



Luke 10

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Tape #8054
By Chuck Smith

There were many Jews that had established themselves in the area of TransJordan. The country, of course, religiously was centered in Jerusalem and in Judaea, which was the southern part. North of Jerusalem you had the area of Samaria. And as far as the Jews were concerned, they had no dealings with the Samaritans. They hated the Samaritans. North of Samaria was the Galilee, which they called the Galilee of the Gentiles. And those Jews from Judaea were contemptuous of the area of the Galilee and gave it that title, the Galilee of the Gentiles. The area across the Jordan known as Perea was just ignored by the Jews. They sort of just acted like it didn't exist.

Now Jesus is on His way toward Jerusalem. He is leaving Galilee for the last time, He began His journey toward Jerusalem coming down through Samaria. And you remember last week when the disciples had gone into a village to prepare for Jesus to stay there and when the people saw that His face was going towards Jerusalem, they did not receive Him. You remember James and John wanted to call down fire and consume them. So Jesus has now with His disciples crossed over the Jordan into that area on the other side, Perea, and He will spend the rest of His ministry there in Perea with the exception of a couple of visits to Jerusalem which John records for us.

But most of the information that we'll be getting in the next several chapters through chapter eighteen, about verse twenty-four or so, is just exclusively found in Luke's gospel. You don't find it in Matthew and Mark and John tells us of a couple of visits of Jesus to Jerusalem, but retiring again back to the other side of the Jordan river where He'll spend the last six months of His ministry.

After these things (10:1)

That is, their experiences in Samaria,
the Lord appointed other seventy also (10:1),

You got to realize that Jesus is travelling with a large company. At this point there is a large following that is going with Him around the countryside. And so He appoints another seventy. The seventy is a very significant number to the Jews.

You remember that Moses when he realized that he wasn't able to handle all of the problems that were arising among the people, he appointed seventy elders that they might receive the Holy Spirit and assist Moses in the ministry to the people. So that became a significant number to the Jews.

There were seventy in the Sanhedrin, the religious council of the Jews was made up of seventy members.

And when the Hebrew scriptures were translated into the Greek in order that the Jews might be able to read their own scriptures because the most of them only spoke Greek and not Hebrew, Hebrew became the language of the scholars, there were seventy men appointed for that task and so it was called the Septuagint because of the seventy men appointed to that task.

So seventy was a significant number to them and Jesus appointed other seventy, that is, other than the twelve apostles,

and He sent them two and two before Him into every city and place, whither he himself would come (10:1).

So Jesus is now sending out thirty-five teams of two to go into the area of Perea. It's new territory for Jesus. There are to go in and they are to prepare the people for the coming of Jesus. They're sort of an advanced team, going to the towns and villages, doing the works of Jesus and telling the people of Jesus and of the fact that He would be visiting through their territory. So it was really an organized effort in evangelism of this territory of Perea.

Therefore He said unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few (10:2):

There are three times when Jesus mentions the harvest. You remember when He in John's gospel, early

on met the woman at Jacob's well there in Samaria and when He revealed to her that He was the Messiah, she said, "I know when the Messiah comes, He's going to teach us all things. He said, Woman, I who am speaking to you, I'm He" (John 4:25,26). And so she went into the village and she said, "Come, and see a man who has told me everything I've ever done: is this not the Messiah" (John 4:29)? And while the disciples were talking with Jesus, the Samaritans began to pour out of this little city of Shechem, crossing the fields to Jacob's well where Jesus was waiting for them. And Jesus said, "Don't say, four months, and then comes the harvest? behold the fields; they are white unto harvest" (John 4:35). And the Samaritans came and heard the word and were converted.

Now if we had sent a team to Samaria to determine the possibilities of evangelism, they would have come back and said, That is a tough territory. It's going to take some time up there. You'll need time for plowing and breaking up the hard ground and planting the seed. The harvest is at least four months away. And Jesus said, No, no, don't say four months. Look, it's ripe now for harvest. The Samaritans, hated by the Jews, but Jesus said they're ready for the harvest.

In the Galilee region which the Jews looked at with contempt, when Jesus saw the multitudes the Bible said He had compassion upon them. He saw them as the harvest and He speaks of them as the harvest. Now here He sees this area of Perea ready to be harvested. And He said, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few:"

pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest (10:2).

Great harvest. The labourers are few. Pray that the Lord will send forth labourers into the harvest.

It's sort of a tragedy that after General MacArthur had signed the accord with Japan after the war, General MacArthur called on the United States to send ten thousand missionaries to Japan. He said they are ready for the harvest, they need the Gospel. They're a defeated people. But instead the commercial interest moved in with materialism and Japan was built by the commercial interests into a tremendous economic empire, the church failed. There was a great harvest there according to General MacArthur but we failed to reap the harvest. And the time of harvest sort of passed for Japan.

Right now the doors are open in Russia. People are all interested in hearing about the Gospel. But the doors are already beginning to close. Thank God that we've been able to send so many missionaries into Russia. We have many Calvary Chapels within Russia at the present time. But oh so few compared with what is needed to be there. And so Jesus said, "Pray ye the Lord of harvest that He will send forth labourers into the harvest." And then He said,

Go your ways (10:3):

He says pray and then go. So many times you pray, Lord send forth the harvest. (???) Okay, go. And He's talking to me, He's sending me. I'm praying, Lord send forth labourers. And so then He said to them, "Go your ways,"

behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves (10:3).

He saw the people there being preyed upon by the religious people, the wolves. And I'm sending you forth as lambs among the wolves.

Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and don't salute [or greet] men in the way (10:4).

Their salutations were very formal and long and drawn out. Jesus said, You don't have time for those long formal salutations. You've got a task to accomplish.

And into whatsoever house you enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again (10:5,6).

If the Spirit of God is moving in our hearts and the son of peace is there, then you'll realize it. If not, then it will turn, you'll discern, you'll feel it. The peace will turn to you again.

And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Don't go from house to house (10:7).

Don't just go on and establish your work and remain there and eat and drink what they give you. "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

And into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you (10:8):

And then their commission was to,

Heal the sick, and to declare to the people, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you (10:9).

When He sent the twelve out, He gave them power. He told them to cast out devils, to heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead. Here He says nothing about casting out devils. However, we know that they did do this. When they returned they were rejoicing that even the devils were subject to them in the name of Jesus. But basically their commission is just to heal the sick and tell the people that the kingdom of God is coming near to you. They were really to announce the fact that Jesus the King was going to be coming to their area, to their village, to their city. And they were to be forerunners of Jesus coming to these villages.

But into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaves on us, we do wipe off against you: [but Jesus said] notwithstanding be ye sure of this (10:10,11).

This is what they are to say, your dust that cleaves to us, we wipe off against you. However, know this, be sure,

that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you (10:11).

You've come close to the kingdom. It is sort of a tragic thing that many people come close to the kingdom but never enter in. There is a time when maybe through tragedy, maybe through heartache, maybe through a death of a loved one, a person's heart is touched. Their heart is open. They're sort of searching. And the kingdom of God comes near to them. Many people who have been near to the kingdom of God have tragically turned away from that door of opportunity that they had to enter into the kingdom because the Spirit of God was working in their hearts and in their lives.

And so it was a sad thing if a village would reject and they would have to shake the dust off and say, The dust that cleaves to us, we shake it off. But know this, The kingdom of God was near to you. You had your opportunity to receive the kingdom of God. You had your opportunity to accept the King. Jesus said, "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaves on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be sure of this, the kingdom of God is come near."

But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city (10:12).

Jesus always taught that the judgment would be according to the knowledge that people receive. That the people of Sodom, though they did things that were unspeakably evil, they had not a great witness brought to them. It would appear that by the time Lot came to the city of Sodom, he had so compromised his own witness that he failed to be a witness. And thus not really having much of a witness, when the day of judgment comes "it will be more tolerable in that day of judgment for Sodom, than for those cities" that had the opportunity to hear Jesus and rejected the light that God brought to them.

Sinning against the light, against the knowledge that you have is much worse than the sins that are committed by a person who has never had the opportunity to hear or to know. Luke will point that out quite clearly when we get to chapter twelve. A couple of weeks from now He points out very clearly how that "To whom much is given, much is required:" (Luke 12:48). To whom little is given, little is required.

But then Jesus as He is speaking of that day of judgment that's going to come, the resurrection of the dead to be judged. The men of Sodom will arise in the day of judgment, they will be judged before God along with every other generation that has lived upon the earth.

Paul said, "And thinkest thou, O man, that you can escape the judgment of God" (Romans 2:3)? In Hebrews it asked the question, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (Hebrews 2:3). And how can we escape what? The judgment of God, if we reject the great salvation that has been brought to us through Jesus Christ.

So speaking then of that day of judgment, and of the judgment to come and of people who have sinned against the light, the knowledge that God has given to them, He said,

Woe unto you, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they would have a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you (10:13,14).

It is interesting that Jesus speaks of the great works that were done in Chorazin. But what is interesting is that the scriptures don't record for us any of the great works that Jesus did in Chorazin. The miracles that are recorded in the scripture were most of them done in the city of Capernaum. Other cities of Galilee, of course,

the widow of Nain, her son came back to life; in Cana of Galilee, He turned the water into wine; and in all of these other cities, Bethsaida, Chorazin and all, Jesus also did many marvellous miracles but they're not recorded in the scripture.

But John tells us at the end of his gospel that if all of the things that Jesus did were actually recorded, all of the libraries in the world could not hold the books that could have been written and maybe should have been written of all that Jesus did and said.

So here is a good example. He is talking about the marvellous works that were done in Chorazin and Bethsaida and yet we don't have any account of those works in the scriptures here at all. Near Bethsaida is where He fed the five thousand with the five loaves and two fish but that was out of town. But here is judgment pronounced against these cities who had seen the work of God, had the opportunity to observe God's work and sinned against the knowledge that was brought to them in the teaching of Jesus.

And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven (10:15),

It was sort of the crown jewel of the sea of Galilee.

you will be brought down or thrust down to hell (10:15).

Exalted, wealth and prestige, but going to be brought down. And then Jesus said,

He that hears you hears me; and he that despises you despises me; and he that despises me despises him that sent me (10:16).

It's beautiful to me how Jesus identified with those who go forth to witness for Him. He is saying, Look, they're not really rejecting you, they're rejecting Me. And I think that that's an important thing for us to remember many times when we start to witness to people about Jesus Christ and they get angry and mean and nasty, we have such a tendency to personalize it and to just feel real horrible because we don't like people to hate us, we don't like people to be angry with us. Yet in reality, Jesus said it's Me that they're despising. It's Me that they won't listen to. And He so identifies with us as we go forth in His name to witness for Him that He says, Look, if they're not hearing you, they're really not hearing Me. If they're despising you, they're really despising Me. And if they're despising Me, they're also despising Him who sent Me.

And the seventy returned (10:17)

They went on out as they were commanded and they returned,

again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils were subject unto us through thy name (10:17).

They had gone forth and had ministered in the power of the Spirit. Came back rejoicing. The victories that they saw, the power that they had experienced even over the demonic spirits in the name of Jesus. And it was through the name of Jesus that they practiced the exorcism.

You remember the seven sons of Sceva in the book of Acts who have been watching Paul and his ministry of exorcism. And they got hold of this man who had an unclean spirit and they said, "We adjure you in the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches." Come out. "And the spirit said, I know Paul, and I know Jesus; but who are you? (Acts 19:13,15) And he turned on them and ripped off their clothes and all and they fled for their lives. It isn't the Jesus whom Paul preaches that has power in your life. It's the Jesus whom you have experienced personally. That's the power in your life, that personal relationship that you can have and should have with Him.

As they gave this glowing report,

Jesus said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (10:18).

This is an interesting passage and a little difficult to know exactly what Jesus was referring to. It would appear from the scriptures that Satan has access into heaven. In the book of Job, we read that the sons of God were presenting themselves unto God and Satan also came with them. And God addressed him, He said, "Where have you been? Satan said, I've been going up and down the earth, to and fro through it. Have you considered my servant Job, good man, loves God, hates evil? Perfect in his ways" (Job 1:7,8). And so Satan had access to God and he was there accusing Job of being a mercenary. Oh yeah, but the way You bless that guy, anybody would love You if You bless them like You've blessed Job. Let me take away all of those things You've given to Him and You'll see the true Job. He'll curse You to Your face.

And you know the story. Accusing Job of being a mercenary. Now in the book of Revelation, we find

the angels saying at that time, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth for the dragon has been cast out" (Revelation 12:12,13). The accuser of the brethren who has accused them day and night and he knows that he has just a short time. That would appear to take place during the Great Tribulation period when Satan is cast out of heaven and note that he has just but a short time.

In Isaiah it says, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning" (Isaiah 14:12)! Sought to exalt yourself but you've been cast forth. But it would appear that he still has access into heaven. He is there accusing the believer before God day and night. But there will be that time when he will be cast out.

Jesus is saying, "I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Is He speaking prophetically of the future? Is He seeing this as the future fall of Satan and speaking prophetically. Or is He making reference to the fact that the power that Satan has had over people for so long is about to be broken? For when Jesus died on the cross, in a sense He sort of pulled Satan's teeth. Stripped him of power. He can gum you to death but sort of stripped him of his power.

Paul tells us in Colossians chapter two that Christ "spoiled those principalities and powers [that were against us] as He triumphed over them in the cross, making an open display of His victory through it" (Colossians 2:15). And so there on the cross Jesus triumphed over the powers of darkness so that as a believer you have the power of God's Spirit in you which is greater than that which is in the world. So that is Jesus referring to the fact that through His death Satan's power that he has had over mankind is broken and we who enter into the victory of Christ have victory over those powers of darkness.

One other suggestion has been given by the commentators, an interesting one, and I only present it for food for thought, and that is that according to the Jewish belief and legend, it was the sin of pride that caused Satan's fall. And it was when as Isaiah 14 tells us, he said, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of the angels of God: I will ascend above the clouds; I will sit in the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13,14). And that sin of pride is what brought Satan down.

Is Jesus, when the disciples are coming back all exhilarated and excited over the ministry and over the power that they've been able to experience, is He giving them a subtle warning concerning pride? Is He saying, "I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven" because pride filled his heart. "The anointed cherub that covereth; and perfect in all of his ways" (Ezekiel 28:14,15), until that rebellion through pride. Some have suggested that Jesus is warning them against even spiritual pride which can be a very damnable thing. Your choice. We don't know.

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy (10:19):

I'm giving you now the power to tread on the serpents and the scorpions. Of course, Satan is known as a serpent and perhaps Jesus is saying, I'm giving you the power over these evil, demonic spirits and forces and over all of the powers of darkness. Granting to them that kind of power.

and nothing shall by any means hurt you (10:19).

Now you remember in Mark's gospel when He gave the commission to the disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they will cast out devils; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them" (Mark 16:16-18).

It would appear that this commissioning of the seventy or talking to the seventy, He's saying similar things. You're going to tread on serpents and scorpions. These things are not going to hurt you in any wise. How do we explain then that for the most part they all met violent death at the hands of men as they were martyrs for Jesus Christ? Of course, Jesus had said, "Don't fear those who can kill your body, and after that have no power: but fear rather Him who after the body is dead, has the power to cast your soul into hell" (Matthew 10:28). I say unto you, fear ye Him. Jesus is talking again in the spiritual realm. The power that we have in the spirit over the powers of darkness. And they cannot touch you in the realm of the spirit, they can't harm you or hurt you in that spiritual realm. But Jesus said,

Notwithstanding in this rejoice not (10:20),

They came back rejoicing in the power that they had over the devils. Don't rejoice, *that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven (10:20).*

That's the thing to rejoice in. How glorious to realize that my name is written in heaven in the Lamb's book of life. Isn't that wonderful? I rejoice in that. My name is written in the books in heaven.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit (10:21),

He just received the report, these men are excited. They're filled with joy, they've experienced His power. And they're coming back with these stories of victories in the name of Jesus that they had witnessed. And Jesus looks at them and they are just simple people. There wasn't a Ph.D. among them. They're just simple people, plain, ordinary people who have experienced the power and the dynamics of the power of God in their lives. And that just thrills you. He just was rejoicing in His Spirit as they told of what was done.

and He said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and has revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight (10:21).

O Father, I thank You. I thank You for Your goodness. You hid these things from the wise and prudent, but You've revealed them unto babes. Isn't it interesting that today we feel the qualifications for the ministry is to go to seminary for a gillion years and become wise and prudent? And the greatest qualification for the ministry is a Ph.D. and several, your Masters and so forth, and you've become very wise and very prudent. Now we feel oh yes, you're really qualified for the ministry. You may be qualified for a ministry but you're sort of disqualified from the power of the Spirit in many cases.

Here were people who were just simple. And Jesus is rejoicing that God hid it from the wise and the prudent and revealed it unto the babes. He loved that. I thank You Father, You did that because it seemed good to You. What does that mean? It means that everyone of you are qualified for the ministry to serve the Lord, to experience the power and the dynamic of the Spirit in your life and to go in the name of Jesus and heal the sick and bring life and a message of life to the people around you. You don't have to be schooled in religion. You don't have to go to a seminary. You can just go in the name of Jesus to the lost. And in the power of the Spirit you can bring a witness to them. You can rejoice also in the power of God that you can experience in your life as you minister to others.

[Jesus said,] *All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him (10:22).*

People really don't know God. They think they know God. They have their own concepts and ideas of God but they don't know God unless Jesus has revealed the Father to them. God can only be known by revelation. Was it Eliphaz [Zophar] who said to Job, Who by searching can find out God to perfection (Job 11:7)? God is not discovered through the intellectual quest of man but is known through the revelation of the Spirit.

So if you want to know God, ask the Spirit to reveal Him to you. "No man really knows the Father, except those to whom the Son has revealed Him" (Matthew 11:27).

And he turned him unto his disciples, and He said to them privately, Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see: [You're blessed.] For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them (10:23,24).

Paul speaks in his epistles of the mysteries that were not revealed in former generations but are now being revealed by the Spirit. And that is that ordinary believers such as you and me can experience the glorious indwelling of Christ in our lives. That it is Christ in you that is the hope of glory.

Peter tells us that even "the angels desired to look into these things" (1 Peter 1:12). The angels are sort of amazed that the grace that God has bestowed on us. They desired to look into those things which God has done for those who believe in Him and trust in Him through Jesus Christ.

There was a certain lawyer that was there, and he stood up, tempting him (10:25),

Another translation says, Put Him on trial, which sounds more like a lawyer.

saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life (10:25)?

We remember that this is the question that the rich, young ruler had asked Jesus on another occasion. But this man's a lawyer. In the other gospels, we read of a lawyer who asked Jesus the question, "Which is the greatest commandment? And Jesus answered him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, strength and thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:36-39). This lawyer is just saying, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And so Jesus said,

You have the law. How do you read it (10:26)?

What does it say to you? He was a lawyer. That is, he had studied the law. Probably on his wrist there was a little box, the phylactery, that had a portion of the law in it. And one of the portions that it had in it was out of Deuteronomy six, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5). So Jesus said, "You have the law. What does it say to you? How do you read it?"

And so he answered Jesus and he said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself (10:27).

And Jesus said, You've answered correctly: do this, and you shall live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, But who is my neighbour (10:28,29)?

Now Jesus had said that actually in these two, that is, loving God supremely and your neighbor as yourself, which is awfully close to supremely, that in these two is all of the law and the prophets. All summed up in these. Love God and love your neighbor. You've summed up the law and the prophets. That's the message, the heart of the message of the Old Testament. In the law and in the prophets, the heart of the message is to love God with everything and love your neighbor as yourself.

If you do that, you don't need all the Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not lie, I don't need all of that stuff. The first table of the law is summed up in loving God supremely. The second table of the law is summed up in loving your neighbor as yourself. You got it all. The ten commandments are all right there. They're fulfilled if you do these two things.

Interesting that usually the ten commandments were in the negatives. Thou shall not, Thou shall not. This is very positive, Thou shall love the Lord thy God and your neighbor as yourself.

But he was wanting to justify himself. "He said, But who is my neighbor?"

So Jesus answering said, There was a certain man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho (10:30),

From Jerusalem to Jericho is a journey of about eighteen to twenty miles. Jerusalem is twenty-three hundred feet above sea level. Jericho was about twelve hundred feet below sea level. So it is steep, the path goes through canyons, it was a place where gangs and robbers hung out. Usually people would never travel that road alone because of the danger. They would usually wait and travel in caravans for protection. But this man was journeying from Jerusalem down to Jericho,

and he was beset by the thieves, who stripped him of his clothes, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side (10:30,31).

The man probably looked like he was dead. If the priest would touch him, then he would be considered unclean for seven days. He'd have to go through ritual bathing and all. And so for fear that maybe the man might be dead, he wasn't even willing to touch him but just passed by on the other side.

Likewise also a Levite [of the priestly tribe], when he was at the place, came and looked on him (10:32),

He at least looked at the guy.

and then he passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan (10:32,33),

Pulls out the knife now. You see, the Samaritans were hated by the Jews. And the moment Jesus said a certain Samaritan, they're probably thinking, Aha, the villain now, because the Samaritans were always the villains in the story. And for Jesus to make a Samaritan the hero of the story, oh man, that doesn't set well. "A certain Samaritan,"

as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and he set him on his own beast, and he brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever you spend more than these, when I come again, I will repay you (10:33-35).

And so Jesus then asked the question,

Which now of these three, do you think, was the neighbour unto him who fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise (10:36,37).

Who is my neighbor? The person who is in distress. The person who is in need. He's my neighbor.

Now it came to pass, as they went, that they entered into a certain village (10:38):

From the gospel of John, we know that the village that they entered was Bethany because John tells us that Mary and Martha lived in Bethany. In fact, it said that Bethany was Mary's town. She knew everybody in Bethany. Everybody knew Mary. She was just that kind of a person, that's friendly, gregarious, and everybody knows her. And so it just said it was Mary's town.

There was a certain woman named Martha who received him into her house (10:38).

It was Martha's house. Though they, Mary and Martha, both lived there, it was Martha's house. Martha was the homekeeper, the homemaker. She was the domestic one. She was the one that busied herself around the house. That was sort of her domain. Whereas the village was Mary's domain. Mary was out and visiting among the villagers and was just. And so the contrasting of personalities and the contrasting of characteristics.

Not everybody, God didn't create us all the same. God did create us with different interests and likes and capacities and talents. I marvel and I love how some people are so gifted with certain talents. And it seems like they don't have to really study or work on it. They just have a natural aptitude toward certain things. And to me it's a delight and a thrill to see people with aptitudes towards music. And to hear them as they play the various instruments, gifted by God and it's definitely just, it's there. It's in the genes. It's a part of the gifting that they have. And so God has made us with various aptitudes and various characteristics.

Martha, the homebody. That was her palace. That was her domain. Mary, didn't like to be around the house much. A woman about town. Just out in the mall. Visiting people and all. Familiar sight in the mall. There goes Mary. Mary, how you doing?

And so Martha had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word (10:39).

The also sat at Jesus' feet, now Martha received Him into her house and Mary, her sister, also sat at Jesus' feet hearing His word. The also sat is suggested by some that it meant that she also was serving Jesus, she was helping and preparing the meal but she also sat at Jesus' feet. She took time out from the service to sit at Jesus' feet to hear His words. Because you see, that's true to form. Martha, the homemaker, the one busy around the house, her domain, she's cooking up a storm. She's busy setting everything in order. Getting everything just lovely and right to show her love to Jesus in her actions, in her deeds. Wanting to prepare the best for Him because of her love for Him. Wanting it to be just perfect. Martha, the busy one.

Mary, I put it out on the table. So I didn't put a napkin under it. I didn't put the finest silver. That wasn't important to Mary. It was to Martha.

But Martha was cumbered about much serving (10:40),

Busy, busy, busy in the serving. And today we have people that match both types of personality. And they're both good and they're both important. The story isn't really putting down Martha for all of her activity for the Lord. That was her way of expressing love.

James said, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22). Service for the Lord is important. It's a very important thing. And if you're a hearer of the word and not a doer, then your faith is questionable. Even John tells us that we are to love not in words but in our deeds and in truth. And the story that Jesus has just told about the man who was beset by the thieves on the road to Jericho, in that story the one who did for the man was the one who was commended and really showed himself to be a neighbor. Those that just looked and maybe felt sympathetic without doing anything for him did not advantage or help the man at all. He needed more than sympathy. He needed the wounds to be bound up, to be mollified with the oil and the wine. And he needed to be helped to the inn.

So doing is not wrong. But you can overdo. You can do to the point of destruction. You can do to the point of neglect. You can be so busy doing for the Lord that you neglect the Lord Himself. And we've got to be careful of that.

I think that the churches have made a mistake many times in taking, when a person comes into the

church, the third Sunday you become a member. First Sunday you're a visitor. Second Sunday you're a second-time visitor. But the third Sunday they get you on the books. Your name goes on the roll in the Sunday school class after the third Sunday. And so often immediately, they have the philosophy that the way to keep them is to get them involved in service. And so often when you show up the third Sunday, the pastor is there greeting you, welcoming you again, and handing you a Sunday school quarterly and saying, We need a teacher for the fourth grade class. We feel that you're the one. Because if you start teaching, you see, then you're going to stay there. And they have that of putting people to work immediately and the result so often is that a person after a period of time gets burned out because of all of the duties and the demands that are made upon them by the church.

After service this morning, I had a fellow that came up to me. He said that he had been going to church but he got so involved in so many activities in the church, Visitation Committee, on and on and on and on, that he said I got burned out and I left the church and I backslid for nine years. And he said, It has been such a blessing to be here at Calvary and just to sit and hear the word. Not to feel any pressure to have to teach a Sunday school class or get in a Visitation, but just to sit and feed on the word. He said, You don't know what this has done for me. You don't know what a blessing it is. After having burned out in service. And so often the service that is sort of pressured upon us and pressed upon us, that isn't really something that comes from my own heart. It isn't something that is springing out of my own love for the Lord. But it's sort of a duty or an obligation that's been pushed upon me.

It's very easy to get burned out with that kind of service. Quite often people come up and they say, How can we get involved here at Calvary Chapel? We would like to maybe teach a Sunday school class. How do we get involved? And I'll say to them, You just found out. You have to ask. You won't be asked to do anything. No one's going to come around and visitation and say, Now what are your aptitudes and what are your skills? What can we plug you into? But you have to ask. It's got to come from your heart. It has to come from your desire to serve the Lord. And when it comes from your desire then it will be a delight, a joy, a blessing for you. Whereas if it's something that's sort of pushed on you, you can get burned out quickly.

Mary was sitting there at the feet of Jesus just enjoying, just relaxing, hearing His word. Martha cumbered about with many things as she served. Pressured, feeling pressure. Got to get it done. Got to do this. Got to do that. And feeling all of the pressures of the got to's. And became upset because Mary was just sitting there relaxing and enjoying. And here she was just sort of hurried with all of the things that she felt she must do to make things just perfect for Jesus.

So she came to Jesus, and she said, Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? bid her that she come and help me (10:40).

Don't let her just sit there, Lord. Tell her to get in the kitchen. Martha had come to the place where her service was no longer motivated just by the sheer love for Jesus but she was feeling pressured by it and now complaining to Jesus. You never want to get to that place where you find yourself complaining about what you're doing for the Lord. If ever you arrive at that place where you find yourself complaining about what you're doing for the Lord, then for God's sake, and for your sake, quit doing it. The Lord doesn't want any of us to be complaining about what we have done for Him or what we've given to Him.

That's why Peter when talking about serving the Lord, said it should "not be by constraint, nor should it be for filthy lucre's sake, but it should be only out of a ready, willing heart" (1 Peter 5:2). That's the service that God accepts.

Paul tells us that when we give, that it should not be grudgingly. Out of a sense of obligation that we resent it. But God loves the cheerful giver. And so God doesn't want grudging service, grudging gifts, complaining service, pressured service. I feel I've got to do it, under constraint, I'm under pressure to do it. The Lord doesn't want that. He wants your service for Him to just rise out of a heart that's overflowing with love where you don't feel it a sense of duty. But you're just so in love that it's just glorious.

Like the young girl who had been married for three months. She met a friend of hers and hadn't seen for a while. Her friend said, How are you doing? She said I'm doing just really great. She said, Well, how's your job going down at the insurance company? She said, Oh I don't work anymore, I'm married now. Well probably the washing of the clothes and dishes and keeping the house clean, she's probably putting in a lot

more labor than she ever put in at the insurance company. But you see, she's so in love that she doesn't look at it as work. That's the way the Lord wants it. So in love with Him that you don't look at it as work, it's just a joy, it's a blessing.

Martha had gone beyond that.

And so Jesus said unto her, Martha, Martha (10:41),

And the repetition of her name is very tender. It shows the familiarity that they had. It shows the love that existed between them. And of course, we are told that Jesus loved Mary and Martha. He loved them both, they were special to Him. And Jesus said, "Martha, Martha,"

you are filled with care (10:41)

Careful. That has come to mean something different. You should think of it as filled with care. We think of careful now, careful how you hold that egg. Don't drop it. But it really means you're filled with care.

and you are troubled about many things (10:41):

You're just so burdened down, troubled, filled with care about all of these things, many things.

But there's one thing that is needful: and Mary has chosen that, and it shall not be taken away from her (10:42).

Of the many things that crowd into our lives, many things that fill us with care, many things that trouble us, as we're wanting to do just the right thing for the Lord. But there is one thing that is really needful and so many times we neglect that one needful thing, and that's just to sit at His feet and worship.

It's interesting that Mary's devotion for Jesus was expressed in a different way than Martha's. They both loved Him deeply. Mary expressed her love in just the closeness to Him, the wanting to be close to Him. When He was sitting at dinner, she expressed her love by taking the most expensive perfume and pouring it over His head. And the fragrance filled the whole house.

But her expression of love was brought into rebuke by Judas Iscariot and he rebuked her. He said, Why this waste? You could have sold that for several thousand dollars, we could have given the money to the poor. Not that he was really interested in the poor, according to John, he was a thief, he was keeping the money and have been thieving out of the purse. But Jesus rebuked Judas and He said, You leave her alone. The poor you have with you always. You won't have me always. And she's done this, anointed me for my burial. And so Jesus was defending Mary's lavish expression of love in the pouring of the expensive perfume on Him.

Now Mary is just sitting there, just looking up adoring Him, just listening to Him and having this close conversation, communion with Him. And Martha comes in and is upset. Lord, tell her to get on the kitchen. Don't you care that she's left me all alone. Here she was and you can just hear her just nervous and upset, tense and few pitches up in the voice. You've seen them. Trying to get the dinner rolls all ready at the same time and on the table and keep the hot food hot, don't let the Jell-O melt. Make her come out and help me. And Martha in her busyness would take Mary away from the important place there at the feet of Jesus worshipping.

Not always will people understand your devotion for the Lord. Sometimes they may accuse you of not doing enough. But time at the feet of Jesus is never wasted. It's really the needful thing. Oh yes, doing is needful, too. The world needs the doers. We can't all be dreamers. If the whole world were just sentimental dreamers, then nothing would get done. We'd still be in the jungles. But it's the doers, they're important. They're necessary but not doing to the expense of neglecting the most important thing, and that's your relationship with Jesus. Sitting at His feet, loving Him, worshipping Him, hearing Him speak to you.

Father, thank You for these little episodes in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ that give us an insight of You, of what You desire and of what You have purposed for us. And Lord we pray that You would just take the word of God and plant it there in our hearts. May we meditate upon it and may we, Lord, use it as a guide for our lives as we look at the place of service to which You would send us. And that we would learn to rejoice, Lord, in the right things. And that we would learn, Lord, who our neighbor is that we might love and show kindness to those that are in need. And then, Lord, that lesson of just sitting at Your feet to worship. Lord, we want to be what You want us to be. And so continue to teach us Your ways that we might walk, Lord, in Your path. In Jesus' name, Amen.