

“Jesus Sends Out the Twelve”

Luke 9:1-9

Read Luke 9:1-2... It is important to be aware of the chronology of this next event in the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus is about 18 months away from being put to death on the cross in Jerusalem; and so, about half of His ministry is already over. Up to this point, Jesus has been the only one preaching the gospel, teaching God’s Word, performing miracles of healing the sick, lame, blind, diseased, demon possessed, and even raising the dead, among the people of Israel.

Luke leaves out an important event that occurred between the time that Jesus’ healed a woman with an issue bleeding for 12 years, raised a 12 year old dead girl back to life (cf. **Luke 8:41-55**), and before He sent out the Twelve in **Luke 9**.

Mark’s Gospel fills in the gap by telling us that Jesus went to His own hometown (Nazareth) right after the events we studied last week.

See Mark 6:1-6... Jesus took the apostles to His own hometown of Nazareth. And on a Sabbath Day, Jesus went into the synagogue, which was His normal practice, and He began to teach.

Although the listeners were astonished and amazed at Jesus’ teaching, they question His authority and right to assume the position of teacher. This is the synagogue Jesus would have attended growing up in Nazareth, where He was known as the son of Joseph, the carpenter.

The people acknowledge Jesus as one of their own, but He is no one special to them (cf. **Mark 6:3**), for He is simply a local boy trained as a carpenter, whose mother is Mary, whose brothers and sisters they knew.

The people of Nazareth refer to Jesus as the son of Mary, although, in Jewish culture, a man was normally called the son of his father even if the father was dead, unless the father was unknown to the people.

It may be that they are referencing the rumors that had gone around at the time of Jesus’ birth, about the illegitimacy of Mary’s conception, which was apart from any sexual relationship with Joseph.

The people of Nazareth failed to honor Jesus because of their own familiarity with Him, as just a kid from their village who had grown up and returned.

Instead of acknowledging His teachings and the miracles He had performed throughout the region, they rejected Jesus as Messiah; in fact it says, “they took offense at Him,” for He was not recognized by the local religious leaders as having any authority.

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Jesus is fully aware of the people’s unwillingness to believe that He had come from God; and so, He states an old proverb (cf. **Mark 6:4**), that a prophet is without honor in His own town and in His own family. This proverb is similar to one that we use today that says, "familiarity breeds contempt."

Interestingly enough, Jesus had received a similar response from His town folks about a year before, the first time He went back to His hometown (cf. **Luke 4:16-17**), right after being baptized by John and ushered into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, where He spent 40 days being tempted by the devil.

Jesus then went to Nazareth (cf. **Luke 4:18-19**) where He entered the synagogue on a Sabbath and stood up to read from the scroll of **Isaiah 61:1-2**, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

When Jesus finished reading (cf. **Luke 4:20**) He gave the book back to the attendant and sat down, everyone’s eyes were upon Him. He then said (**Luke 4:21**), "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Jesus was claiming to be the One this passage was speaking about, the Anointed One from God, the Messiah!

The residents in Nazareth had known Jesus as a boy, and as a young man who had grown up in an ordinary family, learning the trade of carpentry. Now He comes teaching with authority in their own synagogue?

Although it appears that the people were amazed at His words, they seem to question His authority, (**Luke 4:22**), "Isn't this Joseph's son?' they asked."

The people were filled with rage at the audacity of Jesus to say they were spiritually poor, spiritually captive, spiritually blind, spiritually oppressed, that they needed to be healed, and that He had come to save them.

Luke 4:28-29 tells us they drove Him out of the synagogue, out of town, and up to the top of a hill where they intended to kill Him by throwing Him off; but (**Luke 4:30**), He miraculously walked right through the midst of them and escaped.

So, in our reading today in **Luke 9**, it is about a year after that first visit to Nazareth, as recorded in **Luke 4**, when the people would not acknowledge Him as their Messiah, in fact they were enraged by His insolence.

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Mark 6:6 says that Jesus was "amazed" [completely astonished] at the people's lack of faith [unbelief]. It is not that Jesus was caught off guard; but Jesus was extremely taken back by their response to Him.

According to the biblical record, very few from His own hometown believed in Him, and so, He left there and (**verse 6**) "went around teaching from village to village," throughout other parts of Galilee where the people were more receptive.

Earlier today I mentioned how, in the chronology of Jesus' ministry, He is about half way through the three plus years He had been given to proclaim the message of God's Kingdom here on earth..

Up to this time Jesus was the only one who was teaching and preaching and healing; but time is getting short as He will soon be leaving the area of Galilee and be heading toward Jerusalem in Judea, where He will be put to death on a cross, placed in a tomb, and on the third day after His death He would rise from the grave and appear to hundreds of His followers over a 40 day period, after which He would ascend back into heaven to be with the Father.

According to **Isaiah 61:1-2**, Jesus came "to preach the gospel to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord."

See Luke 9:1-3... Jesus is going to commission the Twelve, who had already been named apostles, but they had not yet been sent out (cf. **Luke 8:12-16**). It is now time for the Lord to multiply Himself by 12, by giving these men the power to heal, cast out demons, and "to proclaim the kingdom of God."

In Matthew's narrative of this event, he lists the Twelve (**Matthew 10:2-4**), "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Him.

The apostles had been living with Jesus for over a year, it was now time for them to apply what they had heard, witnessed, learned and received from their Master and Teacher, Jesus Christ! These men would now have to trust the Lord like never before, to protect them, feed them, clothe them, and guide them.

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Read Luke 9:4-5... Jesus tells them to seek out a house where they will be accepted and to stay there until they are ready to leave that town or village. He then tells them that if any house or town will not receive them, they are to shake the dust off their feet as a "testimony against" those who rejected them and their message.

The disciples were sent out to bring God's message of reconciliation and healing to the lost, lonely, and hurting of society. For someone to reject them or their message, was the same as rejecting God.

The Jews had a practice, when returning to Israel from a Gentile country: they would shake the dust from their feet and sandals, so as not to bring pagan soil into Israel. By this same gesture, the apostles were saying that any house or village that rejected them was unacceptable to and alienated from God.

Read Luke 9:6... The disciples were instructed to call people to repent of sin and believe in Jesus to save them, just as John the Baptizer had done (cf. **Matthew 3:1-2, 5-6, 11; Mark 1:4-5, 7-11; John 1:19-23, 28-29, 34**).

As the apostles called people to repentance, they were also casting out demons and healing the sick, just as Jesus had done throughout the region. They were exhibiting the authority He had given them in order to demonstrate, with power, the kingdom message they brought, that salvation has been provided through Christ alone; this must be heard, understood, believed, and obeyed before salvation can be received.

Read Luke 9:7-9... Herod had heard reports, and he was very distraught about all that was going on throughout the region, that repentance was being preached, people were being healed, and demons were being cast out, and that some were saying it was John the Baptizer who had risen from the dead; or Elijah or another great prophet who had power like the prophets in Israel's past.

Herod felt guilty for having had John beheaded at the demand of Herodias, his vengeful wife. She hated John for confronting Herod about his immoral, unlawful and adulterous marriage to her. And so, the thought that John had come back to life totally unhinged Herod, who must of been thinking, what if it was John and he was seeking revenge?

If you don't know the story, you can read it in **Mark 6:14-28**.

June 4th, 2023 (full sermon notes)

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We aren't told any specifics about the apostles' ministry, but it appears that reports had come to Herod about what was going on; and although he was not sure if it was John the Baptizer back from the dead, according to **Luke 9:9**, Herod kept trying to see who it was that was doing these supernatural healings and casting out of demons; although he isn't sure who it actually is.

Listen, John the Baptizer is dead, Jesus is in heaven with the Father, the Apostles are all dead; but those of us who believe in and follow Jesus Christ (crucified, resurrected, and coming again) are to continue what they started.

2Corinthians 5:17-21,

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Pastor Mike
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