

**Sunday, November 12, 2023 | The Road to Redemption**

**Week 4 | Luke 10:17-24 | “Seventy-Two Disciples Return”**

Last week, we talked about the methodology of ministry—i.e., a *how-to* guide to church work. We answered three questions: what does it look like when the disciple is serving, what does it look like when the disciple is accepted, and what does it look like when the disciple is rejected? And the takeaway was that **a good disciple labors in God’s harvest God’s way.** When answering those questions, though our methodology may change, the message remains the same. If we are to join God's work, we must look to him to show how to do the work.

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Today, we’ll be talking about *joy*. If you’ll recall, the commission of the seventy-two prepared them for possible rejection (cf. Lu. 10:8-16). In fact, *most* of what the Lord told his followers unpacked the implications of *failure*. Honestly, when you think about it, we were led to believe the disciples were the *underdogs*. So, it may surprise you that, upon their return, the disciples are overjoyed at their *success*! There is not even a hint of negativity. We were expecting a loss but got an unexpected win! What an upset (**e.g., 1980 Winter Olympics USA vs Soviet Union**)!

Should the disciple labor in God's harvest God's way, they should not be surprised when they actually *succeed*. Though the Christian life does come with its fair share of difficulties, we do ourselves a disservice if we only focus on the negatives. Jesus Christ is Lord of all, after all, and those who bear his name cannot help but win. Even when they might have some setbacks, ultimately, they are *temporary*.

Through Jesus Christ, believers are champions. And as such, even on our worst day, we ought to be joyful knowing that our names are written in heaven.

I want you to notice *two* things:

**i. The Disciples Rejoiced (vs. 17-20)**

**READ:** Luke 10:17-20 (ESV)

<sup>17</sup>The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” <sup>18</sup>And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

<sup>19</sup>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. <sup>20</sup>Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

The seventy-two knew who was responsible for their success. Rather than say, “the demons are subject to us,” they said, “the demons are subject to us in your name.” There is power in the name of Jesus. This is not to say it is some incantation. Instead, life done in Jesus' name is in accordance with Jesus' will, and, as such, the results depend upon Jesus. And has Jesus ever lost? No.

The term "fall" is imperfect, indicating that Satan's demise happened over a specific period of time, presumably during the mission of the seventy-two.<sup>1</sup> As they were casting out demons, Jesus saw Satan himself “fall like lightning from heaven.” The Kingdom of God spelled the defeat of the greatest enemy the world has ever known. Never again will the devil hold unilateral and unchecked sway over the masses. The Messiah has come, and he has dispatched his disciples; as such, demonic forces fall before the power of Jesus.

Though Satan's defeat has implications for the physical realm, this victory mainly affected the *spiritual* realm. The evil one behind the curtain can no longer pull the strings. Thus, when the Lord spoke about giving his followers "[authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you](#),” he spoke metaphorically. They, of course, could be harmed. And many Christians have been martyred for their faith. So, Jesus' point is that death is the worst that the devil can do. And even that will not occur without God's permission. Afterward, the devil will not ever be able to harm the believer. This is why Jesus says in Matthew 10:38, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

But, make no mistake, even something as significant as Satan's fall pales in comparison to the believer's salvation. Or, as Jesus put it, "[Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven](#).” The greatest accomplishment is nothing compared to our spiritual security.

## ii. **The Trinity Rejoiced (vs. 21-24)**

**READ:** Luke 10:21-22 (ESV)

<sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> [All things](#) have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son

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<sup>1</sup> Edwards, p. 212.

is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

<sup>23</sup> Then turning to the disciples he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! <sup>24</sup> 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.”

Notice that, within a few words, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the heavenly Father are mentioned together. Herein, we find the Trinity rejoicing together over the success of the seventy-two. And interestingly, the Greek word behind "rejoiced" doesn't imply simply happiness; it refers to excitement. Jesus was "thrilled with joy," over the moon, or ecstatic!<sup>2</sup> Jesus will later say in Luke 15:7, “I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”

What also gladdened the heart of Jesus is that God has “hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will...” It is not the worthy who are blessed by God but the unworthy. Not those with status are given divine enlightenment, but those without status. It is not the "wise" who understand but "little children." This is the great reversal. Just as Satan fell from power and the disciple rose in prominence, the humble believer (though a child) is given great insight into the inner workings of God, and the prideful academic is left ignorant.

Thus, only those whom the Son chooses are given insight. Jesus says, "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.” Jesus is the only way to God. To know the Father, you must know the Son.

Needless to say, the disciple is “blessed.” Jesus explains, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! <sup>24</sup> 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.” Again, the great reversal is on display. Satan fails/disciples succeed, the wise are dumb/the dumb are made wise, and now, OT prophets and kings are envious/ NT believers are blessed.

**So, what's the takeaway?**

Obedience to Christ's sending results in a joyful returning.

**READ:** Psalm 126:5-6 (ESV)

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<sup>2</sup> Morris, p. 205.

<sup>5</sup>Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! <sup>6</sup>He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

## Video Description

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SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

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**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

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#### **Grace Pointe Baptist Church**

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

Contact: [info@GracePointeLife.com](mailto:info@GracePointeLife.com)

Website: <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

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