts than the animals He had created! In the previous verses, for example, the Samaritans wouldn't let Jesus stay with them. Even though He cast the demons out of the Gerasene demoniac, the people there asked Jesus to leave (Luke 8:37). The people in His own hometown of Nazareth wanted to throw Jesus off the cliff (4:29). Soon, the nation itself would cry out, "Crucify Him" (Matthew 27:22). Those who follow Jesus should expect similar treatment. Jesus said to the Twelve, "*Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves...*" (Matthew 10:16-22).
- And He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."*
 - It was the practice of the Jews to bury people the day they died (see John 11:1, 6, 17; Acts 5:6, 10). So this man's father must not have been dead yet. In which case, he wanted to wait until his father died so he could get his inheritance, and then he would follow Jesus. But Jesus told Him that spiritual truth and proclaiming the Gospel is more important than earthly riches.
- Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*
 - This man was willing to give up his inheritance, but his family ties were too strong. Jesus knew this man's heart. You can't plow a furrow while looking backwards. This man's heart was divided. But you can't follow Jesus with a divided heart.

As we read earlier, *If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me*" (Luke 9:23-24).

Luke 10

The 70 (or 72) Sent Out to Evangelize — 10:1-11

Now after this [when Jesus finished His Galilean ministry in chapter 9] the Lord appointed seventy others [apart from the 12], and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come—announcing the kingdom of God was near (v. 9), and the Messiah was coming to see them.

- The 70 may have paralleled Moses' choice (at God's direction) of 70 elders to help him govern Israel (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-25).
- Traveling in pairs would conform their testimony to the Mosaic Law's requirement of *on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed* (Deuteronomy 19:15).

And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few—The "harvest" is bringing people into the kingdom of God. Most of humanity is moving toward divine judgment and eternal hell, and only a few are working to reach them with the Gospel. Evangelism begins with a realization that all those people face the terrifying reality of eternal punishment. It's a reality to the laborers, who need to make it a reality to others who need salvation.

therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest—It's like a paradox—the Judge commands His people to pray that more sinners be saved from His judgment. The Judge and Executioner was Himself executed to save others from being executed by Him.

Go [and keep going]—the time was running out, Jesus only had a few months left

behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves—The 70 are like innocent, helpless lambs, with no strength of their own. The wolves would be religious authorities, maybe even their own families. The 70 would face hostility, hatred, and persecution.

Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes—They were to take no extra provisions. This was a temporary condition. Later, they would be sent out and told to take provisions (Luke 22:36).

- *and greet no one on the way—i.e., don't stop to make friendships. There was to be an urgency.*

Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you—if the message is rejected, the 70, like the 12, were not to waste any more time with the rejecters (Matthew 10:13), but go somewhere else.

- *Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house—By staying in one house, they showed they were not trying to get to the best house and food in the town, in contrast to the Pharisees always wanted the most prestigious place, the best seats, the best food.*
- *Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you—Especially if it is a poor house, with little food.*
- *and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'—This kingdom of God is made up of believers, who have faith in Jesus Christ. All the other people are in the kingdom of the world (Revelation 11:15), under the rule of Satan (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Ephesians 2:2). There are only these two kingdoms.*

But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you—Jesus Himself had just been rejected by a Samaritan village (9:51-56).

- *go out into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you—as with the 12 in 9:5, this was to show that those who reject the Gospel of the kingdom are themselves rejected by the King.*

Thoughts and Applications

The presentation of the Gospel must include not only the promise of heaven but the threat of judgment and hell (John 5:28-29; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:12; etc.).

- *yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near'*—They heard the Gospel, they are responsible for rejecting the kingdom of God.

Three Examples of Judgment for Jewish Cities — 10:12-16

I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city (where the 70 went)—Here is a hierarchy. Sodom had such gross sin, including homosexuality, that God rained fire and brimstone on it (Genesis 18), yet it did not have the Gospel of the kingdom preached in it. So its people will have less punishment at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15) than the villages where the 70 went, proclaiming the Gospel. With greater knowledge comes greater accountability and greater judgment. All whose names are not written in the Book of Life will go to the Lake of Fire. But the degree of their punishment will depend on the amount of knowledge they had. Those who had the most knowledge of the truth will receive the severest punishment (see Hebrews 10:29).

- *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!* (two Jewish cities in the hills above Capernaum) *For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon* (Gentile cities northwest of Capernaum on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea) *which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.* The Old Testament speaks of the evil and judgment on these two Gentile cities (Isaiah 23; Ezekiel 28), even comparing Tyre's king to Satan, yet they did not have the Gospel of the kingdom preached in them. This is interesting because IF salvation of men was the goal of God, Jesus would have done more miracles in Tyre and Sidon, of whom Jesus says *they would have repented long ago.*

Thoughts and Applications

Covenant theology says the purpose of the Bible and of the world is the salvation of mankind.

Dispensationalism says the purpose of the Bible and the world is to bring glory to God.

So how do the Covenants explain these verses???

- While miracles do not create faith, Jesus' miracles authenticated that His message was from God.
- *But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you*—If you asked a Jew what the most wicked cities were, they would most likely respond: Sodom and Tyre. What a shock for these Jews to hear these words from Jesus.
- *And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!* Hades can mean place of the dead, the specific place where unbelievers await judgment, or hell. In this statement, Jesus is contrasting eternity in heaven with eternity in hell. Jesus is here rebuking the pride of this Jewish city. They had the huge beautiful synagogue. This is where Peter lived, and where Jesus made His headquarters during His Galilean ministry. This all resulted in pride rather than repentance and faith.

- *The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”*

Thoughts and Applications

In thinking of Theophilus, this is good news and bad news. The Gentile cities who do not hear the Gospel, in spite of their gross sin, will have less punishment than the Jewish cities who did hear the Gospel. However, now that Theophilus is hearing the Gospel via Luke’s writings to him, he will have greater judgment if he refuses to believe the Gospel.

- The idea that someone can honor God while rejecting Jesus is a lie. Jesus said, *He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him* (John 5:23; see also John 8:42; 15:23; 1 John 2:23; 2 John 9).

The 70 Return — 10:17-24

The seventy returned with joy, saying—Three reasons for their joy:

1. Successful in evangelism—*“Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” And He said to them, “I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning—Whether they actually cast out demons from people or whether they were referring to people delivered from the domain of darkness into the light of Jesus, they rejoiced that some of the people escaped from the power of Satan.*
 - And Jesus was watching these delivered from Satan, it was like Satan falling from heaven, as a lightning bolt.
2. Power over Satan and demons—*“Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you—probably metaphorically referring to the power of Satan and the demons (see Revelation 12:9; 20:2; and 9:3; 5:10). Satan’s kingdom will not injure them. They were protected by God (see Job 1—God put boundaries on Satan and what he could do to Job).*
3. Being in God’s kingdom—*“Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven”—This surpasses all and any earthly joy or earthly power—even over demons. (See Daniel 12:1; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27.)*

Thoughts and Applications

I find many so-called Christians engaged in the “supernatural,” via conversational prayer, visions, dreams, “God speaking” to them, etc. These 70 had a supernatural power from God, yet Jesus said of much greater value is having your name recorded in heaven.

Reasons for Jesus’ joy:

1. *At that very time He rejoiced greatly [overflow with joy] in the Holy Spirit, and said, “I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.*
 - This is the only passage in the N.T. that says Jesus *rejoiced* during His life on earth.
 - In calling God His Father, Jesus was claiming He was God (see John 5:18).
 - He referred to the sovereign power of God, *Lord of heaven and earth* (see Genesis 14:19, 22; Ezra 5:11; Isaiah 66:1).
 - *These things* refers to everything in Christ’s life, ministry, and mission.
 - God determined to whom these truths should be revealed and to whom they should be hidden. They were His elected choice.

- God did not choose to reveal Himself to the *wise and intelligent* of this world, i.e., to those claiming to be wise and intelligent—like the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees. God’s truth cannot be discovered by worldly wisdom. It only comes from His revelation of Himself in the Bible and the Holy Spirit working in the minds of men (see 1 Corinthians 1:18–2:5).
 - God does exactly what He purposes and plans to do for His own holy joy.
2. *“All things have been handed over to Me by My Father—*This world has been given to the Son by the Father (see Matthew 28:18; John 3:35; 13:3; 17:2). Jesus’ “job” was to carry out His Father’s plan.
- *and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him”*—see John 1:14, 18; 14:9; 1 John 5:20. As mentioned above, the elect are in God’s sovereign plan. You cannot come to know God the Father or Jesus unless they choose you to (see John 6:44; Romans 9:14-24). Those who are dead in their trespasses and sin (Ephesians 2:1, 5), blinded by Satan (2 Corinthians 4:4), and unable to please God (Romans 8:8) cannot save themselves.

Thoughts and Applications

Although the emphasis here is the sovereignty of God, remember it does not trump the free will of man (see John 3:16; 6:37; Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1).

3. The privilege of being a believer—*Turning to the disciples, He said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see—*We see that and more because we have the completed canon of Scripture. But both we and the disciples see that Jesus is God. That should bring us joy.
- *for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them”*—Even the most prominent of the kings and prophets did not have the knowledge these 12 and 70 did (see 1 Peter 1:10-12).

Thoughts and Applications

We live in an awesome time in history because we have the whole written Word of God. And we live in a time where God told Daniel, when knowledge has increased (12:4). The Bible is more available than ever before, study aids are more available than ever before, teachers are more available than ever before. We should be growing in our knowledge of God’s Word. We have no excuse.

What shall I do to inherit eternal life? — 10:25-37

First Question: *And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”* The question is not **if** people will live forever, but **where** they will live forever—in heaven or in hell? Although Jesus ministered to many crowds, here is a conversation He had with one man, who would be highly educated, prominent, powerful, and probably influential among the Jews. Despite asking the right question of the right person and receiving the right answer, he turned away to face eternal damnation.

- A lawyer (or scribe) was an expert in the Mosaic Law and the traditions surrounding it. Often putting Jesus to the test meant an evil intent, but here it seems like he wanted an answer.

Second Question: *And He said to him, “What is written in the [Mosaic] Law? How does it read to you?”*

- *And he answered, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR*

MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.” —This is the same reply Jesus gave the lawyer in Mark 12:28-31.

- *And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE.”*—Jesus is not saying there is someone somewhere who can do this. It is impossible to do.
- *But wishing to justify himself*—rather than repenting and admitting he could not keep the Law
- *he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*—implying that he did keep the first part of loving God with all his heart. In fact, he also thought he loved his neighbor as himself. The only problem he could see was that possibly Jesus had a different definition of who a neighbor was.

This story is widely used to encourage people to help the needy. But the story was told to explain who would inherit eternal life.

- *Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho—a distance of 15 miles, but Jericho is 900 feet below sea level, thus 3,500 feet below Jerusalem. The ancient trail is along the Wadi Qilt. A dangerous trail full of cliffs, rock formations, and caves used to hide robbers.*
- *and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead*—he was stranded on a lonely road in the middle of nowhere, in desperate need of immediate medical attention. Who would help him?
- *“And by chance a priest was going down on that road—hope—the priests were most familiar with the Old Testament requirement to show mercy (Exodus 23:4-5; Leviticus 19:34), the most religious and “spiritual” people in the land—the person most likely to help this poor man.*
- *and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side*—the point is simply that this is a person we would expect to help the man, didn’t.
- *“Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side—*The Levites were the assistants to the priests. They were also men familiar with the Law requiring them to show mercy. But this man also did not help the man.
- *“But a Samaritan—*The Jews and Samaritans had a long history of hatred for each other. The Samaritans were half-breeds, a mixture of Jewish blood and Assyrian blood (who conquered the northern kingdom in 722 B.C.). They had no dealings with each other. So you would expect this man to pass by the injured man. To show no compassion at all.
- *who was on a journey—even more reason not to stop, he had an agenda, somewhere he needed to be.*
- *came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion*—something the other two men did not feel at all
- *and came to him and bandaged up his wounds*—because the robbers stripped the man, the Samaritan would have to make strips from his own clothes to bandage the wounds.
- *pouring oil and wine on them*—also using his own provisions to treat the wounds, to clean them and help soothe the pain
- *and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him*—he could have just left him there. But he went even further. He took him to the nearest inn—places that were themselves often places of robbery, etc. So the man stayed there and took care of the man that night.
- *“On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him—this was a large amount of money, several weeks of a typical wage*
- *and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you’*—this was like a blank check. It guaranteed that the man would get good care from a normally bad innkeeper.

“Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?”—It’s not enough to say you are merciful—this Samaritan man proved to be merciful

- *And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same”—that is, continuously, loving God and every neighbor, on every occasion, even your worst enemy, is what the command is about.*

Thoughts and Applications

- Obviously, this is impossible for anyone to do. Maybe we are merciful once in a while, but to be merciful continually, to everyone, even our enemy, is totally impossible. The only possibility of attaining eternal life is to appeal to God’s mercy and forgiveness.
- This man’s pride, however, prevented him from admitting he did not perfectly keep the commandments. Therefore, he forfeited eternal life.
- Admitting they are a sinner and cannot save themselves is the hardest thing for a person to do. Instead, the common view is that they are good, they do keep the commandments. Therefore, they forfeit eternal life.

Martha — 10:38-42

Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village—John 11:1; 12:1-3 tell us it was Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (John 11). It was near Jerusalem, about 2 miles away, on the eastern side of the Mt. of Olives (John 11:18).

- *and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home—* This may have been the first time they met Jesus, before He raised Lazarus.
 - “Martha” means “mistress,” which seems to fit her character. There is no mention of a husband. Her name is usually mentioned first when the sisters are named together. It seems like Martha was the older of the sisters.
 - Because she calls the home “her home” probably indicates she was the mistress of the home she, her sister, and brother lived in.
 - She called Jesus “Lord,” indicating she was a believer, as her brother and sister were.
 - This particular incident is only recorded in Luke. Their brother Lazarus is not mentioned here.
 - Martha is the main person of this text.
- *She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord’s feet, listening to His word.*
 - Notice that Mary says nothing in this passage and there is just one brief verse describing her actions.
- *But Martha was distracted [“to be dragged away”] with all her preparations [“much serving”]; and she came up to Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.”*
 - There is nothing wrong with being hospitable. In fact, the Scripture commands it (Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9).
 - Martha is not envious of Mary’s actions. She didn’t say, “I’d like to sit at your feet, too, Jesus.” Martha seems to say that working in the kitchen was the better thing to do, both for her and for Mary.
 - Martha is observing Mary becomes angry that Mary is not helping her in the kitchen. She loses what joy she had in serving because of that.
 - Martha sees herself as innocent and accuses both Mary and Jesus of doing wrong against her.
 - Martha charged Jesus with not caring about her and for condoning wrongdoing on Mary’s part, then publicly demanded that Jesus admit His “error” and make Mary go help

her sister. It's one of the most foolish statements anyone ever made to Jesus, to accuse Him of not caring—and if He did care, why didn't He do something and make Mary help. Basically, she was telling Jesus that her will and her plans were more important than His.

- *But the Lord answered and said to her*—Notice Jesus did not answer her anger with anger. His response was gentle and compassionate.
- *“Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things;*
- *but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part [lit. “what is best”], which shall not be taken away from her.”*
 - Rather than rebuking Mary, as Martha desired Him to do, Jesus commends Mary.
 - Notice the hierarchy. Mary chose the “good” part, the thing that was “necessary.”
 - Martha missed the priceless opportunity of hearing the Creator of the universe teaching.

Thoughts and Applications

- Jesus is not suggesting that Martha was wrong and that no meal be served. She had a serving ministry but not a servant's heart.
- Martha's situation is understandable. Jesus traveled with the 12 disciples, and probably more people. They had to be fed. As mistress of the house, it was her responsibility. AND she was the one who invited Jesus to come there.
- Jesus did not impose a stereo-type role on either of the women. They were both free to either serve or sit at Jesus' feet and learn.
- Martha was preoccupied with ministering to Jesus. Mary was occupied with the ministry of Jesus to her—her growth, learning, etc.
- Martha not only did not seek that herself, she tried to prevent her sister Mary from receiving it, too.
- Martha tried to control both Mary and Jesus and what they did.
- Discipleship is not a devotion to duty (often with a bad attitude) but a joyful devotion to Jesus.
- There is a huge contrast between earthly things (such as food) and heavenly things (spending time with Jesus). Serving God can often be an excuse for not being in God's Word, spending time abiding with Christ.
- It seems that Martha was wrong in measuring her significance in terms of her service. Her ministry was her master.