

Jesus Sends the Twelve

Luke 9:1-2

November 18, 2018

Luke, Chapter 9, very important, a, very important transitional chapter in Luke's Gospel. In several, several significant ways it makes transitions. You can see a, a, geographical transition in Luke 9, as you read through it. Jesus leaves Galilee behind. He finishes up his ministry there and starts to make his way to Jerusalem.

If you're in Luke 9, you can see in verse 51, toward the end of the chapter it says, "When the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up." It's a reference to his crucifixion, which, as it just said in a couple of places there, Jesus has been predicting. Says there, "When the days drew near for Jesus to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem." You might say he squared his jaw, he steeled his spine, to head toward Jerusalem.

And that begins a long march, kind of a, a, journey on the way to the cross, to accomplish full and final redemption.

That's one transition that takes place, a geographical transition. There are two other transitions we're gonna see, as we move through this great chapter and they occupy the most significant portion of Luke chapter 9. There's a theological transition and a missional transition. And the theological transition is that, as Jesus reveals his identity more and more fully, in clearer and clearer ways to his disciples.

There's a question Herod asks, and then Jesus repeats the same question, basically saying, who is this? Who is he really? So a theological transition, as we get a clearer, clearer picture of Christology. Who is Christ? There's also a missional transition, as Jesus commissions his disciples to participate in propagating the kingdom of God.

It's that missional transition, as Jesus launches, what you might see, is an internship program for his apostles. That's really how the chapter begins. The one who called these men into discipleship, the one who then chose them, selected them out of the rest of the disciples to be chosen as apostles, named as apostles.

Now he's summoning them. He's bringing them together. He equips them and then commissions them. Instructs them about participating in his mission. If you're in Luke 9, follow along as I read. We'll read the first ten verses. "And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.

"And he said to them, 'Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.' And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

"Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the ancient prophets of old had risen. Herod said, 'John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?' And he sought to see him.

"On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida." And we'll stop there.

You can see from the outline in your bulletin, we're gonna cover those first two verses of the chapter, in four points: The situation, the mobilization, the provision, and the commission. And as we go through those four points, two verses, even though this is about Jesus sending the Twelve, specially appointed apostles.

Jesus set those men apart for a, a, unique, never to be repeated role. They are apostles. Even though that's the case, I want you to think about the parallels; this text and this commissioning, for us today. Jesus Christ still sees the situation that he saw here in Luke 9. He sees the situation the same. His loving concern for lost sheep continues to this day.

And so, Jesus Christ is still mobilizing us, his disciples. He's still provisioning us, he's equipping us, he's getting us

ready, and he has commissioned us to take the gospel out to our neighbors. Whether neighbors near or neighbors far, far away. The question is, has he called and commissioned you? Do you see his Lordship in that way, as making demands on you and your life. As demanding changes in your priorities. Changes in your thought life. Changes in your schedule. Changes in your budget. Do you know him that way?

Will you listen to him and obey him in this? That's the question I want you to ponder, as we walk through these four points. First point in our outline: the situation. The situation. The situation, Luke sort of skips over. It's between the white spaces between Luke 8:56 and Luke 9:1.

There's a lot that's in those white spaces. Details that we find actually recorded in the other Gospels and provides a context about the situation that Jesus enters in here, and sends his apostles into. Helps us understand the situation, a bit better. A bit of context then, to help us understand Jesus sending the twelve out. So, get ready to turn a few pages.

We'll start first, understanding the situation. Turning back to Mark, Mark's Gospel, Mark chapter 6. In Mark 6, we find a parallel with the account in Luke, as Jesus sends the twelve out, in Mark 6:7 to 13. That's parallel with our text. But Mark 6 begins with something that Luke has skipped over.

Purposes that Luke has, in writing his Gospel, he didn't include it, but this is in Mark 6:1 through 6. We read there, that Jesus made a rather, a final visit, a rather painful visit to his hometown of Nazareth. Remember the last time he was there in Luke chapter 4, they wanted to kill him. He came with gracious words. He came with loving kindness. Demonstrating that he was the Messiah.

They spoke of his gracious words. They acknowledged his gracious words. And then, when he confronted them, they wanted to throw him off a cliff. Now he's come back. He's anticipating the cross. He knows that his time is relatively short and he wants to go home. He wants to preach the gospel to his hometown crowd one more time. He wants to give them one more chance to repent and believe the gospel.

There at the end of Mark 5, you can see that Jesus has just raise the daughter of Jairus from the dead. So that's really parallel to what we covered in Luke 8, at the end of Luke 8. As we get into Mark 6:1 to 5, we read this sad, sad account, which again Luke has not recorded for us, but we're going to read it here.

Mark 6:1, "He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished, saying, 'Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us?'

"And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.' You cannot do mighty, many mighty works there, except he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them."

Matthew records the same thing and Matthew 13:54 to 58, says, the disciples of Jesus were there with him. They witnessed this poor treatment. They witnessed this shameful, unbelieving response. And what we're seeing here, Matthew 13, Mark 6, we are seeing an indication, an insight into the true condition, not just of the hearts of the Nazarenes, but also of the Galileans.

This is a, a, portend. This is a, a, forecasting of what's happening among the people. Attitude of those in Nazareth really forecasts this growing attitude of the entirety of the people of Galilee. The rest of the Galileans are not going to be far behind in taking the same opinion. But here in Nazareth, as the saying goes, familiarity breeds contempt.

The fact that the Nazarenes knew Jesus then. They knew Jesus back then, it means that they're less inclined to show him any regard now, to give him any respect or any deference. After all, he's the boy that grew up among us. They could barely, in this text, they can barely disguise their disdain, even though they testify to his wisdom, his words, his works, they can't deny any of that. But they take offense at who he seems to have become.

Notice there, they don't listen to his teaching, they don't listen to it, they don't regard it, their ad, they question the origin of it, and they insinuate, and not very subtly, they insinuate, that his teaching is not his own. He's just grabbing something from somebody else and giving it to them. Again, they don't deny his miracles. You can see right there, "How are such mighty works done by his hands?" No one denied his miracles, but they do question the source.

They seem, all too, ready to accept the judgment of the Pharisees, the religious establishment, that Jesus performed his miracles by the power, not of God, not of the spirit, but of the devil. So, they, here, want to put him in his place. Carpenter. He's a Carpenter. I mean, after all, he's a tradesman. What's he gonna tell us about our souls?

It's as if they're reminding him that he's no one to be heeded, no one to regard, he's not so above them as he might come into town and think. They want to knock him down a peg, put him in his place, don't want him to get too big of a head. Then they get ugly. They pull out a long-held suspicion, calling him

the son of Mary, which he was, but in their mouths, coming through their minds, this is, an, not so subtle insinuation that Jesus is an illegitimate child.

Joseph married his mother merely as an act of mercy. He could have divorced her, should have divorced her. But the hometown boy, he took pity on her. Married this woman. But they knew where he came from, that he was born of fornication, and they despised his origin. In fact, they know the true children of the union of Joseph and Mary, and they named them. The half-brothers, sisters of Jesus, "are they not all," verse 3, "with us?"

Says there, verse 3, "They took offense at him." Not only that, but they were, they were ready to insult him. To express their derision. To voice their rejection. His hometown. His neighbors. His own family members. Really fills in the meaning, here, in a vivid way, doesn't it? Of what the apostle John wrote in the prologue to his gospel, John 1:10 and following, "He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and yet the world did not know him. He came to his own. His own people did not receive him."

Jesus expressed virtually the same thing in Mark 6:4, "Prophet is not without honor, except in his own hometown and among his relatives in his own household." Jesus and the disciples who traveled there, to be with him, they all witnessed how deep, how personal, how intimate, and therefore, how painful this rejection was for him.

I ask you, if you felt rejected for the sake of the gospel by those who know you best. Have you been despised, been scorned for holding fast to the truth, as others condemn you as; oh you're narrow minded, of course, you'll hold that opinion, that's one of those legalistic churches you've been taught by. Bigoted. Uncompassionate.

Do so called Christians even expressed disdain for you? Condemning you for being too strict, too serious. Know this beloved, Jesus has felt that kind of pain more deeply, more intimately than any of us could ever know. Be comforted that your Lord knows and he cares for you. Particularly there, when others despise you, when others reject you, when others scorn

you, and disdain you for the sake of Christ, for the name of the son of man.

Matthew said, Matthew 13:58, "He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief." And that's what we need to understand here, about the situation that Jesus is facing, as he's sending out the Twelve. There's this increasing tenor and mood spreading across Galilee of unbelief. And so, what's his response? What did Jesus do in the face of hometown rejection?

Mark 6:6 says, "Jesus marveled because of their unbelief." Jesus doesn't marvel at much. In fact, this word is used only twice. He marveled at the faith of the Centurion, and he marvels here, at such hard-hearted unbelief. He finds it utterly astonishing. And then there's a break in the Greek text, there in Mark 6, and indicates a new thought, and it says this, "Then he went out among the villages teaching."

How did he respond? He left Nazareth, and he went on a short preaching tour among some of the Galilean villages, and it appears here that he went alone. Seeing that his disciples, some, perhaps all of them, they returned to Capernaum. His

apostles were there in Capernaum. And I want you to, just again filling in the details and getting some of the gaps, we should turn back to Matthew's Gospel now.

Matthew, chapter 9, to get just a little bit more of the picture. I just want you to see the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the face of rejection, in the face of unbelief, 9:35, it gets you in the ballpark, there. Matthew, in that section, just before there, he records two miracles.

In Matthew 9:27 to 33, Jesus healed two blind men. He cast the demon out of a mute man and allowed the man to speak freely again. How did the religious leaders respond to that? Praise God, our Messiah has come. No! That's not what happened. Look at Matthew 9:34, "The Pharisees said, 'He casts out demons by the Prince of Demons.'" Isn't that incredible?

I mean, think about the cynicism displayed there. No concern, no care for the man who was mute, who's just been released, not just from being unable to speak, but from a demon. Wouldn't you rejoice? More hard-hearted unbelief. And now it's resulting in outward verbal blasphemy, as they attribute the

work of the Holy Spirit to Satan, the unholy prince of the host of demonic spirits.

They're resolved here to reject him, again. How did Jesus respond? Was there anger at their ingratitude, and unbelief, and rejection? Certainly, be justified. No. He'd confront their hypocrisy and unbelief, of the religious establishment, another time. At this moment, all he could think about was the situation, not about them, but about the sheep underneath them.

This is the judgment of the leadership. What is to become of the people who are under their leadership? Look at verse 35. He is filled here with concern and compassion. It says, "Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, healing every disease and affliction.

"And when he saw the crowds," get this, "he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, therefore, pray,'" Pray.

Pray. Pray that the, "earnestly that the Lord of the Harvest would send out laborers into his harvest."

There's this massive need. There's an immediate need, a dire need, and Jesus feels compassion. Let that settle in on you. Whatever you're facing, whatever grief you're suffering, wherever your dark place you feel like you're in, know that Jesus is there and he has compassion for you. He has compassion for our church. He has compassion for his churches, for his people.

These lost sheep here are suffering under false shepherds. Self-satisfied, self-congratulating, self-feeding shepherds who fleece the flock for their own good, their own power, their own wealth, their own standing. His heart is to go to them. It's the heart of a true shepherd to care for the sheep. Notice though, though the need is dire, though the situation is desperate, though these people need immediate and fast help, Jesus does not run off and do all the work all by himself.

The desperate, massive immediate need of this sheep and distress, leads to him mobilizing his disciples, his apostles,

Matthew 10:1, "He called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, to heal every disease, and every affliction."

And that brings us right back to Luke 9:1, you can turn back there. Now that you understand the situation a little bit better, we can consider a second point. With that situation clarified, of Jesus rejection, of the growing tenor and sentiment of unbelief. With Jesus feeling the rejection and the pain of that, but at the same time feeling compassion for people.

No doubt he was grieving. No doubt it pained him, saddened him. But none of that is his immediate concern. In the short time there remained, Jesus, point two, Jesus turned his attention to his apostles, to train them, to mobilize them. There are other things to consider, so number two in your outline: The mobilization.

Very simply, Luke 9:1, first phrase, "and he called the twelve together." It's a participle in the Greek, 'calling the twelve together.' Again, Luke has skipped over Jesus' visit to

Nazareth. He's skipped over the preaching tour. He's skipped over everything that Jesus saw and felt.

And we find here, that Jesus has returned to his home base of Capernaum. And he's here now, calling for his twelve apostles. The verb that's translated, called together, is *sygkaleo*, which is, it's here. It's, it's, in the middle voice, which, which is really more, it's to communicate the sense of a summons. It's like he's sending out a summons.

He's issued a summons and probably, *si*, in sitting in one place he's talking to some of the disciples. He's like, hey, I want you to go get Peter and James and John. Go, go find them. Get them, come, bring them back to me. He's sending for his men. He's calling them all together to himself. This is, it's almost an official sense of a summons.

You think about it. For those of you who served in the military, it's like recalling the forces. It's like reactivating the inactive reserve, bringing them back together because we've got work to do. The apostles had, some of them, at least, they witnessed that rather discouraging reception Jesus received in

Nazareth, from his family, from his neighbors. They saw all that. Probably they felt discouraged coming back to Capernaum.

But now, it's no time to shrink back. No time to sit and sulk now. No time to be discouraged or despairing. The need is too great and the time is too short. Now is the time to get back into the fight. This, is, isn't, in my notes, but let me just say this, beloved, as we, as we look at around it, discouraging signs in our country and our community all around us, changing world, changing situation.

Now is not the time to get discouraged and sulk and shrink back. Now is the time to take the attack to the enemy. Now is the time to take the gospel to those who need it. I've had some conversations lately on airplanes and other places of people who are not Christians. In our country, they know nothing about the gospel, and yet they call themselves Christians. They're going to churches, they're giving, they're doing charitable work. They have no idea what the gospel is.

Beloved, our country is in desperate need of gospel. Desperate need of Bible. Desperate need of healthy churches.

We've got to strive like Josh was saying this morning, en, encouraging you to get into home groups. We need to know each other, beloved. We need to care for one another's issues and wounds and hurts and pains and minister the gospel to one another, so that we can be healthy. And then we can all go together out to bring them here.

We bring the, the, those who are evangelized, seek and save the lost. We bring them here, instruct them, and then we send them out. Beloved, we've got to get to work. We've got work to do. That's for free. I didn't have them in my notes. Situation here is changing. Just like our situation is changing, we all sense that.

Jesus knew it, here in his day, and even though, on a popular level, many seemed responsive and excited to his message. They were even welcoming in Luke Chapter 8. But according to John 2:24 to 25, "Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people. He needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in a man."

Jesus knew that a popular reception could be a false positive. He knew that excitement on the surface could really just be rocky soil, thorny soil. But positively speaking, Jesus knew the situation is changing, because he's living in constant and joyful communion with his father. He could discern the will of the father, because he had the indwelling, baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Ever since his baptism, the Spirit's been leading him through ministry. The Spirits directing him; the time has come to wrap up the Galilean portion of his mission on Earth. So, this changing situation, the need to draw the Galilean ministry to a close. This is providing Jesus with a very strategic opportunity.

Jesus, as a human being, in every way a man, he's under the same human limitations that you and I are under. That is, he can't project his body into multiple spaces at one time. You can only be at one place, at one time, and so since he needed to pick up the pace, since he needed to conclude his work in Galilee, it's necessary to extend his reach. It's necessary for him to broaden the coverage.

Put simply, Jesus needed to multiply himself. That's what discipleship is. It's taking what you know and putting it into somebody else and letting them do the same thing. The same thing, the same thing, as a force multiplying technique.

So, this is a strategic opportunity. He already called the twelve. Called them to early discipleship, early on, in John 1. He called them further, in Luke 5, to leave their professions and become fishers of men. Then he chose them to be apostles. We studied that in Luke 6. And choosing them as apostles, literally, they're chosen as, sent out ones, and anticipates that they're going to be sent out.

And yet, up to this point, there's been no sending out. You've just been following around, learning. Haven't done too much, it would seem on the surface. They followed Jesus around. They've watched him work. They've observed his miracles. They've been in awe of his authority, power over demons, power over all disease. They've listened to him. They've learned from his teaching.

In reality, you might say they've accomplished quite a bit. They've been taking it in. The word of God. The word of God. The word of God. It's been renewing their minds. It's transforming them. They just need to be let loose. So that's what he's doing here. He's letting them loose. He's mobilizing, getting, getting them into ministry. He gives them a share and a responsibility in his work. This is a mobilization of the apostles here is strategic. It's timely.

He's about to set his face toward Jerusalem. He's about to embrace his role as the atoning sacrifice for his people on the cross. And mobilizing the apostles, he needs to make sure this is point number three in your outline: He needs to make sure that they have proper provision. He needs to make sure they're equipped, that they're provided for. He doesn't want to send them out without weapons, without gear, without water, without bullets.

Nah, he sends them out fully armed. Look again at verse 1, in fact we'll read verses 1 and 2, "calling them twelve together he gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure

diseases and he sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal.”

And this, in verse 3, “And he said to them.” So, he gave them, he sent them, and he said to them, so he's teaching them there. Three active voice verbs there. He gave, he sent and he said. Might say that he provisioned them, he commissioned them, and he instructed them.

We're going to look at those first two verses, as I said today, and then we'll consider the Lord's instruction to these commissioned apostles next week. Very instructive. First of all, notice in this provision, this is complete provision for the apostles. Complete in the sense of perfect, in the sense of all sufficient, in the sense of lacking nothing.

He gave them exactly what he himself possessed to accomplish his messianic mission: Power and authority. Both are necessary, to have the power, but no authority to make use of it, or to have the authority, but no power to put it into effect. To receive the one gift without receiving the other, renders both ineffectual. With both power and authority, the

apostles' provision is complete. It lacks nothing. It is perfectly sufficient for the task.

Second thing to notice about their provision. This is appropriate provision. It's complete provision, but it's also appropriate provision. In other words, you could say the provision is, is, suitable. It's, it's fitting. It's matched perfectly to the need that Jesus wanted his apostles to meet.

They needed the power and the authority to cast out all demons. It's exactly what Jesus gave. They needed the power and the authority to heal all kinds of diseases, and that's exactly what Jesus gave. Gave them exactly what they needed to deal with demons, to deal with disease, to deal with every challenge, that they would face in the fallen spiritual realm, and every malady they would face in the fallen physical realm.

Third thing about the provision, not only is it complete and appropriate provision, but this is commensurate provision. Commensurate provision, which is to say, Jesus gave them power and authority that corresponded exactly in kind, in degree, and

in proportion, to his own power and authority, commensurate provision.

The provision for their mission was equivalent to the provision for his own mission. Same mission, same provision. That's important, because it shows the continuity between Jesus' ministry and the ministry of his appointed apostles, which is going to be very important, as we transition into the book of Acts.

To show this in his writings, this commensurate provision, this continuity between Jesus and his apostles. Luke has laid down, you might say some bread crumbs to follow in the Greek text. The word translated, I think the, the, tech term is Easter eggs. You put, little Easter eggs around, so you can find those things and say ohh these are all connected. Bread crumbs is the Hansel and Gretel. Is that Hansel and Gretel? Whatever suits you. Luke's given some clues.

The word translated, diseases, here. It's the term *noos*, *nosous*, *nosous*. The singular is *nosos*. It's a very general word, one that, it's translated diseases. Often, it's a general word.

But it's a, it's a word that Luke as a physician, he doesn't really use a lot in his writing. Luke tends, as you might imagine, as a physician, to be more specific, when he's talking about, he doesn't seem to say God, Jesus healed him of a disease. He wants to get very, very technical, very medical. So, he tells us exactly what disease.

Jesus healed Peters mother-in-law, Luke 4:39, and was of her fever. When he stretched out his hand and touched the leper, his, *li*, leprosy in Luke 5:13, *he lepra*, left him immediately. Same thing with the paralytic Luke 5:18, or the man with the withered hand in Luke 6:6, and so on and so forth. You see Luke being very specific. He typically identifies the particular malady using specific words from his broad, vast medical vocabulary.

In Greek, he uses those words for citing specific conditions. But the word that Luke uses here, as I said, *nosous*, it's a broad, encompassing word to cover all the diseases. Everything. And he employs the word, you might think a lot, but no, just four times in his writings. Four times in Luke and Acts and you know how long Luke is. Acts, also, a very long book. The

two of them together, one third of the New Testament. He uses those words just four times, that word just four times. Three times in the Gospel, once in Acts.

Two times it describes Jesus' ministry in particular. Luke 4:40 describes the healing ministry of Jesus, "Now when the sun was setting, all those who had, who were, who had any, who were sick with various diseases, *nosous*, there it is, "brought them to him. He laid his hands on every one of them and healed them." We're to imagine, everything imaginable that you can think of that is ailing man brought to Jesus. He healed them all.

Nosous encompasses the whole thing. In Luke 7:21, says he's gonna speak to John the Baptist. "In that hour he healed many people of diseases," again, *nosous*, "and plagues, and evil spirits." Jesus' ministry, right? The third use of the word *nosous*, it's in our text Luke 9:1, "Jesus gave the apostles this power and authority over all demons and to cure," *nosous* "all diseases."

Those bread crumbs from Jesus' ministry lead to the ministry now of the apostles, whom he gave commensurate power

and authority to heal the broad range of diseases, the afflictions that afflict man. Luke is being very intentional here to demonstrate, to leave no doubt whatsoever, that the power and authority that he gave to the apostles is the very same power and authority that he himself used to cast out demons and to heal every kind of disease.

It's the power and the authority that he gave them corresponded exactly in kind and degree and in proportion to his own power and authority, is just delegated from him to them. Just as a footnote, you want to know the fourth use of the term. The continuity of this power and authority continues into the book of Acts from Jesus to the Twelve apostles. To...

Can you, can you guess who is at the other end of that, Book of Acts? The Apostle Paul. Luke tells us in Acts 19, 11 to 12, That "God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases," there it is again, that word, nosous, "diseases left them. Evil spirits came out of them."

So, the line of continuity went from Jesus to the Twelve to the beloved apostle Paul, and it ended there. The apostles were well provisioned by Christ, with the power and the authority that they needed. Perfect and complete. Lacking nothing at all, it was appropriate.

It was suitable for the task to cast out every demon, cure every disease, and it was commensurate with his own power and authority, such high and holy privilege. I don't know about you, but I've thought about this, if, if, Jesus conferred his own power and authority on me, I could not wait to get started, could you?

I mean, I'd wanna run out right away and put that power and authority to work. Maybe go empty out some hospitals. And start probably, with our own church and go home to home and make sure, you got a sniffle, anything, I'll take care of it.

Jesus does something here in verse 2, and helps to restrain any such well-meaning impulse that loses focus. He issues a command. He commissions them to focus. He commissions them to attend to the mission at hand. And what is that?

Well, we've seen the situation, the mobilization, the provision, fourth point for this morning: The commission. The commission. What is the commission? What mission does Jesus commit to them? What is he sending them out to accomplish?

Take a look at verse 2. Again, "He gave them power and authority over all demons cure diseases, and he sent them out," here it is, "to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. To proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal." The emphasis in the text is on that first part, "to proclaim the kingdom of God," but the second part is also very important, "to heal."

The word, proclaim, is the verb *kerusso*, which means to, to, preach, to herald, verb *kerusso*, it denotes an official activity of like a royal herald, appointed by the king. He goes, he calls the citizens of a kingdom, he calls to them in the public square. He heralds the message from the king.

Kings herald, he steps into a busy public place, perhaps a thoroughfare, perhaps a marketplace. All the people are bustling

about and he stands up on something to make him taller than the rest, and he extends and projects his voice. He proclaims. He shouts out loud. He grabs attention. And then he proclaims the king's edict.

He's there to proclaim the edict. To announce the king's message and that's exactly the role that Jesus played back in his hometown of Nazareth, the first time. We read in Luke 4:8, 18 and 19, like a herald, Jesus opened the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He found the place where it was written. The king's edict was written. He spoke it out publicly, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

After heralding that message, the king rolled the scroll back up. He gave it back to the synagogue attendant and he sat down. As you might imagine, the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him, wondering what his next words would be. The king began to teach them himself, saying, "today this scripture

has been fulfilled in your hearing." Incredible moment. Incredible privilege. Which shows the utter sinfulness of their rejection and rebellion.

But ever since that day, Jesus the king, Jesus the Messiah, he's been proclaiming his own gospel. His own message of the good news of the kingdom of God. He's been calling people, ever since that day, to repent and to believe. He's now commissioning his twelve apostles to join him, as fellow heralds. Going out and proclaiming the king's edict.

Disciples had been hearing that edict for quite some time, about a year and a half or more, had been going with him from village to village throughout Galilee. They listened to his teaching. They'd followed the pattern of his proclamation. They listened to his expositions of Scripture in synagogues on numerous Sabbaths.

Luke 4:31, Luke 4:44, Luke 6:6, Luke 8:41, keeps on going throughout Luke, as he's in the synagogue teaching, but along the way or even in large, cloud, crowds like, like, the Sermon on the Mount. They knew his gospel. They knew his teaching. As

we've seen in the study of Luke's Gospel, Jesus was. Everywhere he went he was thronged by very needy people. All kinds of ailments, all kinds of diseases, paralysis, conditions, concerns, and Jesus was liberal with his power. He was eager to set them free. He healed them all.

But what's instructive to his apostles, and to us, is that Jesus was able to look past the obvious and the, the, pitiful superficial conditions. The physical conditions, which are not insignificant, but you can look back those conditions, to see the deeper, the more consequential spiritual condition, in every single person. Jesus cared for the physical, yes, but he was eager to minister to the more profound spiritual need.

This man is not just a healer, he's a savior. He's able to treat the spiritual cause of all physical maladies, spiritual as well. Paul said Romans 5:12, "that sin entered into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned." So, sin brought the curse of death, brought disease. And because all have sinned; all have suffered under the curse and under sickness and disease and, and, maladies.

There's only one man, one man who never sinned. Only one man who never suffered the curse. Only one man who was never afflicted in our condition. And when he died, he died not for his own sins, but for the sins of all who believe. He died to absorb death itself. He died to conquer death, and disease, and suffering. He died to overcome the curse.

That's why Jesus told the leper when he healed his physical condition, Luke 5:14, "go show yourself to the priest and make an offering for your cleansing as Moses commanded." What's he concerned about there? His spiritual condition. His reconciliation before God. He's concerned about his spiritual standing, his reconciliation to the community of the faithful and the believers.

He told the paralytic before healing him, him, of his paralysis, Luke 5:20, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." He didn't, he didn't cause him to get up and walk. He had another lesson to show the rest of the people that were there. "Man, your sins are forgiven you." For the paralytic, what? Ten, few

more decades on this earth being paralyzed? Would that be so bad if he's going to go to heaven? No.

One second in heaven, he forgets everything else. It's insignificant, and he's suffering in this time. Temporary, short light affliction. He doesn't care. Sin is the issue. Jesus always saw it that way. When the Pharisees upbraided him for eating with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus told them, Luke 5:32, "those who are well have no need of a physician, but only those who are sick. I've not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Jesus said about a sinful woman in Luke 7. She's known by all in the city for her sinful past. Luke 7:47, "Her sins, which are many," he said, "are forgiven." Verse 48, "He said to her, 'Your sins are forgiven,' and the dinner guests that were there were appalled. They understood the implications, of, of this, they said, "Who is this, who even forgive sins?" Then they hear Jesus not speaking to them again. They hear him speaking to the woman. "Woman, your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Sin is the issue. Forgiveness is the deepest cure, and faith is the channel through which the healing medicine flows from God into us to heal us of our deepest problem, sin before a holy God. Listen, these apostles understood that. They knew the preaching of the kingdom of God went deeper than health, wealth, and prosperity. Way deeper.

The real message is about forgiven sin, repentance unto salvation. It's the message that they, er, first heard preached by John the Baptist; a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Same message of good news that Jesus preached and that's what he commissioned his apostles to preach. Same message.

Now, having said all of that, be sure that you don't miss the fact that Jesus is nonetheless, still concerned about physical needs, about practical needs, about immediate needs and issues. He did not neglect people's suffering. He entered into their suffering. And he attended to each one of them. Jesus possessed the power and authority to cast out demons, to cure every disease, and he gave that power and authority to his apostles. Why?

Notice the conjunction in, verse 29, Luke 9:2, "He sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal," both. Do not disconnect those. Do not neglect the one for the sake of the other. He equipped them with the means and the authority to minister to human suffering and, beloved, that is the Apostolic commission. This is not an either-or proposition. It is a both and statement. Jesus wanted the apostles to care for body and soul, spiritual and physical. Why?

God has created mankind as composite beings. We're not just spirits trapped in evil flesh. That's a Greek idea. He joined together, in his perfect wisdom, in his all-powerful design, material and immaterial, physical and spiritual. We're composite beings made of both. Joined together in a mysterious way. And so, since he created us that way, and since the fall affected both, the whole of man is important to God.

Which is why, when Jesus arose from the dead, God didn't just suck his spirit up into heaven. No. When he raised him up, he raised him with a new resurrected physical body. Jesus ascended into heaven in that resurrected body. He entered into

heaven, as a, in a resurrected body, and now he dwells there, in resurrection perfection, in a glorified physical body. He's there now, in a body just as real as your body. If you pinch and feel it, he can do the same.

Listen, that's our hope. 1 Corinthians 15:53, "This perishable body must put on the imperishable." For some of us, that's more obvious than others. "The mortality must put on immortality." "We who have the first fruits of the spirit," Paul wrote in Romans 8:23, "We groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons." What is that? "The redemption of our bodies."

Listen, sometimes, in our theological circles, and for very good reason, I think we tend to steer away from talking about health and healing, because of so much aberrant charismatic theology. It's the theology that twists the gospel to the damnation of the soul and teaches people to chase the elusive temporal goal of health, and wealth, and prosperity.

They train people according to their natural, bent. They train people according to their fleshly desires. They teach them

to seek what's in God's hand, rather than to worship in love, what's in God's heart. But in our right defense of the gospel, in the right repudiation of that false doctrine, we must never ignore the concern that God has for the whole person, spirit and body, physical and spiritual, material and immaterial, body as well as, soul.

In fact, that's how Jesus validated the reality of his ministry to John the Baptist. Here's the evidence that the kingdom of God is truly and rightly proclaimed. The blind received their sight, John. The lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and at the very heart of the matter, don't forget this, the poor have the good news preached to them.

Listen, the hope of full redemption, body and soul, physical and spiritual, that is the hope of the gospel. That is why Jesus was raised from the dead, the first fruits of the resurrection, to give us hope of bodily resurrection. That is the entrance into Luke 9. Oh, what an entrance!

Jesus had compassion on people. He mobilized his apostles. He sent out more laborers into the field. He provisioned and commissioned them, telling them to preach and to heal. Now let's think about a few implications from the text, just before we close. We need to think about how to apply this today.

First, you need to realize that the apostles are in a unique role as the foundation stones of the church. We are not apostles. They are. "The church, the household of God is built, Ephesians 2:20 says, "on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone."

That's the Twelve. Judas Iscariot was replaced in Acts 1 by Matthias. There's also the apostle Paul, the apostle untimely born, but the apostles occupy this unique place in the foundation of the church. They exercised an unrepeatable ministry in the history of the Christian Church. But even acknowledging that privileged and unique role, we need to see the incredible privilege that's ours to be involved in extending Christ gospel work.

Because we carry on the same work from Jesus to the apostles to all those who proclaim the same message and take up that same commission. It's what we sung about earlier, facing a task unfinished. That commissions made even clearer as Christ commanded the church, "Go therefore make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Here's the promise of Christ, when we follow that commission, when we do as he says, "behold, I am with you always to the end of the age."

Beloved, do you ever think like, I feel abandoned by God. I feel distant from God. I feel like, he's not really hearing my prayers. I feel like, fill in the blank. Examine your life and see if you're actually doing that great commission, because his promise is, if you're doing that commission, "Behold, I'm with you always."

Doesn't matter how you feel, doesn't matter what your sense is, doesn't matter whether you think to yourself, if you're doing his gospel commission; believe the promise. It's there for you to believe and hold on to and grasp and know that

he's with you. No matter how you feel about it. It's an objective reality. He is with those and only those who follow, practice obedience commission, to his great commission, to make disciples through evangelism and discipleship.

Listen, if you're here today and you're not involved in some way in that gospel great commission work, you're not only missing out you may be in danger of missing it all. Beloved, get off the couch and get into the game. If you'd like help knowing what to do, come talk with me. Come talk with one of the elders. Come talk with one of the deacons.

The elders and the Deacons are chosen by God, affirmed by the church, as those who model aggressive, intentional gospel living. You can look to their life as an example for commitment to the church. For commitment to the gospel. They'll not only point you in the right direction, as far as getting involved, but they'll help equip you for the task and enlist you and put you to work.

And don't think that that's a, a, burdensome duty. It's a joyful duty. It, you see any burden in the people singing up

here. Some sour dour faces and moping and, as they come, slinking up here, do their duty for God. No. They were smiling. They were joyful. They were happy. Why wouldn't they be? They're serving their Christ. They're serving their king. They're serving all of you. They're serving me. They were ministering to my heart. Get involved.

Secondly. We should never lose sight of the fact that our mission to the world is a mission of mercy. It's an extension of divine mercy, and that means our manners, our comportment, the way we act should benefit the message that we bring. The way we speak with others, the way we interact, our manner of dealing with people should flow out of a heart of kindness. Treating people with dignity and gentleness.

And yes, especially those who disagree with you, especially those who don't share our theology, especially those who repudiate us and our theology, cast aspersions and hate you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you, right? For some of you, that gets very personal, gets right into the home, it gets right into the marriage. Sometimes the enemy of the gospel is someone you're married to. Need to treat people with

dignity and gentleness. We are ministers of mercy, preaching a message of mercy and we need to act in the same kind, the same way.

Third implication. As a mission of divine mercy, we remember that God sent Christ to save an immaterial soul, as well as heal a physical body. We don't have conferred upon us the power and the authority that Jesus gave to the apostles. We don't cast out demons. We don't cure all diseases. But we do engage in spiritual warfare.

As we go into gospel ministry, we're always mindful of the spiritual nature of our warfare, the demonic that stands opposed to God and his purposes. We are, at the same time, as we engage in gospel ministry, always concerned about people. Always concerned about practical needs. Always lifting burdens. Always eager to help.

We're learning about the spiritual nature of our warfare on Sunday nights' exposition of the believers' armor. Learning how to fight spiritual warfare dressed in the full armor of God. But as we engage in spiritual warfare, we're not only concerned

about the spiritual, this isn't just some heady intellectual exercise for us, we're concerned for people. We're concerned to help meet practical needs.

We minister to the sick. We help the hurting. We sit and we listen. We give time and we empathize. Pain, sadness, sorrow are all a part of this fallen world. We don't have the power and the authority Jesus gave his apostles, to cast out demons, to heal every disease. That's not our role. That's not our job.

But it is our job to weep with those who weep. It is our job to mourn with those who mourn. We can come nearer to people, we can help lift burdens, we can help mitigate suffering and pain. Someone's got a headache? Give them an Advil. Easy and joyful. Drive people to the hospital, fix meals, visit people, ssh, who are shut up at home. Go into their homes; minister to them.

That's not just my job as a pastor, Josh's job as a pastor. We are not your delegated representatives to do all your spiritual work. Neither are the elders, neither are the deacons. We organize, we mobilize, we equip. We're all commissioned,

beloved. That's how we, the body of Christ, minister to one another.

That's how we as Christians, enter into the suffering of our unsaved neighbors. Whether friends or enemies, whether family members or complete strangers, we enter into it. Jesus did. Jesus' loving concern for lost sheep, beloved, it continues today. He's still mobilizing us. He's still provisioning us, equipping us, and he has already, Matthew 28, commissioned us to take the gospel to our friends, neighbors, family members, strangers near and strangers far. Question is, will you obey his call?

Let's bow together for a word of prayer. Our God and our Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Savior, Redeemer, and friend, you are our Lord and our master. We never forget that connection we have to you through Jesus Christ, his loving Father. We thank you for how, in this text, you've helped to disciple us. To challenge us, "to provoke us to love and good works." We're grateful for our Lord Jesus Christ, who has commissioned us with a high and holy commission. Has given us a

work to do that he himself engaged in and for us to share in. That gospel ministry is such a high and holy privilege.

Father, please help us not to be like the people of Nazareth, who found every reason to turn away from him. Every reason to reject his message. Every reason to spurn him and disdain him. Let us not be worse, acting like Nazarenes, but pretending to be disciples. Talking about how much we agree with his message, talking about how much we agree with the gospel commission, but never doing a thing about it.

Help us not to be hypocrites. Help us to be like these obedient disciples who it says, "Immediately," in verse 6, "they departed, went through the villages, preaching the gospel, healing everywhere." That's what disciples do. They rejoice to run in obedience to your commission, your command. Help us, to be humble, obedient servants of this gospel message.

Use us, dear Father to glorify your name by lifting up the son. By proclaiming his truth. By proclaiming his full final finished cross work. By proclaiming his resurrection from the dead into new life. Pray that you give us much fruit. Father,

that you would show us fruit. We longed to see people saved. We long to train them, and disciple them, and teach them, to obey everything that Jesus commanded, as you yourself are teaching us. Please help us in the work, father, we need your spirit. In Jesus name, amen.