

# Luke Chapter 10

## Verses 1 to 16

We are not going to consider in any detail the first 16 verses of the chapter which is a narrative spoken by the Lord to seventy disciples whom He sends out to preach the gospel.

These 70 disciples are in addition to the 12 disciples whom He had already called. He sends out the twelve disciples in chapter 9. He gave them authority to cast out demons, to heal the sick, and also to preach the kingdom of God. What characterises both missions is that He sends them out, instructing them how to behave on their mission. Luke is the gospel of the dependent Man, who lived by faith in God. He expected His disciples to have that same faith, depending on God alone. They were to go out with nothing, accepting whatever hospitality offered them, either in a house or in a city; but they were to denounce any home or any city that refused them.

## Verses 17 to 32

### 1. Three joys

Verses 17 to 24 describe what happened on the return of the 70 – in particular, we read of three joys that follow. We read firstly of the joy of the 70 at the results of their service. The Lord points them to another joy – the joy of eternal security in their salvation. Finally, we have the joy of the Son and the Father – the joy of divine revelation to His own.

#### 1.1. The joy of service

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

The 70 had been sent forth to preach, but they had soon discovered that they had been given other powers – the power to cast out demons. They were rejoicing at this power, which no doubt had very visible and public manifestations. The joy of service is one which can and should be experienced by every Christian. The Lord who was the perfect servant, knew of this joy. "I delight to do Thy will, o God". His delight was to do the will of the Father who had sent Him. It is a joy that the world knows nothing of. Paul knew much of it, in spite of the sufferings which he endured in his service. The epistle to the Philippians is written from a Roman jail, yet the whole epistle has sometimes been described as "joy from the jail". I believe the idea of joy and rejoicing is found approximately 16 times in this brief epistle.

The Lord however quickly tempers the enthusiasm of the 70 in the verse: that follows:

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Isaiah 14 describes the fall of Lucifer from his exalted place in heaven.

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Ezekiel 28 also speaks of him being cast out and cast down. If the disciples could cast out demons then the Lord had seen the casting out of the prince of demons.

The Lord in verse 19 gives the disciples even more powers – to tread on serpents and scorpions. But in the following verse, He points them to an even greater joy than that of service – the joy of eternal security.

19 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

## **1.2. The joy of eternal security**

If our names were written on a church role, then we would indeed have cause to fear, because our names might be scored out as a result of sin and failure. But our names are written rather in heaven – a fact that no event on earth can alter. This security is, and should be, a cause of rejoicing for every believer but sadly many, through erroneous doctrine, do not have this assurance. They have told that it is possible to be saved and then lost through failure. The doctrine carries with it a type of Pharisaism – it is not enough that Christ has died – our salvation also depends on ourselves. We need to contribute something to wards our salvation – and that is our own faithfulness. But this is no sense a display of humility on our part – rather it is taking away from the value of Christ's work on the cross. It is no longer enough that Christ has died. It is now Christ plus me equals salvation.

We believe our salvation is eternal and secure, but on what grounds do we hold such a belief?

### **1. The family of God**

John chapter 1 tells us that we have become members of the family of God:

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

When we think of sons and daughters in earthly families, we recognise that once we have been born into a family, we can never lose our place in that family. No matter how far a child may stray and misbehave, a son is always a son and a daughter is always a daughter. God has given us the might and the right to become His children. However faithful we might be in His family, if we truly believe, we ever remain in God's family.

### **2. Eternal life**

In John chapter 10, the Lord speaks of the eternal life that He has given to His sheep:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

The word "never" in this verse is a very strong word. It is in fact a triple negative – it means literally "no, by no means, not unto the ages". We

shall not perish, there is no way that we can perish, we shall never ever perish. The Lord could not have put it in any stronger way. Eternal life is just what it says it is – it is eternal.

### 3. Divine hands

The same chapter, John chapter 10, also tells us that divine hands are holding us up. How could we ever keep ourselves on the pathway. The answer is that we don't have to. Divine hands are holding ours:

neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Our names are written in heaven, in the book of life, and we have cause for joy when we think of our eternal security. Our reward for service might be withheld because of failure, but not so with our salvation.

## 1.3. The joy of the Son and the Father

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

When we think of the Lord as the man of sorrows, we might well think that He never had any joy. Well here He stops on His journey, lifts up His voice to God in thanksgiving, and rejoices in His spirit. He is speaking now of the divine revelation to the disciples of spiritual matters. Here are things that the wise and prudent of earth can never enter into. I Corinthians chapter 2 speaks of the natural or unbelieving man:

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

The eye, the ear, and the heart in this verse are not the organs of the believer. We cannot excuse ourselves that easily from not grasping the word of God. Our position is described in the next verse of I Corinthians 2:

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

It is one of the great "But God's" of the New Testament. We have the Spirit of God within who is willing and able to reveal divine truth to us.

Referring back to Luke 10: 21, we learn in this verse that this joy is not confined to the Son only. The word "good" in the AV has the meaning rather of "well pleasing". It has pleased the Father to reveal His ways to us. Ephesians chapter 1 speaks of this pleasure:

9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

God has revealed to us the mystery of His will – and for no other reason than His own pleasure. No one else caused Him to do so – it was something which

He purposed in Himself. He did it because He wanted to do it.

Verse 22 of Luke 10 speaks of how the Son has revealed the Father but does not speak of the Father revealing the Son. There are things about the Son that are way beyond the scope of even divine revelation. In Ephesians chapter 3, Paul speaks of the "unsearchable riches of Christ". The word "unsearchable" means "unexplorable". There used to be many unexplored regions of the world but many of these have now been explored by men. The riches of Christ are "unexplorable".

In verses 23 and 24, the Lord tells these disciples of the blessing that they have received in becoming acquainted with such truth. Even prophets and kings – great men of the Old Testament – had never seen or heard what they had come into the good of. If this was true of these 70 disciples in Luke chapter 10, then how much more true it is of us today who also have the whole of the New Testament to further enlighten us.

## **2. The parable of the Good Samaritan Verses 25 to 37**

The thing which instigated the telling of this parable was a question put to the Lord by a certain lawyer. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" It was not an honest question, however, for Luke records the fact that the lawyer was tempting the Lord. The man was a lawyer, so the Lord asks him in return, "What is written in the law. How readest thou?" The lawyer does not recite all 10 commandments but rather quotes the words of Moses in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

These are the same two scriptures quoted by the Lord to the scribe in Mark chapter 12:

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

The difference between the scribe of Mark 12 and the lawyer of Luke 10 is that the scribe seems to be a genuine seeker after the truth of God. The Lord says to the scribe, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God". The same could not be said of the lawyer who was trying to trip the Lord in His words.

The words of Moses in Deuteronomy 6 sum up the first five commandments, which deal with man and God. If a man loved the Lord his God in this way then he would honour the sabbath day, he would have no other Gods, he would not take the Lord's name in vain etc. At the end of verse 27, the man quotes from Leviticus 19:18 and again it is a perfect summary of the second group of commandments which have to do with how we treat our fellow men.

The lawyer, however, is not content to leave the matter there, so he asks a second question, "And who is my neighbour?" So he said, wishing to justify himself. The answer that he was no doubt hoping for was to hear the Lord

speak of a fellow Jew as his neighbour. Instead the Lord speaks a parable, the main character in which is a certain Samaritan.

We know the story well. A certain man sets off on a journey. The journey starts in Jerusalem, the city of Zion, the place of the name. He is heading for Jericho, typical in many ways of the world in its opposition to God. It was the city of the curse, and the place destroyed by Joshua should never have been rebuilt. The man falls among thieves who strip him of his raiment and leave him wounded and half dead by the roadside. By chance a certain priest comes along, who sees the man but passes by on the other side. Likewise the Levite. Both men represent the law. It underlines the fact that the Jew under law had lost his compassion for his fellow man.

Along comes a certain Samaritan, not by chance but as he journeyed. The Lord has chosen His main character carefully. The Jews despised the Samaritans. So much did they hate the Lord Jesus that when they tried to find words to insult Him, they said, "Say we not well, Thou art a Samaritan and has a demon?" The Lord, as one now despised, takes on the role of the Samaritan, but shows how it was this man who fulfilled the second part of the law by showing love toward his neighbour. He binds up his wounds, puts him on his own beast and takes him to an inn.

Luke is the gospel of the three inns. The first is found in chapter 2 – the inn at Bethlehem. It is the world's inn, and there is no room there for Mary and Joseph, and soon for the Lord Himself. The third inn is found in Luke 22. The Lord sends two of His disciples to Jerusalem to prepare the Passover. They meet and then follow the man bearing a pitcher of water. They enter a certain house and ask the master of the house, "Where is the guest chamber?" The expression "guest chamber" is the same word translated "inn" in chapter 2. The guest chamber was that part of the inn reserved for the guests. Now it is the Lord's inn, and we read in the guest chamber regarding the love and care which the Lord has for His own before He leaves them. He also teaches them regarding the bread and the cup to be taken in remembrance of Himself.

The second inn in Luke is the one in our chapter, number ten. It is the Lord's inn. The word "inn" would speak of the assembly today as a place into which the Lord has brought His own. An inn is for pilgrims and strangers, people who are not residents in the land but just passing through to another place. Peter writes in I Peter 2:

1 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

So is the saint today – we are just passing through, we are on a journey homewards. The assembly, like the inn, is a temporary dwelling place.

It is a place of care. The Samaritan brought the wounded man to the inn and took care of him. The assembly is many things to us – a place of worship and service, a place of instruction and fellowship etc. But we should never lose sight of it as being a place of care.

The first care given to the man was from the Samaritan himself. "He took care of him". We see the Lord's care for us beautifully shown in the ministry of our Great High Priest in Hebrews.

In chapter 2, He is a merciful and faithful High Priest who is able to succour (run to the aid of) those that are tempted.

In chapter 4, He is Jesus the Son of God seated upon a throne of grace who is able to give us sympathy for our infirmities and dispense mercy and grace.

In chapter 7, He ever lives to make intercession for us. He is praying on our behalf.

In chapter 10, because He lives a priest for ever, He knows all about us. And because He has dealt once and for ever with our sins, He is not preoccupied with our sins. He can devote His attention to us.

Truly, we can cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for us.

The assembly is a place where gift is given to men, and where that gift is to be used to care for the saints of God. The Samaritan took out two pence, gave them to the innkeeper and said, "Take care of him". I believe the assembly is the one place on earth where this principle can properly operate. One-man ministry is a great hindrance to the development of spiritual gift and such gift is lost to the company of gathered saints. One-man ministry stunts spiritual growth, since the main responsibility for all forms of service is undertaken by the ordained minister or priest.

The innkeeper in Luke 10 is typical of the elder in the assembly. The expression used, "take care" is also found in I Timothy chapter 3 where the question is asked of the elder, "How shall he take care of the house of God".

The inn is a place where service is rewarded. The promise is given to the innkeeper, "Whatsoever thou spendest more...I will repay thee." What can a man spend more than to use his gift in the assembly? He can be like Paul and give himself. Many of the Corinthians had little time for Paul yet Paul writes of them, "Most gladly therefore will I spend, and be spent for you". He was willing to be poured out like a drink offering for the Philippians. Such labour beyond the call of duty will not go unrewarded. The innkeeper would be paid in full when the Samaritan returned.

This promise of his return was the last promise given by the Samaritan. "When I come again, I will repay thee". Both the wounded man and the innkeeper lived in daily anticipation of this return – the wounded man to see his benefactor again; the innkeeper to receive his reward. Such are the expectations of the saints of God today.

### **3. The visit to the home in Bethany Verses 38 to 42**

There is nothing special today about the town of Bethany. It is a rather scruffy little Arab village on top of the Mount of Olives. There are no great buildings of historical importance. I suppose it was probably much the same two thousand years ago when the Lord first came here. The Lord entered Bethany with His disciples, and Martha received Him into her house.

Martha has been much criticised for her murmuring in this chapter but we surely have to commend her for inviting the Lord and His disciples into her home. It was because of Martha's invitation that the family came into contact with the master. We see her faith being expressed also in John chapter 11. She

had such faith in the Lord that she said, "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died". She had faith in Him for what had happened in the past. She had faith too for the future. She believed that Lazarus would rise again in the last day. But her faith let her down in the present. When the Lord commanded the stone to be rolled away, she protested, "By this time, he stinketh". We often follow Martha in this respect. We have faith in Him for what is past, we have faith in Him for what is future, but our faith often fails us for what comes our way today.

Verse 39 introduces us to Martha's sister, Mary:

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

The word "also" suggests that Mary had done her part in serving the Lord and His disciples but that now she was sitting at His feet, engrossed by His words. Mary is always found at His feet. In John chapter 11, when she met the Lord Jesus, she said exactly the same words as Martha but the difference is that Mary fell at His feet before she spoke. She is found at His feet again in John chapter 12. She takes her pound of ointment, very costly, and anoints His feet. Now we see her as a worshipper. The revelation of divine truth that she received in Luke chapter 10 caused her now to worship Him. This should always be the case with us. What we learn about Him in the word of God should cause our hearts to worship Him, Anything less is purely head knowledge which has not touched our spirits.

Mary's action in Luke 10 however brings about the criticism of Martha. She complains to the Lord in verse 40:

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

The Lord's reply begins with a double repetition of her name, "Martha, Martha". The Lord spoke in the same way to the child Samuel in 1st Samuel chapter 3 that night that Samuel came to know the Lord – "Samuel, Samuel". The Lord Jesus also spoke to Saul of Tarsus in Acts chapter 9 – "Saul, Saul". The repetition of the names in these incidences surely underlines the importance of the words that follow, and are also designed to grab the attention of the listener. The Lord commends Mary for taking the place at His feet. "Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her". Is there not a suggestion in the Lord's words that the service rendered by Martha would not be held to her account in the coming day of judgment. At the judgment seat of Christ, every man will be rewarded not only for what he has done but also for how he has done it. Motives as well as works will be judged.

We remember too that Mary's action in anointing His feet in John chapter 12 also brought criticism from Judas Iscariot. "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor". In Matthew 26, the other disciples add, "Why was this waste of the ointment made". But the Lord again commends Mary in Matthew 26:

She hath wrought a good work on Me.

It is possible for a Christian to be so taken up with service that we fail to take

time to hear His word and that we fail to worship Him as we should.

There is one member of the house in Bethany who is not mentioned in Luke 10 and that is Lazarus. Three times over in John chapter 11 we read of the Lord's love for Lazarus.

He whom Thou lovest is sick.

Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

Behold how He loved him.

But why did the Lord love Lazarus so much? He seemed to be a man of few words, and not one word spoken by Lazarus finds its way into the Bible. He obviously did nothing either that was noteworthy enough to be recorded. So what drew out the affection of the Lord towards this quiet man? Surely John 12 gives us a clue. "Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him". Lazarus loved to be in the company of the Lord Jesus – to be near to Him. He is a picture of what is meant by fellowship.

When we sum up all that we have read about this home, can we not see that like the inn of Luke chapter 10, the house in Bethany is a picture of what the assembly of God ought to be. It is a place of service, of instruction, of communion, and of worship. It is a place where the Lord is welcome in contrast to Jerusalem as described in the last verse of John 11, where the great city has rejected Him and men are plotting His death.

What did Bethany mean to the Lord Jesus? There are many places linked with the Lord Jesus. He was born in Bethlehem in fulfilment of Micah chapter 5. He was brought up in Nazareth in fulfilment of the words, "He shall be called a Nazarene". And it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. But Bethany seems to have been His personal choice. During that last week before His death, I believe He spent it in the home in Bethany. And when He left this world to go back to heaven, Luke 24 records the words, "He led them out as far as to Bethany". "The expression "as far as" suggests Bethany was a long way from Jerusalem, but in reality it is a little over three miles away. Does it not rather suggest that Bethany was the nearest place on earth to heaven? Such is the assembly of God today.

Bethany sits astride the Mount of Olives, and it is to this same place that the Lord will return when He comes back again to this world.

The inn of the Good Samaritan and the home in Bethany are wonderful pictures of what the assembly of God is today and of how much the assembly means to Christ.