

**THE BIG IDEA: We do what's been done so that others can do what we've done.**

### The Take-Off

I told you last week that one of the greatest things about preaching through a book like we are right now is all of the times that what is next fits perfectly with what is now, and this morning is no exception.

We didn't sit down as a preaching team and map out 31 weeks of passages and teaching to ensure that we'd be where we are today; that was The Helper's job, and He's done something amazing...

He has us exactly where we need to be as we take a day to celebrate what has happened in 5 years and anticipate what could happen in the next 5, 15 or 50 years!

Big days like this are when we remember why we do what we do.

It's an anniversary dinner when a couple remembers why they said "I do" all those years ago, and it should be no surprise that today - as we hit a 5 year milestone - God's word in the first half of Luke 10 is a now word that is all about mission.

For me, this has been the longest week ever, because I woke up on Monday morning ready to share with you 5 critical observations that I see in this section of scripture.

Critical for each of us individually, but extremely critical for us collectively as a body of believers about the mission that we've been given to be near God, near man, and making disciplers.

It's mission critical, and the next few minutes could easily be game changing for many of us.

Let's start by reading the first 3 verses, and then talk through a few observations.

## **1. Living on mission is a team sport with many seasons.**

- a. I know that not everyone is into sports, and it could be easy for us to discount what I'm about to say if you aren't, but since the apostle Paul compared the faith to a race, I feel like I'm in good company
- b. You've probably heard the expression that our faith is marathon, not a sprint
- c. That's only partly true.
- d. The true statement is that's more like a relay race than anything else.
- e. Marathons are typically an individual race, but the Christian faith isn't an individual race
- f. Living on mission is a team sport with many seasons
- g. Luke 10:1 says that Jesus appointed 72 OTHERS - up from the 12 disciples sent out in Luke 9
- h. All of us have a part to play, and just like the 72 went out following the model given to the 12, so later in Acts many more would go out following the model of the 72
- i. All of us have a part to play, a leg to run in the race
- j. We all stand on the shoulders of others who have done their part
- k. In fact, many of you are here because of the part that a 20 member launch team played 5 years ago
- l. But there are others in years to come who will need to stand on YOUR shoulders
- m. **We do what's been done so that others can do what we've done**
- n. If we coast on the leg that a launch team ran, we'll never accomplish the mission
- o. Jesus didn't turn to the first 12 and resend them - He turned to 72 OTHERS
- p. It's a new season at The Gathering, and it's a season for YOU to pick up the baton and run

## **2. Jesus responded to the need instead of reacting to it.**

- a. I saw something this week that I don't think I've ever noticed before - Jesus saw the same problem we do
- b. Every pastor of every church - regardless of size - has the same response to the question, "What is your greatest need?"
- c. It's always people. This week I realized that the Son of God, the Messiah, had the same problem.
- d. A lack of people serving isn't new, but the way we respond to it is.
- e. Jesus said to do one thing: pray.
- f. We typically do one or all of three other P words: panic, point or posture.
- g. None of those are effective, and all of them are reactions.
- h. Jesus knew that God cares more for the harvest than any of us, and that asking God to take care of the need would be a lot more effective than asking men to.
- i. Jesus didn't pray that the ones already working would do more; He prayed that the God of the harvest would send more!

### 3. Jesus prayed for workers, not players.

- a. I also want us to see how specifically Jesus prayed - for workers, not players
- b. Now, remember the balance of scripture, ok? We just came out of a whole month of teaching about margin and breathing. There are definite times when it's ok to relax!
- c. But playing, praying, planning, etc. constantly without actually DOING gets nothing done.
- d. One of my all time favorite poems sums this up the best [BUTT PRINTS IN THE SAND]

### 4. We can't play it safe and still be sent

- a. Something very interesting takes place in verses 2 and 3, and it could rock our worlds
- b. In these verses, we see HOW God sends us and WHERE God sends us, and what we'll find is that we can't play it safe and still be sent
- c. I think many of us wait for God to tap us on the shoulder and politely suggest that we help with the harvest
- d. But the Greek word suggests something very different than that
- e. Jesus said to pray and that God would SEND - the Greek word is "ekballo" and it isn't the normal word used for "send"
- f. It is the word used in Luke 11:20 when Jesus said He cast out demons by the finger of God.
- g. In other words, when we pray, the Lord of the harvest THRUSTS workers into the field, and not to safe places, either.
- h. He sends us - launches us - like sheep among wolves.
- i. It is often fast, it is often furious, and it is often the very trials we face that become the launching pad
- j. [CAT BEING LAUNCHED]
- k. We don't have to fear, because God is more than able to KEEP US SAFE even though we can't PLAY IT SAFE

### 5. We can't afford to miss the mission while we're on it

- a. One final observation, and we'll need to read verses 17-20 to see it.
- b. The 72 came back like we would have come back - pretty pumped about what we had just done
- c. And Jesus celebrated with them - at first - and then gave them a reminder about WHY they were on the mission in the first place: He had saved them!
- d. They had been rescued and now they were helping Him rescue.
- e. Jesus told them that what HE HAD DONE with their names was more important than what THEY WERE DOING in His name.
- f. We can't forget that, because if we do, the mission that was all about Jesus will become a mission that is all about us.
- g. We can't afford to miss the mission while we're on it!

#### The Landing

I've been trying to think all week about how to really drive home the importance of how what we're doing now is what others have done before and what others will do later, and how we can't afford to drop the baton now.

Why it's so important that we not rest on what has happened, because that will ensure that nothing more will happen.

And today is the 15th anniversary of 9/11, and it is the perfect example.

Men and women were heroic on that day, and they saved many lives as a result.

They didn't choose it. They were trained and ready, sure, but the tragedy thrust them into the "harvest" field.

But those men and women are 15 years older - some dead, some retired - and may not be able to do today what they did then.

But the emergency services of NYC are ready if needed, because they haven't rested on what happened 15 years ago - they have trained and put into service new men and women.

That, friends, is the mission of THE Church, and of THIS church.

To play our part in Jesus' kingdom, and to do what's been done so that others can do what we've done.

Let's pray.