

The Great Adventure!!

Sunday, July 7 at 9:00 † Monday, July 8 at 7 PM

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost / Third Sunday after Trinity – 2019

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: In today's Gospel reading, *Jesus sent His* follows on a great adventure! As we hear about some of the ▶details and ▶reactions, *let us apply them to our current adventure through this life on earth!*



1. **Sent to Prepare the Way:** ¹ **After this** [*after Jesus started His journey to Jerusalem*] **the Lord appointed seventy-two others** [*thus not the 12*] **and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town** [*fortified/walled town/city*] **and place** [*in the countryside*] **where he himself was about to go.** ² **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.** // Jesus, with His Son-of-God eyes, could see the people who were spiritually ripe and ready to be picked; however, *more workers were needed*. Therefore, even as the 72 were sent out, *He asked them to beg God to send even more!*
2. **Sending Instructions:**
 - a. ³ **Go** [*Depart*] **your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.** ⁴ **Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road.** // Jesus could have said: ▶Your mission is dangerous, it's among wolves – *but do not be afraid*; ▶don't take money or food or sleeping provisions – *because God*

will provide; and don't waste time by talking to others as you travel – *but remain focused on your mission!*

- b. **5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!'** **6 And if a son of peace is there** [*if the head of that household has or desires peace with God*], **your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you** [...*all are invited into God's kingdom through Jesus, but none are forced to enter*]. **7 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.** // While the ones sent by Jesus were in a city and preparing that city for Jesus' upcoming arrival, they were to continue to stay in the same house – *not looking for a better arrangement*, and receive whatever they were given – *as compensation for their work!*

3. **When They Receive You:** **8 Whenever you enter a town/city and they receive you, eat what is set before you.** **9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'** // Wherever they were received, Jesus told them to *do miraculous healings*, and then *proclaim the nearness of God's kingdom*. And why in that order? The healings validated their connection to God and caused the people to listen carefully!

4. **When They Reject You:** **10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say,** **11 'Even the dust of your town/city that clings to our feet we wipe [dust] off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'** // Try to imagine two of those men in a city going from house to house to house, and yet – *at every house* – the peace they offered was rejected. Whenever that happened Jesus told

them to let the people of that city know that the very kingdom of God – *the forgiveness of their sins* – had come within their grasp and yet they had missed it... *hoping that some would regret, repent, and receive!* Like us missing a golden opportunity, *and thinking it was gone forever*, but then – by God’s grace – *having another chance to receive!*

5. **Sad News for All Who Reject:** As Jesus spoke of degrees of reward for faithfulness (Mark 10:28-30), *so Jesus will now tell us about degrees of punishment for unbelievers!* Realize that these words are still part of the instructions Jesus gave to the ones He was about to send out; He wanted them to fully understand the importance of their mission and the horrible eternity for those who reject!
- a. ¹² **I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day [judgment day] for Sodom than for that town/city.** // Lenski put things into perspective: “**To lie in sin and thus to perish is bad [like Sodom]; to lie in sin and in addition to reject grace [like those who reject Jesus and His servants] and thus to perish is worse**” (574).
- b. ¹³ **“Woe to you, Chorazin [an ancient village near Capernaum]! Woe to you, Bethsaida [also an ancient village near Capernaum and the home of some of the apostles]! 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.** ¹⁴ **But it will be more bearable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you.** // Note: Jesus did not speak about preaching, *but only about miracles*; miracles don’t save souls, *but they should cause people to think about their sin in the light of God’s awesome power!* The problem: Those places witnessed Jesus’ miracles, *but were not sorry!*

- c. ¹⁵ **And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven?** [*The answer imbedded in the Greek text is “No”*] **You shall be brought down to Hades.** // Think about it this way: **“The greater the grace [God’s love] spurned, the more terrible the damnation incurred”** (Lenski, 578).
- d. In summary: ¹⁶ **“The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.”** // Notice the unbreakable chain: God—Jesus—His servants; *those who reject God’s servants reject Jesus and the Father!*

After having been instructed by Jesus, the 72 departed; now, as we continue with verse 17, they have returned to Jesus!

6. **Explaining the Proper Perspective:** ¹⁷ **The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!”** ¹⁸ **And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”** // Upon returning they all had joy because the demons obeyed them; *they experienced Jesus’ power over the devil!* But what is really important? Not what we do, *but what God has done for us:* Choosing us to be His own and forgiving us of all sins!

This Week’s Challenge: Know that EVERYONE needs Jesus; rejoice that YOU have Jesus!!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, as we venture through this life on earth, keep us close to You and grateful for Your eternal gifts!

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