

Reasons We Rejoice, Part 2

Luke 10:17-18

You're going to find this victory in battle, number eight, though: The joy of Kingdom supremacy. Kingdom supremacy. In this victory, the disciples rejoiced in seeing and participating in the beginning and the end of demonic tyranny. At this point, they don't know the full significance of what they're seeing. Jesus is going to tell them, but the fleeing demons represent the downfall of Satan's rebel kingdom. I don't know if you've been following international news. We've sort of seen that over the past few years, illustrated with ISIS, American coalition forces killing, capturing ISIS fighters, taking territory in Syria, Iraq. For the Muslim, they understand and interpret that taking back of territory that once belonged to that terrorist, self-proclaimed terrorist caliphate. With every mile of ground that ISIS lost to coalition forces, it de-legitimized ISIS' claim that they had a caliphate under which all Muslims needed to unite and submit. Kind of similar here. Every spiritual victory over Satan represents the defeat of Satan, the diminishment of his illegitimate claim over the souls of men. And instead, it proves the supremacy of the Kingdom of God that

we preach as we take back more and more and more territory, as more souls are won for the Kingdom.

Number nine: The joy of Kingdom honor. So you've got the joy of victory in battle, the joy of Kingdom supremacy in number eight, and number nine, the joy of Kingdom honor in acknowledging Jesus as Lord of the Kingdom of God, in exercising the authority and power of the King, healing the sick, casting out demons in his name, coming as heralds of the Kingdom to announce the heavenly Kingdom. Listen, what an honor! What an honor to be representing him! They're rejoicing in this massive honor that is bestowed upon them. "The demons are subject to us as we preach and teach and cast out demons in your name." They represent him; that's what "in your name" means. They are representing him. And Jesus has granted these disciples, mere men, like you and me, a high, holy honor of representing him, who is the King of God's holy Kingdom. That's our honor as well, beloved; our honor as well.

Well, listen, all of those joys unfold when we consider what it means to complete the mission. Every time we engage in Great Commission ministry, this Great Commission Christ has

given to us, when we trust his Word, when we do his work in his way, without too much difficulty, I think you'll see how these joys apply to us as well in our own mission, our own time and our own place. When we're engaged in Great Commission work, Matthew 28:18-20, to make disciples of all nations, we go out and evangelize sinners, unbelieving sinners. We teach them the Gospel, we want them to know and understand enough that when they're baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, they, they understand something of the Triune God, of Trinitarian theology. They understand something of the nature of God.

So we teach unbelieving sinners, we baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then we take those new Christians, and we teach them to observe everything else Jesus commanded. Why? Because we want to hold it over their heads? No! Because, like the psalmist in Psalm 119, "Oh, how I love your law." Christians love obedience. Christians love to practice what Jesus taught. Why? Because we love to walk in wisdom, we walk in truth, we love to see it worked out in our lives, love to see wisdom pervade our family atmosphere, so that we parent according to the Book, so we do marriage according to the Book, so we do all of life and godliness and everything

according to the Book. It's not a burden for us. "I run in the pathway of your commands," the psalmist says, "because you have set my heart free." That's what freedom is, to do what Christ has commanded.

So we teach believers, discipling them, helping them to grow as disciples. We have the honor, the privilege, the joy that comes from trusting Christ, obeying his Word, going out on his mission. We, too, put his word to the test. We'll prove him faithful. We'll prove his promises true, his instructions reliable, his wisdom insurmountable. And he will preserve us and protect us. He'll keep us safe from harm. He'll give us success in the mission. And then we rest, leaving the results to him.

Like the farmer who plants seed, and seed fell way over there where he wasn't even gleaning and gathering and harvesting, and he sees over there, wow! A whole other patch of corn growing up over there. "I didn't know anything about it." Many of the seeds of the Gospel, though, you and I plant, beloved, we may never see the fruit of it. We may die first, and then seeds will grow up later on. Listen, we leave the results to him. We learn the benefits of his Lordship, and we find

Gospel friends serving the same Lord, partnering with them in the work. This leads to unexpected blessing beyond all that we can ask or imagine when we test his word and prove it to be true. We gain victory after victory after victory in spiritual warfare. We see the authority and the power and the supremacy of the Kingdom of God above all, and we have the honor of representing our King.

Moving to verse 18. We saw joy in the mission completion. Now we will see joy in Jesus' observation; joy in Jesus observations, that's letter B there. So here's where we see Jesus participating in the mission of the seventy-two. He would follow after them, visiting the receptive towns that they had visited before him. But in verse 18, we see that he wasn't just with them after; he wasn't just participating after. He was with them all along. He's engaged in the mission with what we might call active oversight. He said to them in verse 18, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." "Saw him fall like lightning from heaven." Again, just a few words to explain that before we get into nine more reasons.

First, what is Jesus talking about, here? Is he referring to Satan's fall from heaven at the very beginning, before Genesis 3? Or is he referring to something after that? Perhaps he's talking about the temptation in the wilderness, when Satan failed in an attempt to cause Jesus to sin. Or perhaps Jesus is looking far off into the future, maybe prophetically pointing ahead to Satan's ultimate demise when he is cast into the lake of fire in Revelation 20, verse 10. Well, by virtue of his divine nature, we know that Jesus the Son of God was there as the second person of the Trinity to watch Satan's fall before Genesis chapter 3. He's ever-present; he's in a timeless essence as God, and in his, in his omniscience and in his omnipresence, he's able to see and be there at Satan's final judgment in Revelation chapter 20, even though in time and space from our perspective that hasn't happened, yet.

But the question is what is Jesus talking about here, in this context, Luke chapter 10? What does he intend the seventy-two to understand about what he's saying? How would they take his comment? And the interpretive key is found in the verb there: "I saw." It doesn't come across as well in the English. It's *theoreo* in the Greek, variously translated as "saw," "watched," "beheld," "observed," "looked on." But what's

interesting about the verb, which is hard to see in English, the verb indicates a continuous action in past time. So for you Greek students, it's the aspect of the imperfect tense, continuous action, past time. Okay, so what? Okay, so when Jesus says, "I saw," he's saying, "I was watching, I was observing Satan's fall." It's, get this, while the seventy-two were out on mission, "I was watching, I was observing Satan fall." Simultaneously. So while they're getting into receptive towns and they're healing and they're preaching and, lo and behold, they get to cast out demons, too, Jesus is watching on. As at that moment, Satan fell. Godet, Frederick Godet, the commentator, says, "While you were expelling the subordinates, I was seeing the master fall." That's the sense.

Second point of introduction: In what way is Jesus seeing Satan fall? Like, like how is this actually happening to him in his experience? Is it through a vision? Is it some kind of mental perception? I don't see any record, really, in the Scripture of Jesus having visions, per se. It's kind of like when the devil, during the temptations in the wilderness, Luke, chapter 4, he took Jesus up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. How did Jesus perceive that? What was the experience like? Frankly, we don't know. We just don't

know. I mean, what is it like for Jesus to be the God-Man? Divine nature, human nature together in one person? It's one of the many mysteries of the Incarnation, this hypostatic union, two natures, one human, one divine, one person. Just some things we can't know or comprehend; we just take what it says there.

Third thing: We can know that Jesus is describing the sudden, precipitous fall of Satan, and not just of Satan himself but, but of his entire kingdom. The Greek word *satanas* is a transliteration of a Hebrew word which sounds just like "satan" Satan. It literally means "adversary," one who withstands, one who stands against. If we translate it as a proper name, it's Satan, with a capital "S", the forked tail at the end, referring to that fallen angel, that supernatural enemy who opposes God and man and angelic hosts as well. But just a footnote here in Luke's Gospel: This is the first time we see the name "Satan" in Luke's Gospel. Up to this point, that evil one has been referred to as "the devil." From here on, he'll be referred to as Satan, the Adversary. That's probably to emphasize the adversarial nature of Satan's entire existence. He lines up as God's adversary, which is foolish from the start. And now that we belong to God, he's our adversary as well. Jesus speaks here of Satan literally, as a personal being.

But Satan stands for not just himself as a singular individual entity. He stands for the entirety of his kingdom, the way the part can stand for the whole. When we say Washington was in conversation with Moscow, we understand two cities aren't coming together; we understand that the part represents the whole, right? Satan represents the entirety of his kingdom, so when Jesus names Satan, he's talking about him as the master, and the master represents the kingdom itself, Satan's rule, his kingdom, all his demon agents, every aspect of his influence. So like lightning striking out of the heavens, sudden, startling, not only is Satan himself falling, the whole thing is coming down as well.

So while the seventy-two disciples are engaging in their assigned mission, Jesus participates in their mission from the vantage point of supernatural oversight. He enters into their joy, here, letting them know, "While you were watching Satan's subordinates fall, I was watching Satan, like lightning from heaven, fall." It gives us another nine reasons to rejoice.

We've already used numbers one through nine; I'm going to continue the count with number 10. Number 10: The joy of Jesus' friendship. The joy of Jesus' friendship. They, these disciples had to have rejoiced in Jesus' response even though he has more to say in verse 20, which is mildly corrective. Look ahead to verse 20. He says, "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you." That's mildly corrective, but it's not slapping them down. "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." He's just pointing them to a, he's instructing their joy, he's directing their joy. He's not rebuking them for rejoicing over the submission of the demonic world. He's actually standing there with them, and we see him here treating them like friends. He's rejoicing with those who rejoice, like good friends entering into their joy.

You can almost imagine him here as they're talking. They're telling all the stories, and he's just kind of smiling, and he's, he's just waiting patiently for them to finish telling him all their stories because he's got a story to tell, too. He says, "You know, yeah, yeah, okay, I heard ya, all right, yeah, okay, no, that's a good one, too, yeah, oh, okay, great story about the, yeah the demon did what? Okay, great! Now let me tell you what I was seeing. You know what I was seeing while the

demons were all running from all of you? I was watching Satan, the master, fall from Heaven like lightning. Boys, the whole kingdom is coming down!" He's rejoicing in this with them, very exciting, very exciting.

Further, number 11: The joy of Jesus' oversight. When Jesus said, "I was watching," the disciples had to rejoice in the comfort that that brought. "Oh, what, you saw? You were there watching?" Look, while Jesus is on overwatch, nothing is going to touch them, nothing. They're able to do their work in peace and safety, with peace of mind they know that Jesus is always watching over them. Folks, that's a comfort to us as well, isn't it? When we're engaged in Gospel mission, Gospel ministry, making disciples, he's always watching over us because he always cares for us because he promised, "I will never," what? "Leave you or forsake you." "If you're doing my will, my way, preaching the Kingdom, making disciples, I'll never leave you." That is not a promise, by the way, to be ripped out of its context and taken into your life in whatever you want to do. Do your own will, do your own thing, "Oh, Jesus said he'll never leave me or forsake me." Uh, uh. It's got a context. It's attached to other verses. But it's a comfort to us if we'll just boldly go out and do what he tells us to do. He's with us. He cares for us.

Number 12: Look here, not only the joy of Jesus' oversight, but the joy of Jesus' insight. The joy of Jesus' insight. Jesus has here provided the disciples with insight that they could never have known on their own. This is the true "inside scoop." This is coming from the Son of God himself, the one who knows all things, who sees all things, who understands all things, and then, get this, he tells them about it. He brings them into that inner circle. What a privilege to be brought in to the divine counsel, the divine sight!

Number 13: The joy of special revelation. The joy of special revelation because that's what they're getting with his insight. As with all of holy scripture, so, too, Jesus reveals what's going to provide height and depth and length and breadth to the disciples' joy. What they knew, what they observed, what they had by their own experience that only took them so far, isolated incidents that they, they could observe as pairs of disciples going out. That only took them so far. Jesus special revelation that he provides, even greater reason to rejoice. Supernatural revelation is reason enough to rejoice, and what he says in the content of that revelation brings another reason for joy here.

Number 14: The joy of Jesus' interpretation. These thirty-six missionary pairs, as I said, were only able to see in part, individual experiences of demonic expulsion, individual battles that were won. Jesus, though, as the general over-it-all, he sees the whole battlefield. And he's there to interpret everything for them. Only he has the insight and the interpretive knowledge to tell them what all this meant.

Listen, that's what we have in the New Testament. The Gospels record the life of Jesus Christ. They give us the historical facts, the record, the sanctified record of what actually happened. But we also have the interpretation of those facts, by the Gospel writers themselves, first, but also in the rest of the New Testament. That's what the epistles are for, to interpret the meaning of what the Gospels tell us. We know what happened, and we also know the meaning of what happened, and that is huge, and that is what Jesus is providing right here for these seventy-two. So he tells the seventy-two not only of the demons fleeing, but that their master is falling, too. This is Satan's downfall, which is another reason for joy.

Number 15: The joy of fallen tyranny. The joy of fallen tyranny. The significance of what Jesus revealed is that the disciples were witnessing the beginning of the end. This is Satan's demise, his illegitimate rule, his cruel tyranny over mankind is coming to a decisive end. Jesus came, Hebrews 2, "to destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and to deliver all those to, who through the fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." So no more tyranny.

Satan's fall has commenced, which brings us then into number 16: The joy of divine perspective. The joy of divine perspective. From a human perspective, and you get this as you look at headlines all the time. Aren't they discouraging? Aren't they sad? As you, as you get to know friends and neighbors, family members who are caught up in the fallen world, how much sin ravages their lives, aren't you heartbroken and heart-sick over that? From a human perspective, Satan's *coup d'etat* may seem successful at times. He may seem in his power and influence to be unstoppable. But listen, it's not true. It's just a mirage. What comfort, what peace we find in knowing what Jesus has revealed here, which is a divine perspective on Satan and his kingdom and his influence. Satan's kingdom is falling, and the fall is like lightning. His rebellion is brief, bright but

brief. It disappears into eternal darkness. His fall is sudden and startling, but like lightning it's gone in a moment.

Number 17 brings us to reflect on the past and the joy of prophetic fulfillment. The joy of prophetic fulfillment. The disciples rejoiced in the beginning of this prophetic fulfillment of the downfall that was promised about Satan ever since Genesis 3:15. We talked about it with, in regard to Ezekiel 28, but listen to this out of Isaiah 14:12-14: "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

But, you're brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit." What Jesus sees here in the demise of Satan is nothing less than prophetic fulfillment. It gives these disciples, and it gives us, reasons to rejoice. As each word of Scripture finds its proper fulfillment, we gain further and further confidence as our faith is confirmed. Our hope is consummated moment by

moment as we're assured that our trust is never misplaced. God will accomplish all his good pleasure.

Finally, number 18, reason number 18: The joy of divine justice. The joy of divine justice. In Mary's song right at the very beginning, Luke 1:51-52, she rejoiced that God has scattered the proud, brought down the mighty from their thrones, and when she said that and sung those verses, it hadn't happened yet. She's speaking with faith. She's singing with faith because she believed the words from Gabriel, the angel, that the Son of the Most High would be born and pass through her womb, come into the world. God has scattered the proud, brought down the mighty from their thrones.

Listen, Satan, his demonic subjects, his human subjects as well, the lot of them are proud, and they refuse to bow the knee to God. All of them are clawing for some kind of temporary feudal pre-eminence on small, tiny little earthly thrones. Pretty much every day we scroll through our news feeds and see headline after headline, case after case of the destructiveness of the human lust for power and autonomy, selfish ambition, covetousness, greed. But the demonic love of evil, it's as vile

as it is cruel. Particularly acute in cases of demonic possession. For the believer, what a relief to know that God is holding Satan accountable, that justice is going to be done, and the Judge of all the earth will do what is right. Beloved, there is joy in divine justice.

Beloved, you and I would also die and wake up in the presence of the angry Judge of all the earth because there's no escape from his justice. Every thought, every word, every deed, every sin we've committed whether by omission or commission, every sin has a just and infinite punishment. But for us who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ by God's grace, we stand justified. We will die and stand before that throne of the Judge of all the earth, and he will look at us and say, "Righteous before me! You belong to me, and you are just as acceptable to me as my beloved Son. You are at my right hand. He died for you. All your sins are gone, and I love and embrace you as the Son. Come, enter into the joy of your Master."

Let's pray as we turn our attention to the Lord's table. Father, thank you so much for reasons to rejoice. Thank you so much for what you have done for us in Jesus Christ, that we can

come before this table, claiming his broken body and his blood shed for us, to bring us into this New Covenant, where you've made us new creations in Christ, giving us a new nature, one that longs to do your will, that rejoices whenever you tell us, "Go. Go." We rejoice not only to do that externally as our feet run to do your will, but our hearts rejoice to do your will, and we join with these seventy-two in prayer and every other brother and sister around the world who pray, "Lord, send more laborers into the harvest." We need your people. Let us participate in the joy of the harvest by preaching and proclaiming your name, for it's in the name of Jesus Christ we pray, amen.