

Tomorrow is Memorial day. It is a holiday where we remember those who have died in service to our country. But today is also a holiday. It is not a federal holiday, or an American holiday. It is a Christian holiday. Today is Pentecost Sunday in the Christian calendar. It is the day that we remember the Holy Spirit descending down on the disciples of Christ like fire. The Holy Spirit filled the disciples with power and founded the church. On that day people from all over the world who didn't even speak the same language heard the gospel preached and became citizens of the kingdom of God.

In God's providence, it just so happens that we are studying part of Luke's gospel where Jesus fills His disciples with power and authority. And then sends them out to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God.

This morning we need to be reminded of the power and authority of Jesus. We need to be reminded of what Christ has given us. Too often Christians look out at the world in despair. We see the sin, wickedness, and darkness. We are overwhelmed by the power of the world and we wonder if the gospel is enough. We wonder if the church has what it takes to exist in a changing world. But in this story we will see that how Jesus has equipped His disciples and equipped us.

Our text this morning is Luke 9:1-17 if you can turn with me in your Bibles.

Point 1: Jesus equips us with all that we need (v. 1-6).

Jesus is about to send His disciples out on their own.

For a time they will be separated from Jesus.

They won't be able to turn and ask Him for help.

It will be their turn to preach and teach the crowds.

But Jesus will give them all that they need.

Verse 1, **"And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,"**

They are given power and authority.

It does not come from themselves.

It comes from Jesus.
He is the one who gives it to them.

And they are given the power and authority **"over all demons and to cure diseases."**

Jesus has spent a lot of his ministry healing the sick.
He has spent his time casting out demons and unclean spirits.
It is one of the hallmarks of His ministry as the Messiah.
It is the proof that He is who He says He is.
It demonstrates His authority and His power over the spiritual and physical realms.
But now Jesus turns that authority over.
He does not keep it all to Himself.
Instead, he shares it with his disciples.
They get to carry the very power and authority of Christ.

Jesus does not do this for all of His disciples.
Remember there are a great number of people following Jesus.
There are entire crowds of people numbering in the thousands.
There are the women who are some of Jesus most devoted disciples.
But only the twelve are chosen.
The primary disciples and the ones who will become His apostles.
He does not give this authority to all of His disciples.
He does not give this same authority to us either.

There are some traditions or people who will tell you that all Christians have the authority and power of Jesus.
That every single Christian has the authority and the ability to cast out all demons and to heal all those who are sick.
I don't think that this is true.
Jesus has still today given every single Christian,
Every single follower of God,
Everything that they need to proclaim the gospel.
But we do not all need the ability to cast out demons and heal the sick.

If this were true, then I think a lot more of the Bible and the letters of Paul to the churches would have been instructions on how to heal people and how to cast out demons.

So this part of what Jesus does is special and unique to the 12th.

But the most important part of what they do is in verse 2.

Verse 2, **"And he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal."**

He sends them out to proclaim the kingdom of God.

They are sent out to preach the gospel.

They are also sent to heal.

But the healing is part of preaching.

The healing is part of what they do as they proclaim that their salvation and the Messiah have come.

It proves that they come from God.

Just as Moses' miracles proved he came from YWH.

Verse 3, **"and he said to them take nothing for your journey,"**

Jesus doesn't want them to take anything with them.

Nothing at all.

They're to go only in the authority of Jesus.

The only thing that they can bring is the gospel and the power of Christ.

Because Jesus wants them to know it will be enough.

They don't need anything else.

They don't need to be equipped with anything else.

They don't need to be trained by anyone else.

Jesus has given them all that they need.

And it will be enough.

He then goes on to list a number of things that he does not want them to bring.

And there's a purpose behind them.

"No staff"

A staff would have been a great aid in walking.
Especially as they are going to be traveling all over the hills of Israel.
It would also be a helpful way to defend yourself.
Thieves and robbers might be more hesitant to attack you if you had one.
Jesus tells them to leave it.
To take no aid or help.
To leave their weapons for self-defense behind.
They are to trust in Jesus to protect them instead.

"Nor bag"

This is not just a bag or a backpack to carry things.
Jesus is referring to the kind of bag that wandering philosophers and teachers carried.
They would bring it in order to pass around and ask for donations.
Jesus is telling them to leave the offering plates behind.
They are not to go from place to place asking for money.
They are to be separate from wandering peddlers and charlatans.
They are messengers of a different kind of kingdom.
They are to trust that God will provide instead.

"Nor bread"

They are not even to bring food with them.
This one would have been the hardest for me.
I always need to know where my next meal is coming from.
I will often annoy my wife by asking what is for dinner while we are still eating breakfast.
I just want to know so I can plan.
But Jesus says, don't even pack a lunch.
Take no food with them.
They are to wander like Israel in the wilderness,
Trusting that each day God will provide manna for them.
Trusting that God can multiply food like He will for the crowd.
He will literally provide their daily bread.

"Nor money"

They are not to take any money or savings with them.

Not a single dollar or even some pocket change.

They are to trust not in their money, but in the God who owns the cattle on a thousand hills.

"And do not have two tunics"

They aren't to take a change of clothes either.

Not even a carryon or a suitcase.

Not an extra pair of underwear or socks.

They are leaving with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

They are traveling light.

About as light as you could possibly be.

All that they have is God's authority and power.

And it will be more than enough.

"And whatever house you enter, stay there , and from there depart."

But what does this mean about houses?

Jesus tells them that when they come to a new place, someone will probably offer their house as a place to stay.

Jesus tells them when they come to a new town, begin to preach.

And some will accept the message and give them a place to stay.

Jesus wants them to stay at the first house that invites them in.

And then they are to stay the entire time they are in that town.

Why would Jesus say this?

Because he does not want them to jump around to different homes.

When someone with a nicer house and more money converts and invites them over, they are to say no.

He doesn't want them to try and be climbing the social ladder in the community that they find themselves in.

Because Jesus has given them all they need.

This is because Jesus wants them to depend on him.

To depend on the provision of God.

To believe that when they go somewhere God will open up exactly the place that he wants them to stay.

He also doesn't want them to be people that are trying to climb the ladder.

He does not want his disciples to be accused of trying to get rich.

Or trying to take advantage of people's hospitality.

This was actually a large problem during Jesus' day.

And the early days of the church this continued to be a big problem.

People had a hard time trying to differentiate between who is an actual preacher of Jesus and who is just trying to take advantage of us?

So much so that Didache, which is one of the earliest Christian writings outside of the Holy Scriptures that we have, gives some instructions on avoiding those who try to stay too long or who are trying to always stay in the nicest house.

So why Jesus says stay in the house that opens its doors.

Jesus gave instructions on how they should act when they are received by a town,

He then gives them instructions on how they are to act when they have been rejected.

"And whenever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them."

First of all, I want you to see that Jesus says whenever they do not receive you.

Jesus doesn't say if they don't receive you.

The assumption is that they are going to be rejected.

Yes, Jesus has equipped them with everything that they need.

That does not mean that they will always be successful.

Some of us need to hear that again.
Jesus has given you everything that you need.
That does not mean you are always going to succeed.
That does not mean that every time you preach the gospel
people will get saved.
That does not mean that every time you plant a church
it will grow, it may just die.
That doesn't mean that because Jesus has laid something on your heart
and giving you a vision of a ministry or something that you should
accomplish for him that it will succeed.
It may completely fail.
It may embarrassingly fail.
You might be rejected and spit upon.

This is what Jesus wants his disciples to know.
He wants them to be prepared for when that eventuality happens.
he wants them to know exactly what they are to do.

First, you notice it says when you leave the town.
They're to leave.
They are not to try and stay and fight.
They are to try and change everyone's minds and to get them to stop
rejecting them.

They are to leave and shake the dust off your feet.
And the shaking of the dust it's symbolic.
It is saying you want nothing to do with Jesus and the kingdom of God?
Then I don't want anything to do with you.
I don't even want to take the dust of your town with me as I travel.

It isn't just meant to be insulting.
It is meant to bear witness against them.
It is to say, that the apostles and ambassadors of Jesus recognize that you
want nothing to do with Jesus,

you want nothing to do with the kingdom of God,
and you want nothing to do with the gospel.
Then the gospel will leave you alone.

Now it's hard for us to shake the dust isn't it?
Sometimes it comes from a place of love and we just really desire that
someone would embrace Jesus and embrace the gospel.
But sometimes it just comes from a place of pride.
We care not that they are rejecting Jesus but that they were rejecting us.

And we don't want to shake the dust.
We don't want to walk away.
We want to keep fighting.
We want to keep arguing.
Or we want to go and complain loudly to everyone who will hear us.
But Jesus tells us to shake to dust.

The main thing that we need to see from this first section is that Jesus is
equipped his Apostles with everything that they need.
They only need to take anything with them.

And beloved Jesus is also equipped to you with everything that you need.
If you are a Christian and you are full of the Holy Spirit.
Christ has given you all of the blessings and spiritual gifts that he thinks
you need in order to spread the good news of the Kingdom.
Be encouraged.
Don't believe that you need more than you've been given.
Don't despair at the meagerness of your resources.
Trust that Jesus will be with you.

Point number 2: We are equipped to spread the gospel (v. 6-9).

What followers of Jesus are supposed to do with all that Jesus has given
them is preach the gospel.
We're to preach the gospel.

We are not meant to go out and to build up our own kingdoms.
We are meant to go up and build God's Kingdom.
We are not meant to make a great name for ourselves.
But to make great the name of Jesus.
The disciples don't make their own names great.
They don't build up their own kingdoms.
They preach the gospel of Christ as the only way to salvation.

This is why Jesus has equipped us.
This is the purpose for which we were created.
And this is what the disciples do.

Verse 6, **"And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere."**

They do exactly what Jesus has asked.
They depart in the power of God.
They go throughout all of the villages.
And everywhere they go they preach the gospel.
And they also heal the sick.

The heal the sick as it demonstration that the gospel that they preach is true.
That the Jesus they proclaim really is God.
That the kingdom of God really has come and it is among them.

And their work is successful.
The gospel expands in the kingdom of God is growing.
More and more people are hearing about Jesus.
They are not just hearing it from the crowds that are spreading the news throughout Israel.

Now they are also hearing about Jesus from his very disciples.
No longer is it hearsay about the kingdom but they hear it from the men at His right hand.

This causes the news of Jesus to spread throughout the land even faster. It spread so far that the most powerful people in Israel hear of Jesus.

Verse 7, **"Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening,"**

Herod begins to hear rumors of what is happening.

It appears that he is not just hearing about Jesus but he's hearing about the 12 who are going out and preaching the gospel and healing the sick.

Because it says that he hears about all that is happening.

Herod is hearing about everything.

"and he was perplexed,"

And he does not know what to do about it.

He is at a loss.

He is dumbfounded.

He is floored and confused.

He does not know what to make of all these people running around

They are talking about a kingdom to come and a new king who is here.

And they appear to be working miracles everywhere that they go.

So many miracles that it couldn't possibly be a hoax.

That has to be real.

"because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead,"

He also doesn't know what to do because he does not know who Jesus is.

And people keep giving him different opinions.

Some say that John has come back.

John was the first prophet Israel had in hundreds of years

And he was just killed but maybe he's been reincarnated and returned.

Verse 8, **"by some that Elijah had appeared,"**

Some think that it's Elijah.

the scriptures promised that a messenger would come in the spirit of Elijah before the Messiah would return.

So people are saying this Jesus must be Elijah come back again.

"And by others that one of the prophets of old had risen."

Others are saying that must be one of the old Prophets.

One of those profits from a bygone era.

Like Ezekiel or Isaiah or Jeremiah.

Maybe even Moses.

Verse 9, **"Herod said, "John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?"**

Herod doesn't really like these answers.

And he is not sure who Jesus is but he knows that it's not John.

He tells us that he killed John.

Here it almost seems proud that he beheaded and got rid of that prophet.

Even in death, Herod doesn't seem to have a lot of respect for John.

At least not here in this passage.

There's a lot that's going on here.

It can almost seem like an interruption because it is.

But part of what is happening is that God is foreshadowing the death of Jesus.

Herod played a very active role in the death of John.

He stood as judge and executioner over him.

One day Herod will stand as judge over Jesus.

And Herod will not be the executioner, but Herod will play a role in his death.

Luke sets the scene for us so that we will not be surprised when Herod comes again.

Luke is planting seeds that like John, Jesus is going to be murdered.

"and he sought to see him."

The interesting thing about Herod's desire to see Jesus,

is that he won't until Luke 23.

And in that chapter we'll mention that Herod has long wanted to see Jesus.

But Herod never comes to him.

It is not until the end when Jesus is on trial that he finally gets a chance to see him.

And even then it tells us that Herod mostly one of Jesus to perform some Miracles and magic for him.

It is not actually interested in seeing and discovering who Jesus is.

Herod just wants to know what's going on.

Because if you really wanted to see Jesus, then you go find him.

There are entire crowds of people who want to see Jesus and they go and see him.

Or next section will have who are 5000 people who have gone because they want to see Jesus.

We have no idea who was in that crowd but we know that Herod isn't in it.

Now why do we get this section about Herod?

And I think it's only to foreshadow and to set up where the gospel is leading to.

Where Jesus is headed towards.

I think it is also showing us that the gospel is spreading.

It is spreading to the most influential people of Israel.

In part, because the disciples are being obedient and using Jesus has equipped them with.

And one day the gospel will spread to the ends of the earth.

To every single tribe and every tongue.

Point 3: **Jesus will multiply our efforts even in desolate places (v. 10-17).**

Verse 10, **"On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida."**

The disciples come back and they're excited.

They reported Jesus all that they have seen and all that they have done in their service to him.

And Jesus takes them to the hometown of Philip and Andrew and Peter. But people find out where Jesus is going.

Verse 11, **"When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing."**

The disciples come back and they're excited.

They reported Jesus all that they have seen and all that they have done in their service to him.

And Jesus takes them to the hometown of Philip and Andrew and Peter.

But people find out where Jesus is going.

And they all start chasing Jesus.

Verse 12, **"Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, "Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place."**

The day is almost over at night is coming.

So the disciples, specifically the 12 who have been equipped with the power and authority of Jesus.

They come and they ask Jesus to send the crowd away.

They want Jesus to send them where they can find places to sleep and get food to eat because they are in a desolate place.

They are in a place with nowhere to lay their head
a place with no money

A place with no bread.

The disciples can't provide for these people so they ask Jesus to send them away.

But look how Jesus responds.

Verse 13, **"But he said to them, "You give them something to eat."**

Jesus tells his disciples to feed them.

But this isn't Jesus saying this isn't my problem.

This is Jesus gently nudging his disciples.

This is Jesus trying to give them hints on what they should do.

But they don't get it at first.

"They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men.

They say, Jesus we've got a couple loaves of bread and we got two fish.

I guess we could go feed him but we're going to have to go and buy food for everybody and that's a lot of money.

The disciples look at what they have.

They look at what they have been given.

They look at what has been provided for them.

They look at their circumstances.

They look at the number of people and the difficulty that it will take to feed them.

They examine the logistical challenges and problems.

They look at the desolate place they are in.

And they come up empty.

They don't know what to do.

They believe that they are not equipped in the desolate place.

But Jesus knows they are.

Jesus just sent them out because he was trying to teach them.

He sent them away with absolutely nothing.

And God provided.

Now once again they find themselves in a place where they have nothing. But this time they don't trust.

"And he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each."

Jesus says get everybody to sit down and put them in some groups. In the gentleness of Jesus, he guides them and he helps them.

Verse 15, **"And they did so, and had them all sit down."**

The disciples obey even though they do not understand. They obey even though Jesus is not sending the crowd away. Even though they doubt, they obey.

Verse 16, **"And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd."**

Jesus takes what the disciples have provided, those five Loaves and the two fish, and He multiplies it.

Jesus looks up into the heavens.
Blesses with the disciples have given.
And then,
if you notice Jesus gives it back to the disciples.
And He tells the disciples to hand it out to the crowd.

The disciples take an active role in feeding the 5000.
This is not just a miracle Jesus does by Himself.
While Jesus is the one who has all of the power and who is God,
The disciples get to participate with Him.

And part of what I think Jesus is doing here is trying to show the disciples that He will multiply their efforts.

Yes they've been equipped, yes they've been given everything that they need, but they still need someone to multiply it and make it work. They still need Jesus to take their handful of food and make it enough to feed a crowd.

Verse 17, **"And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces."**

When they are done Jesus wants them to pick up the leftovers. And they're only done after every single person eats and every single person is satisfied.

And second Kings 4 Elijah at 100 men with 20 loaves of bread.

Now Jesus and the disciples feed over 5,000 with only five loaves of bread.

Just in case people were wondering if Jesus is Elijah no he is much much better.

But look at how much is left over.

The number is intentional.

Luke tells us that there were 12 baskets full.

One for each of the 12 apostles who have been so prominently featured in this passage.

God took with little they had, barely enough to feed themselves let alone the crowd.

And now they fed everyone and have more than enough left over for them to take as they travel along.

Luke wants us to see the disciples have been equipped with enough even in the desolate place.

And this is true for us as well.

Because this is what our God does.

Our God feeds thousands of people when it seems like they have nothing.

Our God makes Mana rain down from heaven every day for decades to feed his people.

Our God makes water gush out of rocks.
Our God filled up the jar of oil so that a widow would survive the famine.
Our God can multiply your efforts.

You do not have to be the greatest Christian in order to do great things for God.

Jonah was a reluctant terrible preacher who preached one of the shortest and worst sermons I have ever heard in an entire city of deeply Wicked immoral people repented and Revival broke out.

On Pentecost Peter walked up and preached and thousands of people who didn't even speak the same language of him got saved.

Jesus can multiply your efforts.

Jesus has given you and equipped you with exactly what He wants you to have.

So use it and be obedient.

Don't despair when you find yourself in a desolate place.

Trust what God has given you enough and hand it out.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus is enough.

He is all that we need.

Even in the desolate place.

CONCLUSION:

1. [Summary] We are equipped with all we need. We are equipped to spread the gospel. We are equipped even in the desolate places.
2. [Challenge] If you are a follower of Jesus, you have Jesus. And He is all that you need. So trust Him, spread the good news of the kingdom, and watch what Jesus will do.