

## The Savior Sends You

A sermon on Luke 10:1-12, 16-20 by Pastor Jason Liebenow

Maybe you can relate. She had just finished vacuuming the living room. After that she had to check on how the chicken was cooking, cut up the carrots and add them in too. Then she would have some time to finish vacuuming, clean the bathroom, finish dinner, and hopefully sweep the kitchen before the guests arrived. But on the way to the kitchen, she looked in the living room and saw her son watching TV.

“What are you doing?” she asked, in disbelief that he would do nothing when there was so much to do. “I didn’t know what to do,” was his best response.

Have you ever been there? You had a mountain of things to do, and someone who should have been helping was just sitting around. I have to be honest, my mother ran into this situation a couple times when I was growing up. It’s not that I was trying to avoid work, it was just that I didn’t know what to do. I didn’t have a job right in front of me, so I did what I could think of, which just happened to be watching TV.

In our lesson for today, we read that God has a lot of work to get done, and he calls us, you and me, to do that work with him. In our sermon today, we will talk about how...

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In our gospel lesson for today, Jesus was sending out 72 of his followers to towns where he himself was about to go. And notice this, Jesus certainly could have gone to these towns himself, in fact, he was already planning on going there.

And who do you think was a better person to speak to these towns, those 72 followers of Jesus, or Jesus himself? Who do you think was better at speaking? Who do you think was better at explaining who God

is and what he has done? Who do you think was better at showing love to the people of those towns? Jesus obviously...

But Jesus still sent these 72 people. Because he wanted them to be part of the ministry. He wanted them to be a part of spreading the word.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, this is still true today. Christ is certainly better than any of us at speaking, explaining, and showing love, but he calls all of us to be lights and witnesses to the world.

The Savior Sends You. God wants his people to share in the ministry of the word. To do that, our lesson gives us two things to remember: #1. Your message is his message. And #2. Your joy is his joy.

Jesus told those 72 disciples, "Whoever listens to you listens to me." That's because the message they were to spread was the message that God had shared with them. The message that God calls us to spread is the gospel message. It's not our job to think up something impressive to say, we simply share the gospel message.

We can simply tell our story. I am a sinner. As a sinner, I hate to listen to what God says, and I naturally do the opposite of everything that God wants me to do. Because of that, I deserve death, eternal death, forever separated from God, in hell.

But in spite of who I am, my name is written in heaven, because God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross, to take the punishment that I deserve because of my sin. And Jesus also came to live a perfect life that God now considers my life. That means: for every sin I have committed, God sees Jesus' good deeds instead, and he rewards me, ME, with life, eternal life, forever together with my God, in heaven.

By God's grace and through faith in him, that is my story, and that is your story too. That is the message you can share with people, that in spite of your sins, your name is written in heaven because of Jesus. And that is true of all who believe in Jesus.

After the 72 followers of Jesus returned from their work, Jesus said this, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Anyone here pay attention to the news? There's all kinds of violence and evil in the world. It sure looks like Satan is having a field day with the world.

But God is destroying the devil's work day by day, and he does that through the message of forgiveness through Jesus Christ. And we get to be a part of it all! This is our privilege. God uses us in his plan to destroy Satan, through the spreading of the gospel message! We get to be a part of God's work of saving souls from hell through more and more people hearing what God has done in Jesus.

Just stop to think about that. In a world full of sinful people, all dying under Satan's power, you have the secret that alone can destroy Satan: you know Jesus, and Jesus knows you. What incredible worth that gives to our lives! So many in the world are dying in their sins but we are among those who have the key to life, and that key is the gospel; that Jesus came to live, die, and rise again to save us from our sins!

This is truly amazing: through your sharing the message, through your supporting the ministry of this church here, through your simply inviting someone to church, through your support of missionaries in faraway places, God can use what you do to bring a sinners who deserve hell to faith in Jesus; God can and does bring such people to heaven! This alone is what destroys the devil's work and casts him down from his throne.

Brothers and sisters, the Savior sends you! Rejoice in that privilege and responsibility.

But as we think on this incredible gift that Jesus has given us, to share in the ministry, Jesus reminds us to keep our focus. Your joy is his joy.

In our gospel lesson, the 72 returned to Jesus, and they were all excited because they had been able to cast out demons and miraculously heal sick people! And rightly so! I tell you what, if God gave me the ability to do miracles, I would probably be pretty excited too. I think any of us would. There are many people today who still look for miracles that might happen today, and they want to see God working powerfully in their own lives.

We love to see God's power at work. Just image what it would be like God began bringing more and more people to faith in him through our sharing the gospel even here! It would be incredible to see people returning to church again and living godly lives, but Jesus calls us too to keep our focus.

When the 72 were excited about God's power and the miracles they could do, Jesus told them what their true joy should be: that their names are written in heaven. They were saved. Jesus has taken away their sin and earned heaven for them. It is a done deal.

That is God's great joy, saving our souls, and that should be our joy too. We can spread God's word, and maybe God will demonstrate his power among us in amazing ways, but whether he does or not, that is not our true joy.

No, our true joy is God's true joy. Jesus has died for you. Jesus has taken away your sins. Because of what he has done, your name is written in heaven. You know the one message that the world needs to hear. Your name is written in heaven. It is a done deal. Nothing gives God greater joy than the fact that you are saved. Let that be your greatest joy too.

Brothers and sisters, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. That is why the Savior sends you. Let us not sit around not knowing what to do. Our savior has told us! Your message is his message! But let us keep our focus. Our names are written in heaven. Your joy is his joy. Amen.