

Luke 10 (Part 2): 17-24 • Joy, Rejoicing and Blessing

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We're in Luke 10, beginning at verse 17. So, follow along with me as we read through verse 24. It says,

“The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”¹⁸ And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.¹⁹ Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

²¹ In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.²² All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

*²³ Then turning to the disciples he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!²⁴ For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”
(ESV)*

Let's stop there if you would please, and let's pray.

Heavenly Father, thank You so much for Your Word. Lord the insight, the revelation, the wisdom that is poured out to us through the Scriptures.

Now as we dig into these verses, help us Lord, to unpack them in such a way that we can find the treasures that are there, and go from this place filled up and encouraged, built up and enabled by your Spirit to go forth to walk out the Word in our lives, to share it with others.

Lord, nourish Your people we pray. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

As I was looking through these verses that we're looking at here today, I noticed 3 key elements, if you will, that really jumped out at me. And as you look at them, I think you'll see them too.

Notice the first one is joy. It says, “*that when the 72 returned,*” and this is this is when they returned, having been sent out, sent ahead of Jesus into those outlying villages where Jesus was about to go. He sent them out and they came back and they were just absolutely pumped, and they were just excited about what had happened and they were just filled with great joy. And that's the first thing that we see.

And then we see this key element of rejoicing. Did you notice that was next? Jesus talked to them about the fact that they shouldn't rejoice, necessarily, in the idea that demons were subject to them, and through the name of Jesus, but rather they should rejoice that their names were written in heaven. And then it goes on to say that Jesus rejoiced in declaring in this beautiful prayer to the Father, Lord I'm just so thankful that you did it this way. Your gracious will was to convey these things to little children and to actually hide them from those who are wise and full of worldly understanding.

And then the last element that we see in these verses is blessing, where Jesus began to speak of how blessed they were because of the things that they had received, which he said kings and prophets longed to see but did not see. So, you have joy, rejoicing, and blessing. Alright? Joy, rejoicing, and blessing. And those are the things we're going to look at here this morning. Beginning with joy.

Verse 17 again. “*They returned with joy.*” They had great joy having returned from their time of ministry.

JOY

Joy, Rejoicing and Blessing

I can tell you, I'm very pleased that I know that kind of joy. I hope you do too. It's the joy that God gives to His children when we get the privilege of participating with Him in the work that He has called us to do. And it really truly is a joy.

It's a difficult thing to explain, I'll tell you that. What's that joy like? I, yeah, I don't know. It's like, it's just, it's just joy, joy that comes from serving the Lord. I'll tell you this. If you serve yourself, you can make yourself happy, but if you

serve the Lord, you will experience a joy that happiness can't equal. And that's probably an important distinction.

And in fact, joy is one of the major characteristics of this new life that you and I are called to. Did you know that? Christians are not supposed to be the kind of people that walk around with our face kind of falling like, oh man, this world.

Have you ever noticed that some Christians are like that? They're always talking about the world, this world, oh man, just hang on you guys, because I don't know if we're going to make it. Just buckle up here because this is going to be, it's a rough ride, and it's like, man, where's your joy? Where's your joy?

I've had people write me and just bemoan the condition of life around them and it happens fairly frequently where people are just caught up in negativity. And believe me, if you want to sit and look at it all day long, you'll see it. I mean the negativity is there. All the stuff that would bring you down, it's there if you go looking for it. And so, you can do that if you want to.

You can focus on all the problems of this world, and you can read all the articles about why the millennials aren't staying in church, and why churches are declining in membership, and why people aren't feeling particularly led to share the Gospel, and why most people don't believe the Bible is the Word of God, and on and on.

And you can fill up your Facebook page with that, those kinds of articles and you can share them with other people and talk to other Christians about how rotten this world is becoming, or you can just get busy and serve the Lord and be filled with joy, which by the way I think is the better option, just saying. I really do. When I get notes from people who are just, that are just filled with negativity. You know what I'm thinking? And sometimes I say it to them, but I'm thinking, you need to go do something. You need to go do something for the Lord.

You need to get out of your little pity party, and you need to go do something, and you need to experience the joy that comes from serving Jesus and participating with the Holy Spirit to accomplish the purpose of His Will.

Because you see, joy is, is a characteristic of what we ought to be experiencing as believers. It's a part of living in the Kingdom. I don't know if you remember this but let me quote for you just a small statement that the apostle Paul made when he wrote to the church in Rome. Here's what he said. Listen carefully. He said,

Romans 14:7 (ESV)

...the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

...the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace (listen to this) and joy in the Holy Spirit.

He said, that's what the kingdom of God is. It's righteousness, peace and joy. Joy in the Holy Spirit. Joy that comes from experiencing tangibly, the service of the Lord, and I wonder how many Christians have really, truly experienced that.

And like I said, if you're not sure, and maybe you're thinking, I could use a good solid dose of joy, then let me just encourage you to find a place to serve. I mean, spend your energy, stop spending it on bemoaning the world, and the rotten shape that the world is in because I'll grant you, anything you say on that score is not going to be incorrect. But it is going to bring you down, and it's probably going to keep you from really being functionally useful in the kingdom, because you're going to be so discouraged by looking at the problems that you're not going to have any energy to give to the Lord.

Just go serve God. Go do something. Go do something! And see if God doesn't fill your heart with joy.

In verse 17, the disciples said, if you look with me again there in your Bible, *"they came to Jesus and (they said, they said) even the demons are subject to us in your name."*

And Jesus made a fairly enigmatic statement here to them in response. Notice that in verse 17 He said, *"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."* And all you've got to do is read about four or five commentaries to find out that we don't really know what He meant by that because some they'll say different things.

And Jesus didn't really explain Himself. We don't really know if He was saying that He saw Satan fall as a result of the ministry of the 72 or if He saw Satan fall, in Satan's original fall, or even frankly, something else. All what we do know, what we do know, and by the way, you run into Bible verses all the time that you don't know exactly what they're saying okay? Don't think you're going to be able to figure everything out. One of my favorite responses to people when they write me Bible questions is, I don't really know. I keep that one on hand because you need to do that.

We're dealing with things that are so far beyond us in many cases, but whenever that happens, when you run into things that you don't know, here's what you can do, you can fall back into what you do know. And this statement by Jesus, is enough for you and I to know that Satan is a fallen and defeated foe. That's enough. We've got enough there to know that.

Now, I'll also tell you that he has not yet conceded his defeat therefore, Satan remains a very malevolent and dangerous enemy. One that we are told to, we're warned about dealing with and making sure that we're walking in the power of Spirit, in the Spirit when we are addressing or dealing with him. But he is someone that God is, well able to give you and I power to defeat.

There was a time in my life and in our marriage when Satan was really doing a number on us, and we were in rough shape. And it was about, it was a long time ago. It was probably about 30, 35 years ago or so. And it was a rotten time, to be honest with you, and the enemy was really doing a work. And I think one of the reasons that he was able to do such a devastating work in our lives is because I really didn't understand the power of prayer at that point, nor did I understand the power and the authority that has been granted to us through the name of Jesus and through the power of the Spirit to do spiritual battle to come against the enemy and to be effective. I didn't understand what it meant to resist the devil so that he might flee.

That's a promise from God's Word. “...*resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*” (James 4:7) And yet, we Christians don't really know what that resistance looks like, and so we don't know how to do it, and as a result, the enemy can just waltz in and do all kinds of nasty things and so forth. You know it takes sometimes some understanding on our part to lay hold of the fact that through Jesus Christ and His Name we've been given authority.

Look at verse 19 in your Bible. Jesus says, “*behold I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you.*”

Well, I've got news for you. If you aren't walking in the reality of the authority of the Name of Jesus Christ, you can get hurt. You can get hurt badly. And there are a good many Christians, myself, I was one of them at one point, where I was just sitting back taking my blows from the enemy rather than spending time in prayer. Doing spiritual battle for my wife, for my family, and, and so forth, and even for myself. And we were just sitting around getting hit going, oh, this is terrible.

And Jesus wants you and I to know that there is authority in His Name. There's power. We have the full armor of God that we rarely put on. We have things through the name of Jesus Christ.

Listen, I used to think that Satan and Jesus were in this battle where one day one of them would win and the other day the other one would get the upper hand, and it was like any day you wake up, you really don't know how things are going to go. And that's just simply not true. Satan is a created being and Jesus is the Creator, and there's no comparison between the two, right?

Satan is under the thumb of Jesus. But you and I, as individuals made in the image of God, need to learn and understand and to know this authority, and we need to take it up. We need to take it up.

Jesus goes on in verse 20, and this is where he begins to speak also here of rejoicing. He says, do not, nevertheless, verse 20, *“do not rejoice that the spirits are subject to you but rejoice (He says) rather that your names are written in heaven.”*

Here, we have that second key word, that second key idea that I was telling you about at the beginning. That word, rejoicing.

REJOICING

Joy, Rejoicing and Blessing

There's a lot of things in this world that we can rejoice in but not all of them are free of danger. Let me say that again. There's a lot of things in this life that we can rejoice in, but not all of them are free of danger.

In fact, just this last Wednesday as we were going through the Proverbs, we talked about the fact God says in His Word, *“Do not rejoice when your enemy stumbles or when you see your enemy fall lest the Lord take His anger away from your enemy.”* Right?

And so there's a danger in rejoicing over such things as seeing your enemy and going, ha, ha, ha, you got yours, sort of a thing. That's a dangerous rejoicing.

And here, Jesus is warning against rejoicing in those times of spiritual victory, which are pretty happy times when that happens. And yet He said, there's a danger that can be connected with rejoicing in times of spiritual victory. Why?

Well, success can get us thinking I'm something special. Hey enemy, you want trouble, you got me. That arrogant, sort of an attitude, like somehow, I did this, somehow this is because of me that this happened. That's dangerous. It's dangerous. Walking around like, yeah, demons submit to me. No, no they don't. They submit to Jesus.

And so, instead Jesus says, you're to focus rather your rejoicing on the fact that your name is written in heaven. Why is that a safe thing to rejoice in? Because you had nothing to do with it. You didn't do the work. He did the work. Right? The fact that your name right here, right now, is written in the Book of Life is because Jesus died on the cross for you and did the work that was necessary to secure your salvation. That's why your name is there. Rejoice in that. There's no danger in that. There's no danger in rejoicing about that.

He says, that's what you should rejoice in. We continue on with rejoicing in verse 21. Look with me again in your Bible. This is where Jesus, it says, *“in that same hour, rejoiced in the Holy Spirit. (And He said) I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you've hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”* I like that. Rejoicing in the gracious will of the Father.

And it is expressed as a plan in these verses that God had, to reveal Himself to those to whom society had discarded. Those who really don't matter. Oh, by the way, that's us. Just in case you were wondering. It's us. And we are the ones that God has chosen to reveal Himself to. I hope it doesn't offend you that He describes us that way. Let me read for you an interesting description of this that the apostle Paul gives. He writes to the church in Corinth and listen to what he says. He says,

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 (ESV)

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

For consider your calling, brothers (and sisters, obviously. He says) not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, (that's true) not many were powerful, (yep) not many were of noble birth. (You know like none. He says) But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised

in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

In other words, He has revealed Himself to you and I so that there's no boasting. We didn't have the ability to understand the things of God without Him. We couldn't know Him without Him revealing Himself, and it's all Him, and there's no boasting. Who is it that God has hidden Himself from?

Look again in verse 21, would you? Verse 21 in your Bible. He says, “*You have hidden these things from (who?) “The wise and understanding”* and He's talking there about the worldly wise. He's talking about those who claim to have an understanding. He's talking about people who say, I know. I know.

And Jesus says those people have become so prideful about their understanding, so proud about who they are, that God has actually withheld Himself from those people. Isn't that interesting?

In other words, really smart people. God has hidden Himself because the reason is, it's not just because they're smart, it's because they were proud about their intellect. It's their prideful attitude. I know and you can't tell me anything. Listen, I've studied, I got a PhD, alright? I know these things. Don't try to tell me what the Bible says. Right?

The Word of God says to such an attitude, God hides Himself. He literally will not reveal Himself. They are now blinded to the wisdom and the revelation that comes from God. So, who has He revealed himself to? Well, the reference here in verse 21 is that He has revealed Himself to little children.

And by the way, when it says little children there, it's not talking about if, saying, you know, if you're over the age of 6, you're out of luck. The whole idea of little children means to those who are humble like little children, to those who are receptive, to those who are open, to those who are humble, like a little child who is willing to be led.

Let me read you a statement that Jesus made that is actually recorded for us in the book of Matthew chapter 18. Here's what Jesus said, very, very important. He said,

Mathew 18:3 (ESV)

Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Do you know that in years past that verse has actually been used as a proof text for infant baptism. And people believed that what Jesus was saying there is that unless you are entered into the kingdom as a little child, you won't enter. And that's why they, many times, baptize their children. People, baptize their children. They really believe that Jesus was saying you must be like, you must come into the kingdom as a child. That's not what He's saying. He says in that verse, unless you turn and become like children, and that whole idea of like children means completely dependent.

You know how kids are completely dependent on you to survive especially when they're really little. Now they can get to the point where they grow up and they can feed themselves. What a delight that is for parents, right? When you wake up on a Saturday morning and the kids are going, I'm hungry, and you say, go get some cereal or something like that. But there's those times before that, that if you don't get up and get them something to eat, they can't eat. They're utterly dependent on you.

And it's really that dependence that Jesus is referring to here when He talks about children, who, to whom has God revealed Himself to little children. To those who are utterly dependent, to those who are humble, to those who are receptive, to those who are not saying, I know, and you can't tell me that's not, right?

And so having an understanding of God's will, and even being saved is all predicated upon becoming like little children. And that's why Jesus made the statement that He did in verse 22 here so, look with me in your Bible.

Verse 22. He said, *“All things have been handed over to be by my Father and no one knows this, who the son is except the Father, or who the Father is, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.”*

And this is a very, very powerful statement, where Jesus is serving notice to all of mankind, that listen, the revelation of the Father comes at my discretion. That's what He's saying. People all the time, people all the time say things like, Jesus never once declared Himself to be God.

And I'm thinking, did you ever read the Bible? Here He makes a statement that can only be made by God. Where He says, listen, nobody knows the Father except the Son, and nobody knows the Son except the Father. And you know

what? You want to know the Father? It is at my discretion. Because no one knows the Father except those to whom the Son reveals Him.

Boom. Yeah, you got to go to the Son in order to know the Father. You got to go through Him to Know the Father. He is the living Word of God, the living revelation of God. And that's the point that he's making here. And so, He's basically telling you and I that it's all about His revelation. It's all about Jesus revealing the Father.

And that brings us to the third and the last key element from this passage. And it begins in verse 23. Look with me there. *“Then turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!”* And that's the third element. Remember, it's blessing. We had joy, rejoicing, and blessing.

BLESSING

Joy, Rejoicing and Blessing

And now we come to this blessing. He says, *“Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!”* Look at verse 24. Very interesting. *“For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see and did not see it and they wanted to hear the things that you're hearing right now, and they didn't hear it”*

And He's talking about Old Testament characters that you and I know and love. If you've read the Old Testament, you know he's talking about guys like David, and King Hezekiah, godly King Hezekiah. He's talking about godly kings like Josiah who long to look into these things.

He's talking about prophets like Elijah and Isaiah and Jeremiah and on and on. And Daniel, Daniel who sought to know, but was told, sorry, Danny, you can't know. You guys remember that actually happened in the book of Daniel? It's actually recorded. I won't have you turn there, but it's recorded for us in Daniel chapter 8 where Daniel I'll read this to you. He said, I wanted to know he says,

Daniel 8:15-16, 17b, 26 (ESV)

When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, “Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.” ...but he said to me, “Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.” The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now.

When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, (he received visions from the Lord. (He says) I sought to understand it... (I wanted to know. What is this about Lord? You're giving me this little glimpse, this little picture but I want to know and understand it. And he says) And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." ...but he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end." (And then he went on to say) The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now.

Daniel was told to seal up the vision. You know what that means? Hide it. Hide it. It's not to be known now. It's not to be understood now because it refers to the time of the end. It refers, and you know, a lot of the things that went on in Daniel, the visions and the things that Daniel saw, they still haven't come to pass. Daniel saw things about the end times.

In fact, I'm sure you know, Daniel, the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation is a great study to do side by side because they speak of the same things. But in Daniel's day it was all sealed. But why do we have the book of Revelation? Well, it's called the Book of Revelation. Brrroop! Which means seeing. And it's called the Revelation of Jesus because in it, the plan of God is revealed through Jesus Christ toward the end days, and it's a glorious thing.

But you and I have been given that revelation. Daniel received a little piece of it, and he wanted to know and understand it, but he couldn't. He longed to know, but the Lord said, no Daniel, seal it up. It's for another time. It's for a time to come.

The rabbis, the Jewish rabbis actually used to have a saying, and it went like this, blessed is the generation which the earth shall bear when the King Messiah comes. And they understood that there was a true blessing that would attend those who lived on the earth at the time when Messiah arrived on the scene, because Messiah would reveal, He would share things which men longed to know but did not know and could not know prior to His coming and that's absolutely what happened.

Jesus came and He revealed things that were hidden and unknown, and you and I have it. That's the cool part. You see, because these things were written down in the Bible we have the very same blessing that the disciples received. Do you understand that? Do you get that? Do you see how incredible it is that we have the Word of God written down? We have parables that explain things that cause

us to go, oh, that's how that works. That's what that's all about. Simple parables like the sower, the seed and the sower.

Do you know how much spiritual insight we gain from that simple parable? Oh, that's how it works. Some of the seeds hard hearts choked out by the cares of this world, so on and so on. We get it now. We see things because they've been revealed to us that weren't revealed in the past. People scratched their heads, and they were like, what in the world is going on there? What's happening in that situation? I have no idea. But because these things are all written down in the Word of God, we have them. We have the same privilege, the same blessing that Jesus pronounced upon the disciples.

“Blessed are your eyes for they see!” Blessed are your ears for they hear. You see and hear things that men of old longed to know, but did not know. And you know, there's even some special privileges that you and I have, living in this day and age, and even though some of them happened just before I was born, there still have been some major prophetic fulfillments in the last hundred years. I mean, major prophetic fulfillments just in the last 100 years. Such as, it's our generation that has known and understood how Israel became a nation once again.

Happened back in 1948, 3 years after the end of the 2 World War. Israel was declared once again, a sovereign nation. And Harry Truman said, yep, we recognize it. How cool was that? Because prophecy kept talking about the end times, and it kept saying Israel, Israel, Israel, Israel, and all the people before 1948 were like, there is no Israel! Guys, for you and I, we know that Israel is there, but before 1948, there was no Israel. Do you get that? It hadn't existed for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years. No nation on the earth ever came back from being gone for that long.

But Israel did, because God said it would. He said that He would regather his people in the end days, and we've actually seen it happen. Blessed are your eyes for you have seen things that people read about in the Bible and said how in the world is that going to work? I've told you guys before how I've read writings about you know from guys like George Mueller who lived 150 165 years ago, and he talks about Israel one day becoming a nation again. He didn't have a clue how it was going to happen, but he knew from the Scripture it would.

And he talks about it. Well one day Israel will be regathered. We know this he would say. It's right there in his writing. Get his book. His autobiography out of the bookstore. It blows you away because he lived in a day before that happened and now it's happened, but blessed are your eyes for you saw it. And when you

think about it, it's our generation that can read through the Book of Revelation and understand how it is even possible for the Antichrist to control the entire global economy in a cashless society. We understand how that works. We understand what a cashless society is. They didn't.

On a global scale? Are you joking? A hundred years ago, people looked, well, not even that, but especially a hundred years ago, people looked at that and they were like, whoo, that's Star Trek, if I ever heard it. Right? I mean, that's fantasy. That's right up there with beaming from one location to another. Yeah, right. Cashless society? Good grief, it's all in place. It's all in place today. We have everything we need for the Antichrist now to appear and to begin his global dominion. Everything is in place as far as that whole cashless society Global economy sort of a thing goes.

It's all there, the building blocks are there. I don't it's and it's weird to say blest are your eyes that because you've seen it, but the fact of the matter is you get it, you understand these things in ways that Christians in the past didn't understand So you're living in a in a privileged kind of a time too. So, what do we do? Where, do we go from there? We've been given the revelation of God's Word. We've been shown things toward the end days that people in the past have not been shown. Well, what do we do?

We just keep, we keep studying the revelation of God's Word because even though we've been shown wonderful and glorious things, we're still learning from this. We have not figured all of this out. There's a lot of unmet prophecies related to the last days that are still to come.

I mean the Antichrist has not yet revealed himself. And I dare say, you and I probably won't be around to see it. Not because I think it's going to be so far in the future, but I personally believe the Church is going to be taken away and that's what's going to make the way for the Antichrist to reveal himself.

Because you see we are the salt of the earth. We are the light of the world. That salt light has to be taken out. That has to be removed in order for the Antichrist to really come and take that world dominion that he's going to. So, what do we do in the meantime? We just keep growing. We keep studying. We keep going through the whole Bible, learning, understanding, opening ourselves to the revelation of God's Word, and knowing these things because we've been given the ability to know them. We've been given the privilege to know them.

But don't ever forget, Christians, the reason that we have been given the privilege to know these things is because we've humbled ourselves and we've said, I can't know this without you. I cannot know these things apart from you.

If you're thinking that you need to go get your Master of Divinity in order to understand the Bible, I'm telling you that's not true. You need to humble yourself like a little child and come to Him in that spirit of humility and say, Lord, teach me. And He will open your eyes to things that the wisest person of the world would never be able to understand in the pridefulness of his own wisdom. Amen.