

Life on Mission: *Sent* Rob Rogers August 7, 2022

Introduction

OneGenAway and Grace Chapel have committed to monthly food distributions in Waverly, TN from now through the end of 2023.

You can join us on mission at the Waverly food distribution this Saturday, August 13th from 7:30 AM to 11:00 AM.

Grace Chapel will provide shuttle service to Waverly and back, departing from the drive-in movie screen at 6:00 AM sharp, and will return to church by noon.

- Or if you'd prefer to drive yourself, you can meet us in the parking lot of Dollar Tree at 515 W Main St, Waverly, TN 37185

Would you say **yes** to spending half a day helping the families of Waverly in their ongoing recovery? Because like Henry said, *"All of us have some skill, knowledge, or experience that can benefit others, and making the decision to share it is what puts your life...on mission."*

Today's message has some very specific instructions for us.

Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of Him, two by two, into every town and place where He Himself was about to go. ² And He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³ Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. ⁴ Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' ⁶ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. ⁷ And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' ¹⁰ But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, ¹¹ 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' ¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

¹⁷ 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."

**METHOD FOR MISSION
MESSAGE OF THE MISSION
MOTIVE FOR MISSION**

Method for Mission

As you look over the ministry of Jesus in the gospels, you see Jesus constantly doing three specific things.

1. Declaration of the Kingdom
2. Demonic deliverance
3. Physical healing

1. He persuaded people of an eternal and present reality of the Kingdom of God
2. He liberated people from what was enslaving them, (demonic oppression, possession, and self-deception)
3. He healed people's bodies of sickness and disease.

In Luke 9, Jesus looks at His 12 disciples and says, "I've given you authority and power to do everything I've been doing... now go out and do what I've done." And they went out and they did what Jesus did.

In Luke 10, this calling for mission is not limited to the 12 disciples.

Luke 10:1

...the Lord appointed **seventy-two others** and **sent them** on ahead of Him, **two by two**, into every town and place where He Himself was about to go.

Why 72?

In Genesis 10, there is what's called the "*table of nations*" in which is listed of all the nations on the earth. Guess how many there were? 72.

What does that mean? It means if Jesus *only* sent out the *12 disciples* in Luke 9, you could say — the mission is really only for professional church people. Not for the average Christian, or follower of Jesus. But when Jesus sends out the 72, He's saying, "*It's not just the leaders, it's not just the professional church people, it's not just the pastors, or elders, or church staff, it's every single person who has come in contact with Jesus!*" It means...

Every Member On Mission

It means if Jesus has drawn you near to Himself, if you've surrendered your life to Him — it means **you've been brought in, in order to be sent out!** Every member of the body of Christ is given opportunities for mission. Every time in scripture God draws someone in, immediately, he sends them out.

- **Abraham**, God says, "Come near to me, now leave your country and I will bless you to be a blessing..."
- **Moses**, God says, "Come near to the burning bush, converse with me, now go confront Pharaoh..."
- **Isaiah**, God draws near to Isaiah, cleanses him of sin, and sends him to go preach.

Over and over again, God draws us in, sends us out.

The word "**sent**" in the original language is "missio" — where we get the word *mission*.

Luke 10:3

Go your way; behold, I am **sending** you...

- Behold, I'm "**commissioning**" you.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for **good works**, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- What that's telling you is that when God sends you out on mission, it's not vague, it's not so general that 1,000 other people could do the good works God prepared you to do!
 - What this means is that God prepared ahead of time, work that **only YOU can do**. There are specific needs that only YOU can meet! There are specific people that only YOU can reach. But it's not just for them — it's for YOU.

**“You are best ministered to
When you're ministered through!”
~ Narrow Gate**

How?

1. **He sent them out two by two** – It can be challenging to live on mission, and to carry the message of the gospel in an antagonistic, or just ambivalent culture. We need support, we need community, we need each other for encouragement, for exhortation, to spur one another on.
2. **Do not go house to house, but if someone is receptive, stay there** – why? There's a broader principle here. You cannot go relationally deep with people that you're going to *ding dong ditch*. Jesus is instructing them, if you find someone in a town that is open, receptive to the gospel — a *person of peace* — GO DEEP with that person. Why? “Because we're going to have to move on at some point, and we need someone in the neighborhood, in the community, that will continue to represent Me well...” A Kingdom Representative.
 - a. If you *only* go door-to-door, you're not really loving them, and you're definitely not discipling them. So, invest deeply where you know there is good soil.
 - b. If the people don't receive you... don't dwell on it. Don't be discouraged by it. Expect it and move on. Don't let the rejection cling to you. That's why He's saying, brush off the dust on your feet... don't let it get on you, don't let it weigh you down... there are plenty of others that are desperate for some hope in life... they're open and hungry for the gospel.
 - c. And the GOSPEL IS THE MESSAGE. We have no other message to bring.

Message of the Mission

When the word *gospel* was chosen by the early church to express the message we're meant to carry to the world — that word has a very specific meaning.

The gospel was *news* of a world-altering, community-changing, objective fact, an *event*, that everyone needed to respond to.

EXAMPLE: There's a great example of this in an ancient document that starts by saying, “*This is the beginning of the gospel of Caesar Augustus.*” It was a document declaring the Pax Romana — the peace of Rome. It was declaring the ascension of Caesar Augustus to his throne, and the news of peace that affected every single citizen of the Roman Empire. Heralds and messengers spread the news to everyone — declaring the gospel (the news of the Pax Romana) of Caesar Augustus.

EXAMPLE 2: Another example is from the battle of Marathon in 490BC. The Persians were invading Greece and the Athenian Army went out to the plains of Marathon to meet the Persians in battle. The

Athenians were grossly outnumbered and overpowered and everyone expected a Persian victory. Everyone in Athens knew as soon as the Persians won, they would be helpless, defenseless, doomed. The Persians didn't win, the Athenians did — but no one in Athens knew it. The army had to get news of the victory back to the people that were in a panic awaiting certain death. They realized if they didn't get the “good news” back to Athens, there would be panic, looting, plundering, because people do crazy things when they're afraid.

So they chose a runner, to sprint the 22.5 mile journey from Marathon to Athens to declare the gospel, “the good news”! He ran into the city, cried out, “Rejoice! We've triumphed.” Because of exhaustion from the battle and running that distance, he declared the gospel and fell over dead. The news changed everything for everyone in Athens. They were saved from certain death.

When Jesus tells us to carry the gospel — declaring it to all of creation — He's saying, “There is a world-changing, history-altering, objective fact that has taken place. But if no one knows about it, if no one declares it — people will remain in bondage to sin, to fear, panic, and under the oppression of impending doom that they can be free from!”

What gives Jesus the authority to tell us to carry the gospel?

Luke 10:18

“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven...”

- He's saying, “I was there before the beginning of the world... everything that was made was made through me, and I witnessed the fall of Lucifer. I was there.” In other words, as Jesus claims all throughout the gospels, “I am the eternal, uncreated, second person of the triune God. I am God in human flesh, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.”

If that's true, you can't treat Jesus like a prophet, or a teacher, or even just a revolutionary. If He is God — as He says about Himself — the declaration of His gospel is not something that you can just say, “*Yeah, that works for you, but not for me,*” just like a Roman citizen couldn't say, well, “*Caesar might be your emperor but he's not mine...*”

The gospel of Jesus Christ is an objective, historical event that changed the course of human history. It's the declaration of news, not of a temporal, worldly victory that only affects a few — it is the sharing, the persuasion, the declaration of news of eternal reality that changes everything for everyone.

PROBLEM: *But if we don't get this next part right... the message can be leveraged in ways that are incredibly destructive.*

Motive for Mission

Luke 10:17-20

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.”

There are some profound things happening here...

Jesus is rejoicing that they went out and did the work! They shared the good news, they delivered people from demonic oppression and lies they were enslaved to, and they healed the sick — and Jesus is celebrating what they've done. *Then He gives them and us a serious and sober warning.*

Luke 10:20

Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you.

Jesus is saying, *“I don't like what's motivating you about this... I don't like what is inspiring you about this... because you're rejoicing in something that will cause you to be destructive to people who listen to you. It will cause you to be manipulative to people, condemning and scornful toward people, it will eventually fill you with the belief that you're superior to the people that I'm asking you to serve.”*

Jesus is saying that there is a motive for ministry that is absolutely destructive not only to those around you... but it's destructive to you!

Don't rejoice in the wrong thing.

Well, what's wrong with rejoicing in the fact that the demons are subject to us? We're laying hands on people, delivering people, we're liberating people! Why can't we rejoice in that!?

Is that really what they're rejoicing in? Look closer.

Did they come back saying, *“Lord, look at all the people whose lives are now better... look at their freedom... the healing that's taken place in them! People are free, marriages are back together, people are reconciled, communities are being mended.”* That's not what they say...

Luke 10:17

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, *“Lord, even the demons are subject **to us** ...in Your name!”*

In other words, *“Lord, we're really something. We're important! We matter! We have power over the seen and the unseen!”*

Jesus says...

Luke 10:20

*...do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject **to you**, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*

Jesus is saying, *“Look what you're rejoicing in!? Look what you're resting in! Look what's making you feel like you're a somebody!”*

- Your accomplishments. Your performance. Your power. The fact the people are listening to you. You're building your identity, your value on *your influence* over people and demons. **If you rejoice in that for long enough it will lead to the very same thing that made Satan fall: “Pride.”**
- If you say, *“Here's how I know I'm a somebody... people are listening to me! They're affirming me! I'm making a difference!*
 - It's like Stuart Smalley from the old Saturday Night Live skit, *“I'm good enough, I'm smart enough, and doggone it, people like me!”*
- *Jesus is saying, if you rejoice in your power, your influence, your accomplishments... you will end up being coercive and manipulative to the people who are listening to you, because you won't view them as people, you'll view them either as tools to be leveraged, or trophies to be paraded — not as people to be loved.*

- *And if you rejoice in your power or influence, and someone rejects you, or disagrees with you, or challenges you in any way, you will be death on those people because you'll perceive them as a threat to the very foundation of your life! The very thing you're building your identity on.*
 - When your idolatry of self is threatened, you'll be just like the disciples who said, "Lord, should we call down fire from heaven on them, those unbelievers, those people that don't agree with us!?"
 - It's Simon the Pharisee looking at the woman weeping over Jesus' feet saying, "Jesus, why do you have any association with scum like that...be rid of her."

Those that might be willing to explore Christianity look at Christians like this and they're not only repulsed by it — they associate that behavior with Jesus — when Jesus is the one rebuking His disciples for having that attitude and motive!

**Jesus says,
don't rejoice in your power
don't rejoice in your influence
don't rejoice in your gifts
or your past achievements or performance.**

Instead, do what?

Luke 10:20

...rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

1. In ancient times, to have your name written in a town ledger or a census meant that you were a somebody, you were important.
2. Religion tells you that if you do good enough, if you accomplish enough, if you perform well enough, THEN and ONLY THEN will God write your name in heaven.

Jesus looks at his followers, and He looks at us and says, "Listen to me, the gospel means that your names are ALREADY WRITTEN in heaven. That's past tense! It's already happened! It's not about how much you accomplish for me to get your name in there — it's because of who I am, and what I've come to do, your names are ALREADY WRITTEN!

**"Don't rejoice in what you've done,
or what you do.
Rejoice in WHO YOU ARE in Me."**

The gospel is because of Jesus Christ — you're already in! Your name is *already* written in heaven! It's past tense... which means your achievements or accomplishments or your power, or your gifts, have absolutely ZERO bearing on your acceptability before God.

Don't rejoice in what you've done, or else your sense of value will be all over the place. But rejoice in that you're absolutely loved. Absolutely secure. Completely accepted.

Jesus is saying that if you want a motivation for anything in life that will not make you coercive, manipulative, deceptive, destructive to the people around you — so you won't exploit people, you won't try to control people, you won't be oppressive to people — if you'll just remember and rejoice that your name is already written heaven, not because of anything you've done, but solely because of the grace of God.

Luke 10:3

Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as **lambs** in the midst of **wolves**.

How does Jesus send us out? As lambs.

What's true about lambs? **They're always gentle.**

But He's sending us out as lambs among wolves. Which means we need to have incredible gentleness, and incredible courage.

It's expected that Christians will be persecuted. But what Jesus is telling us here, is that **it's never okay for Christians to be the persecutors**. The moment you become a persecutor — the moment you begin to condemn people for not believing, or not listening, for any reason at all, is the very moment you've forgotten that you've been saved by the sheer miraculous grace of God and not of your own merit, lest you should boast in yourself!

When you realize that your salvation has absolutely nothing to do with your own moral fortitude, it has NOTHING to do with how "good" of a person you are — there will NEVER be an ounce of superiority in your interactions with people — because you'll know that your salvation is not because of you. If someone rejects you, you can be gentle with them, because your name is written in heaven.

Being a follower of Jesus means that we'll be people of
Gentleness AND Courage.
Empathy AND Compassion.
Grace AND Truth.

The only way to get the power to live on mission like that is to rejoice, not in power, not in gifting, not in your influence — but rejoice that your name is already written in heaven by the miraculous grace of God.

When your heart is resting in that reality, when the Lord asks you as He did Isaiah in chapter 6... "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?*" you'll be able to say, as Isaiah did... with a purity of motivation, with gentleness and courage...

"Here I am! Send me."

Discussion Questions

1. In the ministry of Jesus, what are the three specific things that He does?
2. Why did Jesus send out 72 people on mission? What does that mean to us?
3. Discuss Ephesians 2:10. How does that affect your thinking about your "being sent"?
4. What does it mean to "wipe the dust off your feet" if someone does not receive the gospel?
5. Why does Jesus condemn "rejoicing that the spirits are subject to you"? How does that harm your ministry to others?
6. What should you rejoice in? Why?
7. How do you react when someone rejects you because of Christianity? How should you react and why?
8. Are you ready to say, "Here I am! Send me"?

NOTES