From Follower to Fisher of Men

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[0:00] insight. Isn't that great to hear that? Love it. There you go.

Love it. Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to the Gospel of Luke chapter 10. It's alright. We like that.
Jesus liked it. Still does. Yeah, Luke 10. We're going to look at, I'm going to read Luke 10, 1 through 24.
It's a rather large section. We're not going to look at every detail of this section. Really, reading through this felt like it would be appropriate to kind of principalize some things, just kind of grab onto the main thoughts here that apply to us.
today. So, we're still going to dig in, but not all and every word. so. You understand how hard that is for me, right?
[1:11] Yeah. Yeah. Taking big pieces here. Okay. If you're able, please stand as I read from Luke chapter 10, verses 1 through 24.

1 through 24. Jesus, remember at the end of chapter 9, Jesus was teaching his followers about what it really means to follow.
The kind of commitment that was involved in following him. chapter 10, verse 1. After this, the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go.
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.
Go your way. Behold, watch out. I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no money bag, no knapsack, no sandals.
[2:28] Greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, peace be to this house. And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him.

But if not, it will return to you. 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. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick in it. And say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you.
But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 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. I tell you, it will be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town.
[3:38] Woe to you, Chorazin, woe to you, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

But it will be more tolerable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?
You shall be brought down to Hades. The one who hears you hears me. The one who rejects you rejects me.
And the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me. The 72 returned with joy saying, Lord, even the demons were subject to us in your name.
And he said to them, I saw, or I was seeing Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 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.
[4:46] Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

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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. All things have been handed over to me by my Father and no one knows the Son except the Father or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.
then turning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. 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.
So it reads, let us pray. Father, guide us this morning in your word. help us, Lord, to grasp not only what Jesus is doing here with this unique group of 72 others, but let us see, Father, why it's here.
[6:16] How, how, why does Luke want us to know this? How does this relate to us? Help us to see that. We pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Please be seated. So let me start with a little perspective questions.
If you're saved, if you're a saved person, why were you saved? Why were you saved? Why did God save you? Because he loves us.
Okay. What was his purpose? To glorify him. Glorify him. Okay. Yes. I know Ron's got something. Because he's chosen us. Yes. To overcome Satan. Okay. So we're saved from sin.
[7:17] Right? He set us free from sin. The penalty of sin. Our shame and guilt. He saved us from ourselves, from the ruin that we've created in our own life by ignoring God and rebelling against God and he has opened our eyes and saved us from what we truly deserve.

What has he saved us to? He saved us from that but to what? To glorify him. We've heard that. Salvation. To salvation. To teach us to love each other.
To seek, to love each other. Absolutely. That's one of the reasons we're here to love one another. To serve. To serve. And to serve by spreading his word. What is the purpose of the church?
Why does the church exist? Why has God established that churches be established and not only loving one another but why do we love one another so that others outside might see that we love one another and be drawn to it and make known the word?
Why does the church exist? We write in our own bulletin. Our purpose is to share the gospel and to equip the saints.
[8:32] Church has a two-fold purpose. That's in scripture. We have a two-fold purpose. We have a commission to go into the world and make disciples of others to teach them to do everything that Jesus commanded which includes going out and teaching others.

and we have a command a huge command to love one another. That's why we gather. That's why we're together.
We're doing the one another's. We're loving one another's. And that should reflect to those outside who see what are they doing in there? And hopefully they observe how we care for one another. How we love one another. And why we do it. So, on the front of our bulletin we've kind of simplified this down.
Kind of taken the words from, I forget which. It's either Matthew or Mark. Both Matthew and Mark refer to it. Where Jesus says, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.
[9:36] Well, I think Mark has it in Mark 1.17 Jesus said, follow me and I will make you become fishers of men. See, it's a process. Your part is follow me.

We're gathering, following him. Learning to follow him. And in that process Jesus says, I will make you to become fishers of men. I have a mission for you.
There's a reason I want you to gather. There's a reason I've called you. There's a reason I've saved you. So that you might go and be a vessel to save others. That's our purpose. That's why we exist. To fish. So in front of our bulletin, I think we say, it says following Jesus and fishing for men, right? Well, today's about that second part. Fishing for men. How do we do that?
What's that look like? This is Luke 10. He's showing us about, he is making others besides the 12.
[10:39] He's making others into fishers of men. Going out. Going wherever you go. Some are going to, wait a minute, where are you guys going yet?

Indonesia. Indonesia. Yeah. Yeah. I work with Muslims. Wonderful. And some he calls to go where we live.

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To our neighbors, to our friends, to our coworkers, right? That's, most of us are called, right? Where we are. Our church is at a juncture.
We need to start talking about where we're going. We've done this.
In fact, we were doing a lot of that, Rick, right? Right before COVID hit, we were gathering, we were talking about our church health and what we're doing. And I think we found a lot of benefit in doing that. We need to start doing some of that again.
[11:44] Not just talking about status, and projects we want to do, which are good. We're redoing this little log cabin. We have good reason for that, for visibility in our community. But we need to talk about what we are doing.

How can we fish for men? How can we go gather more people? Because if you hadn't noticed, although today's an exception, we have more people here today, but if you haven't noticed, on some Sundays, we're kind of sparse.
And God is in the process and has been in the process of taking some of our valued members and saying, I'm going to go put them over here. I'm not going to look at you guys.
Or you guys. That's his business. But those of us left are kind of going, what about us?
No, we're, we know God will take care of us. But I think part of our responsibility, we're at a juncture, I think, to start talking about, okay, how do we gather others?
[12:44] Not about numbers. I'm not talking about numbers. I'm not talking about marketing. I'm talking about, how do we do what God calls us to do that we might gather? Some for here. Are there things we're missing?

Are there things we didn't do? So that, I want us to do that. And actually, we're going to start today. I know you didn't plan it, but if you can, gather with me, maybe just for a short meeting to talk about when we can meet.
I'd like to, I'd like to start that discussion before I'm on vacation. So that y'all can continue that discussion. Maybe zoom me in sometimes or something like that.
I think it's important we begin that discussion. Just honest talk. Because I think God works through us together.
So, here we are. Luke 10. This is what raised this question. We have seen for the last five chapters in the Gospel, Luke, Jesus gathering disciples.
[13:49] He himself is gathering people to follow him. They're just following him. Chapter 5, 10. Remember, chapter 5 began with Jesus getting into Peter's boat and preaching from the shore there.

And then, he tells Peter to let out into the ocean. Not the ocean. Sorry, they're just a little sea of Galilee. But let out into the lake, right? And fish.
And remember, Peter and Andrew were like, hey, Lord, we already fished all night. We're professionals. We know what we're doing. You know, there's no fish out there. No catch today. You know, and you do it at night because then they can't see the nets.
And so Jesus wants him to go out in the middle of the day. And I said, yeah, it just doesn't work. Okay, we'll do it because you said so. Right? And then they get this huge catch. And even James and John need to bring their boat over to get some of the, they got so many fish.
The boats are starting to sink. They get to shore. And I don't know what they did with all the fish, but first thing Peter does as he falls down, says, Lord, get away from me.
[14:57] I'm too sinful. What does Jesus say? Hey, Pete. Pete. You're all right.

From now on, you'll be fishing for me. They're following. They left everything and followed him. A little bit, a few verses later, he goes up to Matthew slash Levi in the tax booths and says, come follow me.
And he left everything and followed him. And you got others. We don't know. Luke doesn't tell us about some of the others, but by chapter six, he's got a whole bunch of disciples. And out of all those disciples in chapter six, he goes up on a mountain, prays all night.
The father tells him, I think, who to pick. Right? And he selects 12 from all his disciples to be his apostles. His sent ones. The 12.
And then in chapter nine, he sends them out. Gives them a power and authority to heal and cast out demons. And then he gives them the message to preach the gospel of the kingdom.
[16:05] And they go out and do that. They're special. They're the 12. They're the apostles. And then we come to chapter 10 and there's this whole other group.

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Who are these? The Lord appointed 72 others, different ones, not the 12, and sent them.
And then he gives them these instructions when we compare this sending of the 72 with chapter nine, the sending of the 12. it's almost identical.
I like the 12 were given all the authority and power. When we find out the 72 come back and he says, yeah, I've given you authority and power. Over all the enemy of the, and all, over all the power of the enemy, who he refers to as scorpions and snakes.
Those are Satan's images. It's like, who are these guys? Why is this here? Only Luke gives us this.
[17:13] You won't find this in Matthew, Mark, or John. And the 72 after this chapter are never referred to again as a special group. So why is this here?

Why did he do that? Well, I think the point is that all the followers of Jesus are called not only to follow him but to fish for men.
I think this is a prequel to the Great Commission where he calls all disciples to go and make disciples to follow Jesus.
I think that's what this is. So, I'm going to break this down into two points because, you know, that's what I always do. There's always two points, right?
For me, it has to be simple. Just the first half, second half. So, it looks like this. Verses one through nine, the focus of what he's doing is the mission.
[18:15] The mission. And I want to give you some principles for the mission. What he sends us to do and what are the principles of going to fish. And then the second part from verse 10 through 24 focuses primarily on the message.

The message. What are we communicating? Now, there's more there in 10 to 24, but I just want to pull out what is distinctive about the message that we bring.
Okay? So, verse one, the mission. What's the mission? Well, the mission is simply this. All followers of Jesus are sent to gather other followers. Pretty simple.
All followers of Jesus are being made into fishers of men. All followers of Jesus are going to be sent to gather more followers.
Sound scary? What does that look like? Do I have to go out and knock on doors? No, don't, don't, don't put it into something that happened to you in the past. I hated doing that.
[19:21] Especially when I wasn't converted yet, it was really uncomfortable. So, some principles. So, verse two, principle one is to pray for more workers because we don't have enough workers.

Two, in verse three, expect regular hostility because you're lambs among wolves. And then, verses four to nine, kind of a general principle is trust God to provide as you go.
So, first of all, first principle, verse two, the harvest. What's the harvest? Right? He said to them, the harvest is plentiful but the labors are few.
Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out, literally cast out, more labors into the harvest. The harvest is huge. The harvest is big. There's a harvest.
There's a harvest. But the workers, the labors to go out and to reap the harvest, to go out and to gather the harvest, there are few. I got a huge harvest out there.
[20:30] See, how do we know? See, that's an interesting question. Is there always a big harvest? Well, notice in this text when he talks about when they go, there will be places they go where they're received and there will be places they go where they're not received.

How do you know where the harvest is? Where you're received. Where you're received. We don't know until we go. The harvest, there is a crop to be reaped, to be gathered.
It's abundant and great. There are many converts or potential converts or pre-converts, whatever you want to call them, ready to be gathered. But the workers are few.
So what do we do? This is not going to be a sermon about guilt. This is not going to be a sermon about, you know, you better, blah, blah, shame on you. I'm not going to do that.
Because what does Jesus tell us to do? When we need more workers, what should we do? Should we guilt people? Should we push people? Right? No. What does Jesus say?
[21:35] Jesus says, go over their heads. Talk to the Lord of the harvest. Because unless he sends them out, they won't. They won't go. No guilt, shame, any of that will motivate them.

And if it does, it's horrible. Be like I was, guilted. No, just go over the head.
Go to the Lord. Lord, please send more. Send more. Send more. So that's principle number one. Pray for more workers. Two, verse three. As you go, because you are going to go.

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And the idea here in verse three, go your way. Go wherever he sends you. Wherever he goes. Go in your neighborhood. Go in your workplace. Go wherever you have contact with people.
That's your field. As you go, know this. I'm sending you as lambs in the midst of wolves. Now note that he doesn't say, I'm sending you as lions.
[22:35] Because that'd be great. You know, lions against wolves. Okay, no match. No, I'm sending you as lambs. Not even sheep. Not even rams. But, but, but lambs. Because rams at least, you know, a little more macho, right?

Lambs. Thank you. Thank you, Lord. Appreciate it. Just know. Lambs. Mild. You're not fighters. You're not fighters. You're lambs. Where? In the midst of wolves, there will be hostility. There will be fierceness. It will not be an easy mission.
Jesus wants you to know up front, as I send you, it's going to be tough. Okay? You're going to encounter people who will ill-treat you, people who will mock you, people who will, who will scorn you, people who will make fun of you, whatever you want to call it.
That's just going to, that's, don't be surprised. That's just how it's going to go. Third, verse four to nine, trust God's provision. So he says, verse four, just like he said in chapter nine to the 12, don't care, don't take anything extra.
[23:45] Just go. Don't pack bag. Don't have a go bag even. Just go. And odd, the end of verse four, greet no one on the way. That sounds, so don't be friendly.

No, that's not what that means. It simply means, because when you get there, verse five, be really friendly, right? So it's not about that. It's just about, don't get distracted. Don't delay this.
Just go. You're on a mission. Go. When you're talking about greeting back then, we're not talking about, oh, hey, hey, hey, how you doing? Then you move on. Greeting's a little more involved back then. Okay.
Don't delay. Don't just, don't get distracted. When you are on mission. Verse five, whatever house you enter, the first thing you say, first thing you say, first thing you communicate, peace be on this house.
What's that? Now, for Jesus and his disciples who were Jewish, it would have been shalom. Shalom. Shalom lachem. Spit a little bit.
[24:44] Be proper Hebrew. Shalom. It's, it's God's blessing on you. Shalom. God's peace on you. God's peace be your peace. God's will be your will.

In, when we get into the New Testament, you know, Paul will write about peace to every congregation he writes to. God's grace and peace to you from the Lord Jesus. So it's a new kind of peace.
And I think this peace, because Paul talks about the kind of peace Jesus brought. When Jesus brought, what Jesus brought was peace. Right? Ephesians two talks about Jesus is our peace. How did he establish our peace? How did he get peace between us and God? And Paul says, Jesus also made peace between Jew and Gentile.
How did he do all of that? Well, Paul says he broke down the barrier of, of hostility, which was the law. He broke down everything that condemned us.
[25:47] He broke down everything that was in our way to peace. Our peace with, with God was totally blocked by the law. The law said, you have to do all these things. And we do what?

Maybe a little bit of that one. Maybe, you know, forget that one altogether. You know, we're a total failure when it comes to the law. We are. That's the whole point of the Old Testament.
They couldn't do it. They just couldn't do it. And we can't either. Nobody can do it. That's why Christ came. First covenant doesn't work. Covenant at Sinai does not work.
They didn't even want to agree to it. You know, they agreed because they were scared to death. And then out of the blocks, three days out of the blocks in the wilderness, what do they do? They're complaining and, you know, whining and we can't do it. Can't do the law. So that kind of peace, we're going to bring that kind of peace to them and peace between one another.
[26:46] So, here's how I want to principalize this peace. When we say bring peace, build a relationship. How can we get to the point where we can just share the gospel with other people?

How do we get that? You don't just come up to somebody, especially you've been working all there with them for 20 years. You come up and say, hey, I want to tell you about Jesus. Right? And they're going to go and, you freak.

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Unless you've built a relationship. Unless you've earned the right to be heard. Unless you've convinced them that you really do care about them. You don't want to just spew this message unless you build a relationship with them where they go, yeah, and that probably means breaking through some of the barriers that they've got built up because of what they've been through. They've probably got emotional barriers built up. They've got, they've got all kinds of stuff. God hurt me. God didn't fulfill, you know, this church hurt me. I ain't going back to church. You know, they've got all kinds of barriers.
Maybe from their, how they were raised with their father, their mother, who knows? You will, as you get to know it. And you can help break those down because you care for them.
[28:03] Because you understand. And that's going to earn you the right at some point to begin to talk about your journey. What brought me peace?

We can probably relate to some of the stuff they've been through. Getting hurt. Falling on our face. Failing. Power of our own testimony that's really honest is breaking down those barriers and then sharing how I found peace.
Well, or how he found me. Yeah. Yeah. Right? I mean, my journey was I cried, cried, cried. He didn't answer, didn't answer, didn't answer. Walked the aisle, prayed the prayer, you know, threw the stick in the fire, did everything they said to do.
Even Billy Grant told me, come cross that line, I'll be good. I did cross the line, I wasn't good. I couldn't make it happen. And then eventually God said, okay, Billy, now. Now. Now.
Now. Now. Now. I have a testimony to others who've been through a similar journey. Yeah.
[29:09] God doesn't answer my prayers. Tried the church thing. Yeah. Doesn't answer my. Tried the Billy Graham thing. I'm not against Billy Graham. Billy's got a good message.

I just wish he hadn't asked people to come across the line. So I think that's what this peace beyond this house is.
Because before you get to the message, see verse five and six, it's about, it's about bringing this peace. And if you, and if they, they are willing to build that relationship with you.
And even verse seven, remain in the same house. In other words, stay. When you go to a place, stay with them. Build your relationship with them. Then.
As they receive you. Right. Trust whatever they put before you. Right. I got don't. Or no, don't even go there. Go. Whatever they give you.
[30:05] Trust the Lord to provide for, for you. Do. You're building a relationship. Heal the sick in it. Verse nine.

And say to them, the kingdom of God has come to you. We'll get to that next. Christ. So here's the point. First point about this mission. Verses one to nine.
Is all followers of Jesus are sent to gather other followers. The point is not, there's not just a select few who are sent to share the gospel. It's not just those who are gifted at it.
And, and those who are gifted at it, praise God. I've, I've seen some of them. They're just incredible. God has gifted them to just turn conversations, to share the gospel so seemingly easily.
Some of us aren't gifted that way, but we're called to share. To share what we know. If you, if you know the gospel, then you know how to share the gospel.
[31:12] Do you know what the gospel is? You can share the gospel. So it's not just a select few. So, so notice, even we see that in the book of Acts, it's, it's, you expect it to be the 12, right?

And then you get into Acts and okay, it's, it's John and Peter and, and then after a few chapters, it's like there's other guys.
There's Stephen and Philip and Barnabas and Paul and Silas and what happened to the 12? Well, we've moved beyond. There's, it's a bigger mission than just because the 12 have already probably been sent to Ethiopia and, you know, other places.
so the rest of the church picks up the mission where they live. Listen to 1 Corinthians 3. Paul says, what then is Apollos? What is Paul?
They're just servants through whom you believed as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything but only God who gives the growth.
[32:21] He who plants and he who waters are one. They're in the same mission and each will receive his wages according to his labor for we are God's fellow workers. It's for all of us.

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You who, you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God given to me like a skilled master builder, I laid a foundation and someone else is building on it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it for no one can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid which is Jesus Christ.
So notice that it's, now, it's Apollos and Paul. It's not even the 12. Paul wasn't part of the 12. Paul wasn't part. Who's Apollos? Right?
And then you get other people mentioned in Acts. You get Priscilla and Aquila and you got Lydia and you got all these other folks are part of this gathering process. Some are more public speakers and a lot of them, most of them, are simply sharing with their family and their friends and people they are around.
That's just how they're building relationships. All are sent to fish. Follow me, I will make you to become fishers of men. We all, some of us plant, some of us water, you know, some of us are cultivators.
[33:38] I don't know, the whole process is part of it. He says it's all one. Okay. Second part. Get to the message. Verse nine and following.

So let me simply kind of capture it this way. All that Jesus, he says a lot in verses nine through 24, but let me capture it just this way.
Explaining the, the message is explaining the good news which must include the bad news. In fact, explaining the good news makes no sense if you don't include the bad news.
Most people that we probably associated with have heard the, the, the basic gospel, right? Yes, Jesus died for my sins, I should believe in him and I'll have eternal life.
They probably know that. They don't know what it means necessarily, but they know that. They don't comprehend the depth of that. So, let's break this down.
[34:38] So some principles again. Verse nine, explain the gospel. Explain it clearly. Now, what he says here, we're kind of going, ah, is that the gospel?

Verse nine, heal the sick and say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you. That's the gospel. The kingdom of God has come near to you. So that's what I should do. Should I go to people and, you know, lay hands on them and hopefully heal them and then say, the kingdom of God has come near to you.
They're not going to understand that. But the villages that these guys, these Jewish people went to, when they said the kingdom of God is drawn near to you, they're going to get it. A Jewish person would understand what the kingdom of God is about.
Oh, that's David. They would associate kingdom with Messiah, the coming one, who will deliver us just like David delivered Israel, just like Solomon ruled.
it will be a kingdom like that. So they're going to get, oh, kingdom, yes, that's what we've been hoping for. Let's get this Roman kingdom out of here so we can be free and have our right kind of government and our right kind of worship.
[35:49] Right? That's what they're thinking. That's not what is meant, but that's what they're thinking. So what is gospel? So we talk about, when we mention the gospel, we say there's four points to it, right?

We've gone over this several times, right? It is what? God, man, Christ, response, or faith, right? The gospel always must have those four points in them to make sense.
God, who's God? He is merciful and just. So he's merciful, loving, forgiving, all those things, right? Exodus 34, he's compassionate, he's forgiving, all those things, but he's also holy and just and will not let the guilty go.
So how does that work with the forgiving part? I don't know. There's a huge tension there. God is God. He doesn't drop part of who he is to just let everything go. All right?
So, who's man? Who are we? Sinners, fallen, right? Screw-ups, rebels, you know, all that.
[36:57] We can't do what God wants us to do. We can try. We can do little bits of it, but then we just fall. We can't do it. Right? But that puts us in a really big pickle because God's still saying life comes through obedience, right?

According to the Old Testament. Don't want to trouble. So how does he resolve that? How do you resolve a merciful, forgiving God with a holy, just God? How do you resolve that when God wants to be merciful to these pitiful people here?

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How is he going to do that? That's the third part. That's Christ. And what does Christ do? He brings those two parts together, right? He does the holy part because he takes our sin upon him and he pays the debt.
So he justifies so that God can forgive us, so that God can be merciful. God wants to be merciful. That's why he sent his son.
Right? So that he can resolve this for us because we can't resolve it. And then how do we get a part of all of this? Right? Faith. Belief.
[38:07] Not living up to, you know, measuring up to. No. Belief. Faith. Trust. Dependence. Wow. Too good to be true, isn't it?

Not walk the aisle, by the way. Faith. How do I get faith? Well, faith comes through hearing, hearing the word of Christ.
A miracle happens at some point when we hear. And whenever God decides to let that hearing become faith, get through our blindness, right?
Our deadness. That's what Jesus clarifies later when he says, right? Verse 21. He rejoices. Jesus rejoices.
I thank you, Father, Lord of Heaven, that you've hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children. It takes God's revealing to little children. All things have been handed over to me by my Father and no one knows the Son except the Father or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal.
[39:16] How do we get to know Him? How do we come to believe that the Father and the Son open our eyes and gift to us to see and hear? I can't make that happen.

I tried for 15 years. I couldn't do it. I tried to believe. It didn't change my life. And one day...
I wish I could capture that in the bottle and give it... Right? It's mysterious.
Then He has the... So the good news is the kingdom's near. God has come. God has come to set up His kingdom. God's kingdom is near. It's not way long farther.
It's here because Jesus is here. And then here's the other part. So those that receive... You know, that's great. Verse 10. But whoever...
[40:20] Whenever you enter a town and they don't receive you, go into the streets and say... Talk about the dust on your sandals. You're wiping that off so that none of their uncleanness gets on to you.

Again, another Jewish thing, by the way. Not something we are supposed to do. Don't worry about that. Because if you did that to somebody, they'd be going, what's your problem? It's not that.
It's a warning. It's a symbolic warning. And then verse 12. Look at this. Here's the bad news. I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town who has not received Jesus.
What do you mean? Sodom. Sodom. Is there a more notorious, notoriously wicked place? At least the way Scripture describes it.
Well, maybe Tyre and Sidon. Maybe Israel. When God said, I'm done. Go to Babylon. When they became just like all the other nations.
[41:24] So, we could ask, what's the worst sin ever? What is the very worst? What's the most horrible sin? And we could think of all these wicked, external kind of things, right?

And he's saying, no. Rejecting Jesus is worse than anything else. So, so he reads on.
He talks about places that he's been. Verse 13. What are you, Chorazin? What are you, Bethsaida? For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago sitting in sackcloth and ashes.
As wicked as Tyre and Sidon were, they would have repented if they saw what you saw. If you saw, if they saw the blind seeing and the lame walking and the lepers cleansed and people's lives changed and people who were captive to demons sat free.
If they would have seen that, they would have been on the ground repenting. But not you. Not you. You just kind of go, ooh, wow. Okay, back to work.
[42:39] Like people today who see the marvel of creation. I mean, live in a place like we live. We see the marvel of creation, the beautiful mountains, the trees, the streams, you know.

And just take that for granted? That's God crying out. We look at the night sky and we see the beauty of the night sky. We forget that Psalm says, God is declaring His praise in the heavens.
We take it for granted. Oh, yeah. Oh, that's pretty. That's pretty. Oh, I like the sunset. That was beautiful. Beautiful. Beautiful. Instead of going, thank you, Lord.

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Wow. Your color palette, huh, John? Your color palette, Lord, is incredible. What He does with sunsets and sunrises. Woo! Yeah.
You just, you just, you just kind of showing off. Yeah. Yeah, showing off to get our attention so that we might go not just, oh, that's pretty. We might go, thank you. Wow.
[43:39] Wow, you're amazing. The worst sin that there can be is to dismiss God.

Not even, I mean, it doesn't mean, it could just be simply, no, I don't want to hear it. Just disregarding, no. Not for, no. That's the worst sin. It's the worst sin because of what was offered to you.
And look at how He says it. He goes, He says, verse 15, you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you're going to be brought down to Hades. Capernaum was where Jesus set up His ministry, right?
That's where He was, He did all kinds of miracles in Capernaum and around Capernaum. They saw everything and apparently didn't really respond. Took advantage of His healing.
That's great. Oh, good. Get my stuff healed, get my life, back, now I'm on my own. So verse 16, here's the point. The one who hears you, hears me. So again, to the goers, you're bearing a message.
[44:45] It's not your message, it's God's message, it's Jesus' message. So when you speak, Jesus speaks. When they hear you, they hear me. When they listen to you, they're listening to me.

That's why it's life-changing. And the one who rejects you is rejecting me. So just remember that. That's kind of helpful as the messenger. When you get rejected, they're not really rejecting you, they're rejecting Jesus.
And it's bigger than that. Verse 16, and the one who rejects me, he's rejecting the one who sent me, my Father.
It was his idea. It's his love that sent me. It's his mercy that wanted to pour out on you. It's his grace that was being offered to you, and you said, no.
That's... That's... That's... That's... That's... That's... That's...
[45:54] So apparently there's degrees of judgment. And for those who reject Christ, we'll be at a deeper level of judgment than Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Tyre, and Sidon.

Finally, when they return, verse 17, Jesus gives them some refocusing. They come back. Obviously, they're excited. They return, verse 17, with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons were subject to us in your name.
I mean, who wouldn't be... There's nothing wrong with joy in that. Hey, woo, that was great. Seeing Satan, you know, releasing his captives, because you used the name of Jesus.
And so, Jesus isn't poo-pooing that. I mean, that's really cool if God uses you to set people free, obviously. He's just refocusing. And he even commends it, verse 18.
He says, yeah, I saw Satan fall. Literally, I was seeing. It wasn't a one-act thing. He was saying, I was seeing this over and over and over again. I was seeing Satan fall like lightning.
[47:04] I saw him go, oh, there's one, there's another, there's another one, there's another one. Because these people were in all these different towns and it was just happening all over. So it's a metaphor. This wasn't his fall from heaven.

His fall from heaven was, remember, when Jesus ascended, took his throne, and it was like, see ya, Satan. Revelation tells us about that one. That's not, this is a metaphor.
He's fallen. He's being conquered over and over and over again because you're sharing the gospel and you're using the name of Jesus which is a power that he can't. He just disarms him.
So he says, yeah, and behold, verse 19, I've given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you. Ultimately, nothing shall hurt you.
Nevertheless, here's the point. Verse 20, don't rejoice in this. I mean, that's pretty cool that God uses you for that, but don't rejoice in that the spirits are subject to you.
[48:08] But rejoice. Find your joy that your names are written in heaven because that's really, that's really the great thing. That victory over, say, those are temporary.

That's awesome. Great. But here, rest your joy in this. You're secure. You belong there. Your names are there. You're there. The results.
So, so in other words, not about results, not about achievements. I think that's really important today. Don't rejoice in the numbers. You know, Satan was subject to it. We can give you all these examples.

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I had 15. I had 20. I had one. Don't rejoice in the achievements or the accomplishments or the numbers, whatever God gives you, or the non-numbers.
It's not about the numbers or the accomplishments. It's about your own salvation. And the results are in God's hands anyway. And then verse 21 to 24, he talks about some other things to rejoice in.
[49:09] Jesus is rejoicing, right? Verse 25, 21. He's rejoicing that God has revealed to some. He's hidden it from a lot of people, but he's revealed it to some.

And Jesus is rejoicing in it. But the Father said, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. What is the Oprah thing? You get it. You get it. That shouldn't, that wouldn't.
Kind of lowers what God does, doesn't it? You get salvation. Sorry. And then he talks about it's all in God's hands, right?
And the Father has handed it over to Jesus. It's in Jesus' hands now. Verse 22, who can know the Father and who can know the Son? Nobody gets to really know the Father and the Son unless it's revealed to them.
I can talk about who Jesus is, but I don't know him if he hasn't been truly, my eyes have seen him. There are scholars who talk about Jesus and they talk about the quote unquote real Jesus they determine by removing all the miracles and that's where you find the real Jesus because they don't know him, obviously.
[50:32] They don't believe in miracles because they have never experienced the miracle of a changed life. So that's where the, you know, rejoice in the right things, rejoice in the things that are eternal, rejoice in the things that really matter, that God would, would be merciful to reveal to me.

Why me? We sang, and can it be, right? How can it be? He would die for me. How? How? For me? Because of me, he died.
I mean, that's the perspective. That's the joy. That was sweet this morning, by the way. I was a mess over there. I went through a box Kleenex. It was a good thing, though.
So, I want you to notice, and let me just bring in one other text. I want you to notice how Jesus explains the implications of the gospel. The gospel is good news, but it includes bad news. Because the good news comes out of the bad news. Let's just hear John 3.16. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.
[51:52] What's the implication of believing? Eternal life, right? Eternal life. That's good news. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world. Jesus did not come to condemn us.

And that transfers to us. Our job is never to condemn people. Never. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.
That's our job, too. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already. See, that's why it's not our job to condemn people because they're already condemned. Our job is to see them as condemned and get them out of that.
I got a way to free you from the shame and guilt. I got a way to free you from that ruin, that life of misery that you're trying to patch with other things.
Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in him is condemned already. That's an implication of the gospel. There's good news and bad news. Because he's not believed in the name of the only Son of God. There's that warning.
[53:02] Here's the judgment, Jesus says. The light has come into the world, but people love the darkness rather than the light. Why? Because their deeds are evil. They're scurrying into the dark corner. They don't want it to be exposed.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light lest his work should be exposed. That's absolutely natural, isn't it? We want to hide.
We want to hide our stuff. We don't want it exposed. Here's the miracle of salvation. The miracle of salvation is not to hide from that light, but to get into that light and let it expose you.
Because that's the first step. So let the light do its job. Notice what he says. But whoever does what is true comes to the light.
Whoever does what's honest, whoever does what's not hiding, whoever does what's true comes to the light with all the stuff. All the baggage, all the darkness so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.
[54:08] Remember we learn in 1 John, right? When we deal with our own sin what do we do? We get in the light, right? And we confess our sin because in the light that's where we get healed.

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That's where we get clean. Not in the dark. God shines his light. Yeah, at first it's scary because it's exposing and it's the most unnatural thing to do to get into that light and be exposed.
But that's our path of cleansing. Because God says that's how I'm going to clean you. Exposure. I thought I brought another.
All right. So the message is explaining the good news that includes the bad news. The good news is what we said. It's about who God is.
It's about who we are. It's about what Christ has done and it's how we receive what Christ has done. The gospel is about life and death. It's about eternity. It's about salvation and condemnation.
[55:11] It's about judgment. God has acted. God has spoken. And in his gracious words he has provided rescue for our ruin. will we accept it or will our pride reject it?

That's really what it comes down to. He has provided every means for us to be clean and forgiven and set free. Will we accept that?
Will we welcome it? Will we embrace it? We are called not only to follow Jesus but as we've been following him to allow him to make us fishers of men and to hear his promptings go now.
Build that relationship over there. You've been friends or neighbors or a co-worker with this book for so long. Go build a relationship. Whatever the Holy Spirit says to you that's when you go.
And you don't blast them. Make sure you build that relationship. Care about them. Find out where their hurts are as they are willing to trust you and share.
[56:27] And then you give them the answer. You may find some of them are ready. I've had some fun lately. You know when I had a chiropractor I used to talk gospel all the time with him.

Like the sermon you know hey Pastor Bill what are you preaching Sundays? Okay. But I'm going through PT so I got PT people that are attached to me for 45 minutes.
What do you do? Okay. And we get to talk about faith because Margo knows you know they're doing PT with you. They're moving your arm getting right.
And what's the most natural thing to do when it hurts? You know. And what do they say to me? What do they say? Trust me. So I get to say oh yeah trust I should know about that.
I'm a pastor. Faith is hard. I get to talk to them about faith. I get to talk to them about it's been anyway. You never know what God is going to put in front of you.
[57:29] or you do because you live next to them or whatever or you work with them. We're all called to tell others about this truth to explain the good news and the bad news to share the hope and to gather them into God's fold.

Let's pray. Father we thank you for this word that challenges us that gives us hope that gives us honest reflection on what you call us all to do.
So help us to ponder it rightly. Help us to take it to heart. Help us to ask you to search us and know us and try us and show us.
We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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