

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Gospel of Luke, Session 15, Following Jesus, Duties and Privileges, Luke 9:51-10:24

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This is Dr. Daniel K. Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 15, Following Jesus, Duties and Privileges, Luke 9:51-10:24.

Welcome back to the Biblica eLearning lecture series on the Gospel of Luke.

We have been able to cover a few things in this gospel, and we have looked at the ministry of Jesus in Galilee from the infancy narrative. At this point, we are taking the next step to look at how Jesus travels from Galilee and performs various ministries on the way in Luke's account. That will bring him to Jerusalem, and the gospel narratives will end up with Jerusalem, where he will be arrested, crucified, and buried.

So now, the ministry is on the way to Jerusalem. We will begin to focus on the last part of chapter 9 from verse 51 and then take a look at some verses of chapter 10 in this one-hour lecture. First, let me draw your attention to a few things in the transition.

The break from the ministry of Jesus to Galilee is one that some scholars try to do earlier, as early as verse 10, trying to wonder whether we should be able to look at some of the parables and locate them at certain places. However, I find a good number of scholars and myself; as I look at the text carefully, I tend to think that the break was in the right place, so I will begin the journey narratives or accounts from 51 of chapter 9 instead. Jesus going to Jerusalem and Luke's way of following geography becomes very important because Jesus came from Judea and then later on when he came to Galilee, spent more time in Galilee and went to Jerusalem and later the ministry began in Jerusalem with the church and in Acts the church will build from there to the rest of the world.

The session we are looking at is presented, showing clear markers of the journey. For example, as we look at Chapter 5, verses 51 to 55, we see that there is a clear indication of a journey being taking place. And then you go to chapter 10, verse 1, verse 38, chapter 11, verse 53, chapter 13, verses 22 and 33, chapter 17, verse 11, chapter 18, and so all the way to chapter 19, verse 27, you see features and markers showing that this is a journey leading up to Jerusalem.

Luke will stress in the course of these narratives the ultimate destination or goal of Jesus is to arrive in Jerusalem, where the messianic mission will reach this

consummation of being arrested and crucified, the key things he had mentioned to the disciples. Now we turn quickly to the session that we will be covering, which I call Following Jesus, the Duties and the Privileges. We will see Jesus trying to go through some Samaritan villages and how some of these villages will reject him because they are aware that he has set his eyes on Jerusalem, and as Samaritans, that in itself is not good news because they don't like that idea.

We will see Jesus talking about discipleship and people who are following him being ready to be disciples, followed by an account that only Luke presents where Jesus, instead of the 12, sends out the 70 or 72, depending on the manuscript that your text depends on to go out to ministry and bring a report back. At the end of this particular session, we will see the return of the missionaries, the missionaries' report, and Jesus' subsequent response to what is going on with the missionaries. Quickly, let's turn to the Samaritan village and the rejection of Jesus' ministry.

I read from verses 51 to 56. To make preparations for him. Samaritan village rejects Jesus.

They have apparently heard about the things that are going on in Galilee. They have heard about the ministry of Jesus by Jesus sending people to prepare the grounds for him to be able to go and go on smoothly. That said, I should clarify that Samaria is not all that friendly terrain for a Jew going by.

Jews don't like, typically don't like Samaritans because they are mixed blood in the Assyrian exile. It is believed that some Jews were left behind. They intermarried and had a mixed heritage and settled the land while the rest of the Hebrews or Jews were in exile. Consequently, they build up a group, a society, or a community that we will refer to later as the Samaritans who will comprise mixed blood but whose religious beliefs will also be a distortion or, if you like, distorted version of what the Jews would deem as pure Judaism in Second Temple Judaism.

The Samaritans, for example, will look at the significance of mountains like Gerizim as a very important place where the Jews are looking at the mount, the city of David, Jerusalem, where the temple is and where the center of worship resides. So think about this animosity, if you like, and the written code of difference between Jews and Samaritans. Here in the first century, in Second Temple Judaism, Jesus, a Jew with all their disciples who are Jews, will be traveling to Jerusalem instead of the typical route of crossing to the east of the Jordan, leaving the Samaritan territory, and then going all the way and entering Judea through crossing the Jordan towards Jericho and others.

Now, here they decide to go through Samaria, and that is why we find this response. The Samaritans are like, what is going on here, and then they hear the worst. They hear that Jesus is actually setting his eyes toward Jerusalem.

In other words, Jesus deemed Jerusalem as a center of worship, a center of Jewish religious life. Samaritans don't accept that. That in itself is not good.

So, they reject him as a result. I mentioned to you earlier in the previous lecture about what I call the shadows of the disciples. You see that playing out again here.

They said oh no, you see, they reject us. Master, do you want us to call fire from heaven just to consume them? I mean, we can do this, right? We have power. They have no clue.

But you see, that reminds me of us. We are human beings, and the apostles were just like us. Occasionally, they get upset.

They want to cross. They want to do whatever they can to cause some problems. Samaritan village rejects Jesus.

Three things to observe here. One, their attitude was not on any messianic belief. For them, they are rejecting Jesus not because Jesus is promoting himself as the Messiah or anything like that.

But the sheer fact that he has set his eyes on the journey to Jerusalem as a sacred place is problematic for them. That brings the response. The response is the disciples want revenge and retribution.

Jesus does not want revenge and retribution. They want revenge and retribution, believe it or not, not necessarily because of the simple rejection that they are experiencing by trying to prepare grounds for a visit that others are not accepting. No, there is a long-standing problem between Jews and Samaritans that I mentioned earlier.

And because there are all these animosities percolating, one rejection brings everything out. They would like to see the worst happen to them. As one scholar puts it in relative to this particular account, Craddock states, just as Jesus' baptism was followed by rejection in Nazareth, so now the transfiguration and event parallel the baptism is followed by rejection in Samaria.

Jesus was planning to take his ministry to the Samaritans. Obviously, they would have to move on quickly to the next village because this immediate village that is unnamed is not going to accept them. That brings me to verse 57 in the narrative.

Where Jesus is going to underscore the necessity of understanding what it takes to follow him because the disciples are already doing something, they went to a foreign soil. Their immediate reaction is not necessarily the best.

They are setting their eyes on Jerusalem, where huge aspects of the ministry will unfold. They need to understand what it means to follow Jesus. Luke writes that as they were going along the road, someone said to him, I will follow you wherever you go.

But Jesus said to him, foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but a son of man has nowhere to lay his head. To another, he said, follow me. But he said, Lord, let me first go and bury my father.

And Jesus said to him, leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God. Yet another said, I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.

Jesus said to him, no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. In his phrase of explaining readiness for discipleship, notice that he mentions the kingdom of God two times. Then, he brings in a very important part of the culture, namely kinship and family relations, into how one considers the price of following Jesus.

If I may, I will call it, count the cost. Jesus said, if you want to follow me, you should count the cost. Foxes have holes, and birds have nests, but a son of man has no place to lay down his head.

Do not think that following Jesus, he would argue, will give you an established home where you will find stability and enjoy a family setting. After all, he began his ministry as one who would have accommodation problems. He was born in a manger among sheep.

He said homelessness is associated with his ministry. Another way of putting it is saying, his ministry is going to be an itinerant ministry. They will be on the road a lot.

The son of man is not going to settle down in one place because the kingdom's business that he's embarking on requires a lot of traveling and a lot of activities. Both the disciples, the apostles following him, and those he's speaking with who are unnamed in this particular account are becoming aware that there is going to be a long ministry trip between Galilee and Jerusalem. And Jesus says it's not going to be very close to home.

Because even for the apostles, when everything is happening in Galilee, it's close to home. If they are in Capernaum, they are close to where Peter and others were. If they are on the other side, towards Nazareth, that is where Jesus himself grew up.

But now they are getting to the road, and they are going into foreign lands. The son of man has no place to lay his head, he tells them. He also tells them about the high calling involved in being his disciple.

When he said, let the dead bury their dead, he is actually saying, let those who are spiritually dead be so eager and obsessed to fulfill their kingship obligation of burying the dead. Whenever I read this particular account as one who is very interested in kingship in the ancient world, it strikes me about what Jesus demands of his disciples. And friends, I think it's a lot.

We are talking about a culture where one of the highest honors one gives to parents is to be able to help them in their old age and take care of them. And then, when they die, you give them a fitting burial. It is rather irresponsible, and society would deem it shameful, and one would lose their reputation in society for failing to bury a parent, particularly a parent when they die in this culture.

Yet, when someone said, I'll be ready to follow you provided I am given the time to take care of burying the dead that I'm responsible for, Jesus said, no, the kingdom of God must be prioritized above kingship obligations. Jesus is not negating kingship per se, but he prioritizes kingdom ministry over kingship obligations. I could imagine how hard it would be for me, if I were in that context, to fulfill that obligation.

This is especially true if you are a man, and by all accounts, Jesus is talking to man; it is not easy. You need to bury your dead. Yes, Jesus is saying that even when there are a lot of responsibilities that are pertinent to your standing in society, to even your place in your family, seek to prioritize the kingdom of God.

If you remember, in Matthew 7 on the mount, Jesus is trying to convey that kind of thought when he said at the end of the whole account of being anxious about things that he said one should seek first priority, the kingdom of God and its righteousness. And all these things will be added. Here, he also calls to discipleship and emphasizes that one should prioritize again following him above all.

So, I said I would like to go home to say goodbye to my people. Jesus said, no, no, no, no. Do you know that proverb everybody knows in the neighborhood? You know, one who put your hand in the plow, you don't quit and look back.

You have to keep going. If you are ready to follow, you don't say, oh, I see you right now, but I'm going to turn back. No, no, no.

You just said to keep your focus and priority. Jesus is highlighting priority and prioritizing this at levels that are significant for one to note. As I said earlier, the barrier of the dead was a religious duty that took precedence over all others in Jewish society, as Howard Marshall writes, including even the study of the law.

Priests who were not normally allowed to touch dead bodies could not do so, even in the case of relatives. They need to go and do so to fulfill their obligations. But Jesus said in a very simple language, let the dead bury their dead.

Let those who are spiritually dead move away to go and bury their physically dead. Wow. That is a lot.

And then, just after that, Jesus will look at those who are around him and account that no one else recorded in the other gospels and calls on 70 or 72 and now charge them with ministry while he's still on the road heading in the direction of Jerusalem. Let's read that account from chapter 10, from verses 1 to 16. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Go your way. Behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no money bag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, Peace be to the 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 whatever is set before you. Before I move from this screen, I want to just draw your attention quickly to some things that are in the text here.

You notice from verses 3 and 4 where Jesus is talking about what not to bring along. Here, he adds sandals to what he said to the 12 earlier on. From the money bag and the knapsack, he now says you don't even need to bring additional sandals.

But then he adds another thing here at the end of verse 4 to say, Greet no one on the road. And I just want to have that; keep it in the back of your mind. He is sending them to a region that is Samaria.

And this is not a friendly terrain. He wants them to keep their focus and greet no one on the road because they are no longer in Galilee; they are in the Samaritan territory. And then he goes on as he describes, whatever is provided, eat and all that.

He said do not go from house to house. Just as you go to the town, if you are accepted, please stay, eat, and drink whatever is set before you. And then Luke continues.

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 street and say,

even the dust of your town that clings to our feet will wipe off against you. Nevertheless, know this: the kingdom of God has come near.

I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom. Then, for that town. Woe to you, Gerizim.

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 bearable 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 the Hades. 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. So now Jesus sends the 70 or 72, an account that the other synoptic gospels do not record. The first thing to note is that Luke is unique in recording this account.

Two, it is very complex to address the issue of 70 or 72. Are there 70, or are there 72? The manuscript discussion is 50-50. There are fairly reliable manuscripts that use 70.

And there are fairly reliable manuscripts that present 72. So, scholars are tossed between. So when you find in any translation you use, especially in English, some use 72, some use 70, you should know that some have weighed the manuscript for 70 a little bit higher and have accepted the 70.

But there are also further explanations that go into the awaying that are not necessarily tax-critical criteria. That is, it is believed that what Luke is doing here, Luke seems to be alluding to Moses. And Luke seems to be alluding to Moses' ministry, where he would choose 70 elders, as we see in Exodus 24 and as we see in Numbers 11.

Luke seems to be alluding to that here. And if you allude to that, then, then, like the ministry of Moses, 70 makes sense. Should we take that, or should we not? Well, I like the round figure, so let's go for 70.

But I just want to be frank with you that the manuscripts that say 72 are not that weak. That is why it goes both ways in terms of how one views what is going on in this text. Fourth, when Jesus sends them, he sends them into a foreign terrain ahead of him, places that he has yet to go.

He sends them two by two. This could be in the case of mutual support for one another, or as it is both in Jewish and Samaritan tradition, two or three are needed

to bear witness. So, it may be important that as they go two by two, they come as true witnesses of what they have seen and heard from Jesus.

Namely, the kingdom of God and the ministry of the kingdom of God. So that when they mention what Jesus is doing, what they are saying will be believable. One person testifying in that cultural setting will lack the credibility that is required.

You need two or three to bear that witness. I am intrigued by another thing Luke does here. Luke says that Jesus, by telling them that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few, turned to this 70 or 72 quickly and told them that the first thing that is needed is not for them to step out to do ministry.

No. He said pray. Pray to the master.

Some translations use the word kurios, they translate here as Lord. Pray to the master of the harvest—the one whose harvest field it is.

He might supply more laborers. Yes, I will send you the list, but the task is huge. It is going to require more laborers to get it done.

For Luke, it is important that this important mission is preceded by prayer. I have often told students in my Luke Arts class that if they want to be involved in any Christian ministry and follow the map of Luke, they cannot exclude prayer. For Luke, to do God's work is to check in with God and to make sure you are on track doing what God is calling you.

Here, he said, even for the harvest itself, it is God who is the Lord, the master of the harvest. And those who are going to be sent, before they hear that they are being sent, he says, join in prayer and call on the Lord of the harvest to bring more because the harvest is plentiful. That which is ready to be harvested is ripe and ready.

But there are few laborers who can get it done. Once speaking on this topic in Ghana, at a place where the season was tomato season to go and pluck the tomatoes, I saw the faces of the audience as I shared with them, and I made the analogy here to say, imagine God has miles and miles and miles of tomato farms and when you cast your eyes, unlike the tomato we eat over here in the United States, which are plucked when they are green and somebody sprays things for them to get ripe for us, there in that part of West Africa, tomatoes ripe and turn red before they are harvested. So as I told the farmers and I said to the people in the audience, I said, imagine that with these miles and miles of farm, all you see is green and red, red, green and red, red, green and red, and you see the harvest is plentiful.

And I asked, what will happen if we don't have enough laborers for the harvest? One man who seemed to be a tomato farmer just told me immediately, you need them.

You need the laborers. I said, what will happen? I thought he was going to say the tomato will rot. He said, you need the laborers.

And what he's trying to tell me is this: that is the farmer's dream. You have a plentiful harvest. You cannot afford to let it spoil.

You need laborers to harvest because for tomatoes, it's a matter of time. Here, Jesus says, the harvest is ready. The laborers are few.

Before you try to start harvesting, acknowledge that you can't do it alone by yourself. Check-in with the Lord of Harvest. Cry out to him for more laborers.

And then I'll send you out. And then Jesus sends them out. But as he sends them out, he asks them to travel light.

He asks them to be modest. I also want to check their message. He told them that the message was still the same: the kingdom of God.

They should preach the kingdom and heal the sick. They set out. And we find the characters, the characters of the missionaries, unfolding.

Jesus said that as far as their behavior is concerned when they go to people's homes, they should conduct themselves appropriately. In terms of attitude of reception, they should accept whatever is offered them by their host. But then Jesus also warns them.

If they are rejected, they should also show the most powerful form of rejection. Dusting off the soil of the land from their feet and warning the people of judgment as a result of the rejection that has been shown.

Jesus is involved in this big ministry. But as if sending them is not enough. He is reminded that these disciples are likely to face rejection.

They are likely to face rejection, as has happened in some towns. He goes on to talk about the cities that have been involved in some of this rejection. He said war to those cities who have rejected the message.

He talks about war. And he said for those who reject, it will be worse for them than what happened in Genesis on Sodom. Remember that in Luke's mention of Sodom here, he is not saying that the sin of Sodom is that of homosexuality.

In fact, Luke's point here is that the sin of Sodom is the lack of hospitality. And for their lack of hospitality, God punished them. Jesus tells these 70 or 72 that as they go

out, if they are not accepted, those who reject them are likely to face worse than Sodom.

But the war with the other cities that have seen great things and still don't believe. Judgment pronouncement is made to Gerizim, Tyre and Sidon, and the others. Even Capernaum gets its share.

Following from verse 17, Luke writes, The 72 returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. Notice that the first thing they want to tell Jesus is about the demons. The demons are subject to us in your name.

And he said to them, I saw 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. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

In that same hour, he rejoiced in the 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 who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son, and no one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Then, returning to the disciples, he said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings desire to see what you see. And did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. When the missionaries returned, they had some interesting things to say.

We saw Satan fall; they were very triumphalistic. And Jesus said, yes, you saw Satan fall. You cast out demons in his name. Jesus also said he saw Satan fall.

In reality, there is joy, Jesus rejoiced as well. But he cautions against self-congratulation. Jesus challenges them to rejoice in the Spirit.

Before I go on to talk about what Satan's fall and all that means, I like what Green has to say about this text. When Jesus mentions Sodom and the judgment for those who reject them, Green writes, The sin of Sodom was proverbial in the Old Testament and other Jewish texts, like Genesis 19, Isaiah 3, Ezekiel 16. Some interpretive texts note the general sexual immorality associated with Sodomites.

And that you see in Philo as well, absolutely speaks of the sin of Sodom as homosexual practice. However, the Jewish interpretation of Genesis 19 focuses above all on the violation of hospitality at Sodom. The association with Sodomites within hospitality is also in view in the current context.

They are symbols of any town that refuses to welcome Jesus, Jesus' agents, and are thus guilty of refusing hospitality to God's emissaries. Hospitality was a very, very important thing in ancient Jewish culture as it is in some of our cultures today.

It is not quite like the culture we are recording in, in the United States, but I had some great experiences of hospitality from Bosnia. Except for the Bosnian hospitality, I had to sit down and eat and drink the Turkish kava, the Turkish tea, that strong coffee, before any big conversation would happen. And I must say thank you to my Bosnian friends who may be watching this, for introducing me to your rich culture.

I used to say when I lived in that region that if I had been born anywhere else in the world, I would have been born in Bosnia. I like Bosnia, and I like your hospitality. And the Turkish kava, the Turkish coffee that you always supply, may be part of why I am addicted to coffee now, but you are not guilty of that.

Hospitality was important, at least in the time I worked in that region. Hospitality is very, very important in my home country. In fact, people will go a long way to offer their guests the best.

People who have next to nothing will kill the only fowl they have to prepare a meal for their guests. Sometimes I feel embarrassed when I go to my village. Some of the people I know, the poorest of the poor, will come in and offer me the best of what they have.

I know in my mind they have nothing. I am blessed. But it is their sign that says, welcome, we are so happy to see you.

I've seen it in some Asian countries, and when I'm in Middle Eastern countries, it is even more so. To come to somebody's home, they invite you to come for a meal. You have the family; they put in a lot of effort.

Hospitality is a big thing. To be inhospitable is a very, very bad thing. Jesus is saying here that when the disciples go out and are not received, those who reject them show a lack of hospitality.

Therefore, the judgment will be worse than that of Sodom. And Green's whole point is along that side. I want to move on quickly to touch on the idea of Satan falling because that has brought a lot of attention these days.

In verse 18, Luke writes, Then he said to them, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the powers of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not

rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

What do I saw Satan fall mean? Scholars have posed two questions around that. The first one is whether it refers to a primordial event or something that happened in the life and ministry of Jesus. Was Jesus referring to some time in the primordial age when Satan fell? Or is he talking of an event that was unfolding in his ministry prior to or during the event? Why was Satan so proactive? In the ministry of Jesus in the lives of many, if indeed Satan fell? So, these questions are posed, but we may not try to answer them outside the context in which Luke writes.

Luke said that 72 came back, and instead of talking about how many people heard about the message of the kingdom, the first thing, and the only thing they are ready to report to Jesus is, Lord we were able to cast out demons in your name, how cool is that? And Jesus said, yeah, I'm aware of that. I saw Satan fall, while you are there. So, you could see this particular reference in one of two ways or a combination of both.

You could see it as a mythical idea, utilized by Jesus to express the significance of exorcism or casting out demons to say, yes, when you were casting out demons and driving them out, I saw them falling during your period of exorcism. Or you could also think about the possibility of a vision of Jesus on the ultimate downfall of Satan that was beginning in the unfolding ministry while the 70 or 72 were out, and they were casting out demons out of people. In either case, something that will still unsettle someone in a Western country is something that Luke wants you to bear in mind.

That Satan is active in the lives of people. As in the Parable of the Sower, the devil is also active, trying to undermine God's work. And here, when the 70 went out, they were able to deal with the demons, and Jesus presented that as, yes, the highest power conceivable, Satan, has fallen down.

By the way, in my recollection, I think this is the first place Luke is going to use Satan, and he will be using Satan here in many other places. Satan, being the highest power overseeing the demonic activity, falls. So yes, you can ask that legitimate question.

If Satan did fall while they were out, why is he so active? Well then, it is possible that when the kingdom of God comes, in whoever lives, in whatever situation, Satan loses his stronghold, and the reign of God is ushered in. But where the kingdom of God has not advanced, and the power of the kingdom has not been seen, the message of the kingdom has not been proclaimed and received, and the power of God has not been demonstrated, then Satan will still have his stronghold. So Satan is active, but Satan is not to be said to be active in the lives of God's people who have believed and trusted in Jesus and are participants in the kingdom of God.

Exorcisms, as Howard Marshall says, are a sign of the defeat of Satan. Thus, the eschatological defeat of Satan is seen to take place in the ministry of Jesus and his disciples here as the seventy go out and come to report about seeing Satan fall. Again, as Nolan writes, in a vision, he has seen the coming triumph of the kingdom of God over the rule of Satan and has identified this triumph as his own task. This vision is becoming a reality in his own ministry of exorcism, healing, and proclaiming the kingdom of God.

In the present context, the same working out of the envisioned future is seen in the extension of Jesus' ministry through his own disciples. In other words, exorcism is also becoming a manifestation of the kingdom's work. And if I may add another quote that I think clarifies and vivifies what is going on, from Green, that Luke portrays Jesus as having a prophetic vision, then whose content was the future and ultimate downfall of Satan, presumably scheduled by the time of the judgment to which he alludes to in verses 12 and 14.

Such a view is consonant with some Second Temple Jewish texts, but Jesus' view in this Lukan co-test pushes beyond the content of those. The decisive fall of Satan is anticipated in the future, but it is already becoming manifest through the mission of Jesus and, by extension, through the ministry of his envoys, namely the Seventy. They say, in your name, we saw Satan or demons come out, and Jesus said, yes, I saw Satan fall.

The kingdom of God has one of the primary enemies, Satan. And Jesus has come to deal with those forces head. He said, rejoice.

Rejoice that your names are written in heaven. This could be a metaphorical expression, suggesting that they are included in the kingdom of God, and it will also serve as a warning against spiritual pride. And assuring them that they have found salvation in Christ is the most important thing that they are participating in this great work.

The idea, by the way, of the names written in heaven is known both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. There is this idea of the Book of Life or a book that contains the records and names of deeds of righteousness. In Judaism, we find some of this alluded to in Exodus 32, 32-33, Psalm 69, 28.

In Paul, Paul talks about the Book of Life in Philippians 4, 3. In the book of Hebrews, we have chapter 12, 23. In Revelation, chapter 3, verse 5, we read about the Book of Life. The idea is that the names and the good deeds of those who are doing the right things are recorded and archived.

Jesus said the seventy must rejoice that they have such a place. I like the parables of joy and rejoicing in this account, and so I try to show the pattern. The seventy-two return with joy for the ministry outcome.

Jesus said, please rejoice that your name is written. That is where joy must be placed. The reason why they say they are rejoicing is because demons submit.

Jesus said, no, that is not important. Rejoice in the spirit that your name is written. They say, oh no, we rejoice because these demons submit, and they submit to the name of Jesus.

But Jesus said, no, no, no. Rejoice on the grounds that your name is written, and the Father is being glorified in the process. And then, as he goes on in verse 21, he tries to talk about something that is hidden and revealed.

He said that some great things have been hidden from the wise and the intelligent, but they have been disclosed to the infants. Oh, but here, let me just show you what is hidden and disclosed. When Jesus talks about the infant, he is talking about the least in society, who are the ideal figures to comprehend.

Jesus appeals to the custom of status and says that the status consciousness of society does not apply in the kingdom of God. The little takes preeminent place. The measure of wisdom, he says, is revealed, not to the wise, not to those who claim to be up there, because the measure of wisdom by the worldly standard is irrelevant, given what they see and hear in this kingdom ministry.

The comfort of infants is the life, expectation, and attitude required of true disciples of Jesus to operate in his name. Jesus says, yes, they went out, they saw great and mighty things happen, but he would rather rejoice. He would rather rejoice that their names are written. And that is a good cause for them to rejoice as well.

Friends, kingdom ministry is not about us. Kingdom ministry is not, and I should say, it is not about how we boast of the things we have accomplished. Kingdom ministry comes with humility in realizing that people who participate and become disciples of Jesus are simply privileged to be called to be a part of the great work of God and that whatever is accomplished in the process comes to the glory of God.

That disciples or servants in the ministry of Jesus are not more than servants, if you like, slaves. The servant's job and one expectation to carry is to do the master's bidding. And when that is done, the servant should be happy.

Jesus says, in true discipleship, people follow the course of action, and they give credit to whom the credit is due, and they rejoice for the right cause for the mission. In the accounts we have seen so far, as we look at these journey narratives, we have

seen Jesus sending disciples forward and some rejecting in some of the villages, even for him to come. We also see Jesus encountering some people and asking them to follow as disciples.

And they gave excuses. Some say, for one reason, they cannot make it: they need to bury their dead, and they need to say hello and goodbye to those who are at home. Jesus asked them to prioritize discipleship above all.

When Jesus comes to send the 70 or the 72, Luke is quick to remind us that he was sending them two by two to go ahead of him to places he would go. But he would not be quick to send them unless he stops them. Ask them to pray for the Lord of Harvest to bring harvesters to help harvest the ripe fruit. Imagine the tomato illustration I gave you.

And when he sends them, and they move for that mission, we are told that they came out with tangible results. The only concern for Jesus is that their report was so one-sided. They only talk about how they were able to cast out demons in his name.

Jesus corrects that. He gives them a good cause to rejoice. They must rejoice that their name is written in the Book of Life, in heaven if you like.

Jesus calls us to follow. He calls us to adopt the attitude of a child and be faithful followers. Friends, Jesus did not call us to be heroes.

He did not call us to do some big things for him. First, he calls us to follow. To follow means to follow his instructions.

To check in with God. Yes, and he calls us to be faithful. I hope and pray that God helps you and me to be faithful as we seek to follow him.

Both in this learning experience and our very walk in real life. Thank you, and God bless you.

This is Dr. Daniel K. Darko in his teaching on the Gospel of Luke. This is session 15, Following Jesus, Duties and Privileges, Luke 9:51-10:24.