

Everyday with Jesus – Luke, Week 9, (September 21-27)

September 21 Luke 10:1-20 Verses 1-12 – What, do you imagine, was the ‘hardest’ thing the 72 had to do when Jesus sent them out?¹

Note that concerning v. 5 Riddervolt said, “It must remain a significant truth, however, that Jesus bids his disciples first to build his Church in the quiet privacy of the home. The family is the root of the Church, . . .” (*The Gospels*, Ylvisaker, p. 316.) Spiritual head of the household, (In God’s structure of the family that is to be the husband and father. But in some cases it may be the wife, or a single parent.) how are you doing in building Christ’s Church in your own home with devotions, Bible readings, family prayer, encouraging your family to be with Christ’s body in corporate worship? Wives how are you at encouraging and praying for your husband in these areas? Children, how are you at encouraging and praying for your father (or mother) as he/she does this important work.²

It is no accident that vv. 13-16 are here. What is the warning Jesus is giving us here?³

Prayer: Jesus, enter my life and through me enter my home. Give me a heart that so believes in you that “my mouth may declare your praise” freely and without fear before all. Amen.

¹There might be many answers, but perhaps the hardest thing was taking Jesus at his word and believing the implied promises that he would take care of all their needs and protect them even when they were rejected. Our failure to take Jesus at his word and to believe his promises, and the resultant fear, are the very things that most bind our tongues today in our witnessing for him. ²Answers to these questions will vary, but our low worship attendance says a lot that is negative in this area. All of us need to repent by confessing concerning our lack of zeal for doing this vital work in our families and then, in true repentance, do a better job of faithfully glorifying Jesus and bringing his Word and blessings into our homes. ³We, like Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum of Jesus’ day, might deceive ourselves into thinking that religiously we are not so bad. But we need to remember that our estimation does not count; Jesus’ does.

September 22 Luke 10:17-24 We tend to find ‘joy’ in many things, but in verse 20 Jesus says there is only one thing to really rejoice about. At times maybe we don’t feel so joyful about that because we don’t see ourselves as ‘blessed’, but Jesus’ prayer of thanksgiving and his comments to his disciples show that we are. What blessings do we believers enjoy that the world could never imagine?¹

Prayer: Lord, let our joy be in the right place - that you know us, and that our names are written in heaven. In response to these gifts of grace may we join you in ever praising and thanking *our* Father. Amen

¹God revealed his truths to us, we are his children, the Son has willed to reveal the Father to us, and we get to look into and understand truths that people like Isaiah and David never saw or heard in their fullness.

September 23 Luke 10:25-27 This familiar reading is easy to breeze over, but, instead, let’s pause to look at and consider it closely. When we read the account we try to figure out if we are like the Priest and Levite, or the Samaritan. After all that is what Jesus’ point is about, isn’t it, “Which . . . proved to be a neighbor. . . ?” But it leaves us with another great question - have we ever stopped to think of the account from the victim’s point of view and why that might be helpful to us?¹

Prayer: Teacher, teach us what it means to be a neighbor is like. We too easily fall into the trap of thinking of ‘neighbor’ as that ‘other person’, when ‘neighbor’ is us. In response to your being a neighbor to us and rescuing us from sure death, move us to show love and compassion toward others that truly reflects yours toward us. Amen.

¹Probably not. But to do so would help us appreciate what it is like to need help and to be ignored (Perhaps we even have had one of those times!); and then to think of the hope and joy and the gratitude we had when someone stopped and helped. Such thoughts help motivate us to stop and help the next time we see a person in need. But each one of us have been that victim, haven’t we? Jesus, in a manner of speaking, is our ‘Good Samaritan,’ who stopped and at great expense rescued us who were waylaid by Satan and literally left dead by the side of the road. Motivated by the life-giving help he gave us in our need and by which he saved us, we truly are motivated to be thankful to him and in that thanks be a neighbor who gives help to others.

September 24 Luke 10:38-42 We might entitle this reading “What’s important to me?” or, “When it comes to Jesus, am I a Mary or a Martha?” It is all too easy to think that ‘busy-ness’ for Jesus is the same as ‘faithfulness’ to Jesus. We may be sure that Jesus appreciated Martha’s domestic efforts. But to have someone pause to sit at his feet, listen to him and then contemplate what was said, chew it over, digest it and then live what was heard and learned – is a far greater honor to and worship of him, and of greater blessing and use to Mary (and to us). Why is that use of time and energy “the better portion”?¹

Prayer: Lord of the Sabbath, may we find our rest in you. Too often we think that to be faithful we need to be always busy. Help us to remember that as you rested upon the completion of your work creation, so too are we to rest our bodies. But the rest we especially need is for our souls. Give us that rest that comes when we, together with fellow saints, members of the body of Christ, cease from our labors, come to you to be forgiven

and fed by your Word and Sacraments. Lord, help us to stop and enjoy the refreshment of being in your presence and hearing you speak to us in your Word. Amen

¹“What lasts forever? God, his kingdom, his Word, and the souls of people. Nothing else.” *One Year at His Feet*, Chris Tiegreen, Sept. 15. Luther’s explanation of the third commandment shows the same focus, “We should fear and love God that we do not despise (treat as unimportant or with contempt) preaching and his Word, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones put it this way, “A man’s god is that for which he lives.” To set aside time for God and to hear him says, “You, Lord, your Word and the care of my soul are the number one priorities in my life. You and your Word are the joy of my soul. There is no better use of my time and energy than to be with you and hear your Word.”

September 25 Luke 11:1-13 In your own words define what ‘prayer’ is.¹ But what is ‘prayer’?² When we pray Jesus tells us to see God as a ‘Friend’, be persistent, and know that our ‘good’ Father will know how to give us what is good and right for us. Why do we need to be told these things?³ What is the greatest gift we can ask from and receive from the Father?⁴

Prayer: Lord, teach us to pray. Amen.

¹Answers will vary. ²Prayer is an act of worship in which we converse with God at anytime, in any place, about anything (Yes, *anything*). It is an act of worship because in it we acknowledge God and his existence; that he is all-powerful (able to do more than we think or ask. Eph. 3:20), all present, and all knowing, all wise; that he is faithful; that he keeps his promise to hear and help his people. Believing these things, we bring before him the needs of his kingdom and our needs, confessions, and intercessions on behalf of others. We also come remembering to thank him for *all* his blessings. By going to the triune God with such prayers we are making a confession of faith that we fear, love and trust in *him* above all things. ³Because of our sinful nature, we tend to be suspicious of God. We wonder and doubt, thinking, “Is he really there? Good? Does he know what is best for me? Why isn’t he answering me right now and in the way I want?” We need to be reminded that the evil one, satan, is the one we really need to doubt and question, for he has never sought anything good for us, nor will he ever. The only things he has given us are lies and death. ⁴The Holy Spirit - for he is the Creator, Strengthened, and Sustainer of faith. As such he makes alive, cares for, feeds and defends our souls. Therefore there is no greater “Gift” for the gifts he gives are eternal.

September 26 Luke 11:14-26 Again, we see Jesus battling a possession that is far worse than that of being possessed by a demon – the possession that is called unbelief. To more than just imply that Jesus’ work is done by the hand of satan, is a sin of unbelievable proportions. Why so?¹ It is very critical for each of us to ask, “What spirit/whose spirit fills me?” for it is easy to think, “I am a believer, so I am ok,” and let our spiritual life slide. But that is not wise to do, as we read today. So we believers need to ask, “As a believer what am I filling my ‘house’, my soul, with?”²

Prayer: Lord Jesus, with your blood you have brought my spiritually bankrupt wreck of a house. You have kept me from eternal foreclosure, hell. In grateful response, let me ever care for and be a good steward of my spiritual house, my soul. By your Spirit grant that it is only filled with you. In mercy never let my ‘last state’ be worse than the first. Amen and amen.

¹It is so evil because it claims that the Spirit that filled Jesus, the Holy Spirit, is evil, from satan. For that reason this sin is unforgivable (See Mark 3:28-30, Luke 12:10). ²As Jesus has cleansed our ‘house’ of satan and his evil, it’s a good idea to have Christ and his Spirit fill it and furnish it with all the good and blessings that God alone can give, and to leave no room for evil of any sort.

September 27 Luke 11:27-28 Oh, how we love celebrities, their fame and all that tinsel they can buy! To at least possess one of those ‘six degrees of separation’ with a famous ‘one of those’ who can buy tinsel (the fast and footloose life style; the ‘bling’ of gold, platinum, diamond and other jewelry; mansions, high-end automobiles, sleek powerboats) is so cool and great. To rub elbows with them is even better. But to actually personally know and be in with one of the rich and famous (especially one of the young, the bold and the beautiful), that’s the best because that makes me a ‘somebody’ because I’m attached to a “SOMEBODY”. But God doesn’t want us to be satisfied with simply superficial brushes or acquaintances with the supposed famous and their tinsel. He wants us to have more, something of depth and meaning. That’s why Jesus said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!” Such a hearer and keeper is a real ‘somebody’ because he or she is, God’s workmanship (Eph. 2). He or she is not only acquainted with, but an actual functioning and contributing part of the body of Christ of which Christ is the head. Such a person is a saved ‘somebody’. Such a person is an eternally saved ‘somebody’. Do I have God’s view of what’s makes me valuable, of what makes me blessed?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, help me know that I am only a ‘somebody’ when I am attached to you. To that end open my ears to hear what you say in these verses. Open my eyes to see the ‘tinsel’ that I’ve loved, craved and, sadly, so often settled for, for what it really is - nothing. Let me understand that true treasure is found only by being attached to you, hearing your Word, and keeping it. That, Lord, is the definition of being blessed. Amen.