

AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: "Seriousness of the Gospel Message" Luke 10

Scripture of Lesson: Luke's Gospel 10: 1-23

1. Expanded evangelic mission

- A. Seventy messengers, including the twelve, were sent out to all towns to which Jesus planned to visit:
 - i. Mission: They were sent out as messengers [prophets] and harvest workers to bring in ready souls to the Kingdom of God. They were to heal the sick and preach the message of the Kingdom of God.
 - ii. Manner of evangelic work: They were to carry minimal things for themselves, depend on the kindness of those who welcome them into their towns, and focus on the mission.
- B. They came back rejoicing with the positive results of the mission. They were able to subjugate even the demons when they went in the name and power of Jesus Christ [v. 10:17]. At this the Lord revealed the news of an important cosmic change – Satan and his host were chased out of God's presence in heaven and sent down to the earth. Satan no longer has direct access to God as he used to in the time of Job [Job 1, 2, Zechariah 3:1-2, Rev 12: 7-9]. However, Satan's host is allowed to work on the earth. He is even called the 'Prince of the air' [Eph 2:2] and has been busy deceiving the people. Much of the world's depravation, confusion and evil in the present world is due to his work. The Lord gave warning to His disciples that when they go among the people with the mission work, they would face opposition from Satan and his host.

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them[a] in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. [Rev 12: 7-9]

- C. Thus, the Lord gave a stern warning to the towns which had not welcomed the Lord's message. These towns were Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had been visited multiple times by the Lord. Although some people accepted the gospel message in these towns, much of the populace apparently was not receptive in their hearts. Rather, the Lord was strongly critical of the haughty spirit of the people in Capernaum. What about the spirit of the American society today? Do most people accept the Jesus and His gospel message or are they unbelieving, critical and offensive to it? Those who reject Jesus reject God and their fate will be in 'Hades,' which means 'Sheol,' or place of death [v. 10:15]. These statements of the Lord point to the seriousness of the response of the hearers of the gospel message. Would you reject an invitation from the White House? If you reject President Trump's invitation to join him at a dinner or a trip together, he and his administration will not be favorable to you. How much more serious will be the consequence of rejecting God's invitation to His Kingdom!

2. Joy of the Lord

- A. At the good report of the evangelic mission our Lord rejoiced in the Spirit and thanked God in an audible prayer:

I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. [v. 10:21]

- B. The labor of the servants of God for winning souls for His Kingdom brings great joy and pleasure to our Lord. But, as His servants go forth to preach the gospel, the Spirit of God works in the hearts of men and women who hear the message. The truth of God is revealed to only those whose hearts

are humble and pure like 'babes.' It is hidden from 'the wise and the prudent,' meaning those with their own conceit and thoughts lifted so high that they do not really listen to the message from God. In fact, God detests such people and deliberately hides His truth from them. In eternity, such people will be kept apart from God's grace, light and blessings. They will be left alone in darkness and their own conceit and self-righteousness will not be of much help to them. Only remorse or continued contempt toward God will torment them, like undying fire and worms, burning and eating into their souls [Mark 9: 42-48].

3. Seriousness of the gospel message

- A. In verses 23-24, the Lord emphasized the value of the revelation of God's truth as revealed through Jesus Christ: *"Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."* Some chosen faithful people of OT era saw the Messiah through the Spirit, such as Abraham. *"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."* [John 8: 56]. But not all prophets and leaders of the people were granted the revelation. Some may have been the vision partially. Now these lowly disciples had the privilege of experiencing the very person of God living with them.

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty [2 Peter 1:16].

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. [John 1: 14]

- B. Let us be glad and thankful that the gospel of Jesus Christ comes to us today. Although the Lord is not with us as physically visible, He is with us clearly in the Spirit and His message must be delivered in the same clear, unadulterated way as it was in the first century.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. [Rev 3: 20-21]

Discussion topics:

1. *Let us discuss the value of the truth of God as revealed through Jesus Christ.*
2. *What are some of the factors that cause people to reject the gospel message? How can we help such people?*