

Rediscover Jesus

Part 36: Jesus Rejoices | Luke 10:17-24

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Personal Introduction

Hi everyone. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Jeff, I'm a pastoral intern at HMCC of Jakarta, and it's my privilege to be preaching the Word of God for us today.

Sermon Series Introduction

So today, we'll be continuing our sermon series called "Rediscover Jesus" - where we're studying the book of Luke in order to learn more about Jesus - who he is, what he did, and what he has to do with our lives today.

So let's get started with today's sermon: "Jesus Rejoices"

Sermon Introduction

Now, let's think back to this past week, was there something specific that made you want to jump up and down with joy? What was it that made you feel really glad or really delighted? What was it that made you rejoice?

Perhaps it was when:

- Your favorite sports team won an important game
- Or when you finally finished that big project at work
- Or when you and your family gathered for Chinese New Year
- Or maybe when you found out that LIFE Group is restarting soon

Throughout this past week, there could've been many different things that we could've rejoiced in. But as we'll take a look at today's passage, Jesus will teach his disciples what they - as his disciples - should actually be rejoicing in.

The One Thing

As his disciples, let's rejoice in what Jesus rejoices in.

Scripture Introduction

If you have your Bibles with you or if you have the Bible app, please turn to Luke chapter 10. Today, we'll be reading from Luke 10:17-24.

So far, in the book of Luke, Jesus and his disciples were proclaiming the kingdom of God and doing miracles in the region of Galilee. But then Jesus began to set his face to go to Jerusalem - because it was almost time for his ministry on Earth to end. Jerusalem would be the final place where Jesus would be arrested, crucified, and then die on the cross for the sins of man.

Last week, we learned that, during this time, there were actually seventy-two other disciples that were traveling with Jesus and the 12 apostles.

And as they all headed to Jerusalem, Jesus sent out the seventy-two other disciples two-by-two. Their mission was to visit the towns where Jesus himself was about to go. And they were to heal the sick and proclaim the Kingdom of God to the people of those towns.

And this is where God's narrative continues...

Scripture Reading

Let's read Luke 10:17-24 (ESV).

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

¹⁸And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

²¹In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy 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. ²²All 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 anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

²³Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! ²⁴For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

This is God's Word.

Overview

We'll look at this passage in three parts:

- I. Rejoice that we have eternal life (vv. 17-20)
- II. Rejoice that the Truth is revealed to us (v.21)
- III. Rejoice that we are chosen to know God (vv.22-24)

1. Rejoice that we have eternal life (vv. 17-20)

Verse 17 says this:

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

First, let's try to put ourselves in the position of the disciples. So let's imagine that you're one of the seventy-two disciples. And Jesus sent you out two-by-two - so you're sent out with one other disciple. And you and your partner are to go to another town, and your mission is to heal the sick and proclaim the Kingdom of God to the people of that town.

Now, imagine that in the town you visited, there's a man who had been possessed by a demon for years and years. Many others had tried to cast out this demon from this man, but they've all failed. And then one day, you and your partner came along and - in the name of Jesus - you successfully cast out this demon.

What would be going through your mind? What would amaze you the most about that encounter?

Perhaps you can't believe what you just did. That, in the name of Jesus, you had the power and authority to actually order a demon to come out of the man. And you're so happy and excited that you just can't wait to go back and tell Jesus about what you just did.

And that's what's happening here. The seventy-two disciples returned from their mission with joy. So we can assume that they were successful in healing the sick, casting out demons, and proclaiming the Kingdom of God. And on top of all that, everyone made it back safely! 72 were sent out and 72 returned!

But... when they all returned, note what the disciples said to Jesus. They said, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

So out of everything that they could've highlighted about their mission, the one thing that the disciples were specifically rejoicing in was how they had the power and authority over demons.

And when we all were imagining ourselves to be one of the seventy-two disciples, perhaps that was also what we were rejoicing in - that we were able to cast out a demon!

But... in the next verses, we'll learn that the disciples' joy was actually misplaced. Because in the next verses, Jesus would correct them, and would teach them on what they - as his disciples - should actually be rejoicing in.

In verses 18-20, Jesus says this:

¹⁸ And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

But before Jesus corrects his disciples, notice how he would first give them affirmation. Jesus affirms and encourages them that what they're currently rejoicing in is true - it's true that they do have the power and authority over demons.

And to me, that highlights Jesus' gentleness. That even though he knew that he needed to correct his disciples, he was still able to do it in a gentle and loving way.

So before correcting them, Jesus would affirm them. Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

- Now, there are different interpretations regarding what Jesus means here.
- But given the context, I believe that Jesus is affirming the disciples that as they were proclaiming the Kingdom of God to the people of the towns, Satan's rule was falling like lightning falling from heaven
- So that means that as the disciples were faithfully doing work for God's Kingdom, God used their work to bring Satan's rule crumbling down.

So Jesus is rejoicing with his disciples that they've done good work for God's Kingdom. And he's rejoicing in the fact that his disciples have successfully and safely returned from their mission.

Then Jesus says, "behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions"

- "Serpents and scorpions" here is used as a metaphor which figuratively represents demonic powers or demonic spirits.
- And to "tread" on something means to crush something with your feet.
- So Jesus is affirming his disciples that he has indeed given them the authority to crush - to cast out - demonic spirits.
- And that they do have the authority over all the power of the enemy, Satan.
- So if the disciples are rejoicing in the fact that they have power and authority over demons... that fact is true, they're not wrong.

But... this is when Jesus corrects them. Jesus says, "nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

"Nevertheless" - so even though it's true and Jesus affirmed that the disciples do have the power and authority over demons - nevertheless - do not rejoice in your power and authority, but rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.

This is such an important correction.

Because when we misperceive our joy in our own power and authority, we risk becoming prideful, and we lose sight of Jesus.

And Jesus has seen this before. In chapter 9, Jesus sent out the 12 apostles to the villages in Galilee to heal the sick and proclaim the Kingdom of God. But some time after the apostles came back, they started to argue which one of them was the greatest. Their sense of privilege in serving Jesus was becoming a sense of pride in their own achievements and capabilities. And Jesus corrected the 12 apostles just as he's now correcting the 72 disciples.

And as his disciples today, this correction is also important for us. As sinners, our tendency is to rejoice in our own power and authority - and in our own achievements, even as we're serving Jesus.

Now perhaps we haven't cast out a demon, but perhaps we've placed our joy in:

- How much we do for the church
- How much offering we give to the church
- How much we know about the Bible
- Or how many people we've invited to Bible Study

And I should clarify that those are all good things. Because God is the one who calls us to serve the church, to give generously to the church, and to invite others to study God's Word. And so we should rejoice when we do God's work just as Jesus rejoiced when the disciples did God's work.

But... if we misplace our joy in our authority, and our achievements, and how much we've done; then we misplace the focus of our joy on ourselves instead of on Jesus and what he has done.

As Jesus' disciples we are to rejoice in our eternal life because not only will it keep us from being prideful, but doing so keeps us focused on Jesus' work on the cross. It reminds us to rejoice not in what we've done, but in what Jesus has done for us.

So let's ask ourselves: when was the last time we actually took a moment to just be still, and to delight, and to rejoice in the eternal life that we have in Christ - that our names are written in Heaven?

Let's really think about what it means when Jesus said, "your names are written in Heaven" - your names...

- What's interesting here is that the names of the seventy-two disciples are not recorded in the Bible. Unlike the 12 apostles, not a lot of people know who the seventy-two disciples were.
- But... God does. God knows their names. And that's what's more important. Not that their names - or our names - are remembered on Earth, but that our names are written in Heaven.

Are written...

- And let's think about that. Jesus didn't say that our names "may be" written in Heaven. He didn't say that our names "still need to be" written; He said, "our names are written in Heaven." It's for certain. And it's already done.
- Jesus already did the work for us on the cross. He died for our sins so that whoever believes in him as Lord and Savior will not die but have eternal life.

Eternal life - that's another aspect that we can rejoice in. That our names are written "in heaven" - in Heaven...

- Heaven is our true home - our eternal home. It's where we will be in God's presence for eternity.
- Now it's difficult for our minds to imagine how long an eternity is. But just imagine living 100 lifetimes, and know that that's still nowhere close to eternity.
- And for disciples of Jesus, we will spend eternity in Heaven - not eternal punishment in Hell - but eternal life in Heaven. With Jesus and with all of our brothers and sisters whom we love.
- And that's why Jesus is rejoicing - because his disciples whom he loves have eternal life and will be with him in Heaven!

So let's also rejoice in that! Let's rejoice in our eternal life. Because when we do that, we place our joy on the work that Jesus has already done instead of our own works. And let's not rejoice in our own power and authority, but let's rejoice in God's power and authority over all things, even over death.

So first, let's rejoice that we have eternal life. And second... rejoice that the Truth is revealed to us.

2. Rejoice that the Truth is revealed to us (v.21)

Verses 21 says this:

²¹ In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy 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.

So after Jesus teaches his disciples what they should rejoice in, Jesus himself rejoices.

And more specifically, we're told that "Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit." So the Holy Spirit is filling Jesus and moving him to rejoice. And as he rejoices, Jesus gives thanks to his Father.

And this is amazing because here we see the Holy Trinity specifically mentioned in one verse. So we're reminded that God is three persons in one being - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. Three distinct persons in one being - one God.

And here we see that our triune God is rejoicing in unity.

And this is actually the only time that's recorded in the Bible where we'll see Jesus rejoicing in the Holy Spirit. Now, there must've been other times when Jesus did rejoice while he was on Earth, but this is the only one that's specifically recorded.

So this is going to be very important for us. Because as his disciples, we should rejoice in what Jesus rejoices in.

And here we see that Jesus is rejoicing that the Father has hidden "these things" from the "wise and understanding" and that He has revealed "these things" to "little children." So let's unpack what this means...

When Jesus says "these things," what he's referring to is the Truth - the Good News of the Kingdom of God. This is what Jesus and his disciples have been proclaiming to the towns and the villages.

- The Truth is that we are sinners. And because of our sin, we deserve to be punished in Hell.
- But... it's not too late! For those who repent of their sins and put their faith in God - in Jesus - they will be saved! They will not perish, instead, they will have eternal life.
- That's the Good News! That's the Truth!

But... not everyone who heard the Good News were able to receive it as the Truth

From what Jesus is saying, we can see that there are two groups of people here:

- The first group is the "wise and understanding." The Truth was hidden from them, which means that this is the group who did not understand the Truth and rejected it.
- The second group is referred to as "little children." The Truth was revealed to them, which means that this is the group who did understand the Truth and received it.

But this seems counterintuitive, right? Because you'd expect the opposite. You'd expect for the wise and understanding to understand and receive the Truth - because they're wise! And you'd expect for little children to not understand and reject the Truth - because they tend to be foolish.

So there's something more here. So who are the people referred to as "wise and understanding"? And who are the people referred to as "little children"?

Now, if you ask people during Jesus' time who they thought were "wise and understanding," they'd probably say, "the Pharisees." Because the Pharisees were religious leaders who were well educated and were known to have memorized Scripture.

- And if Jesus proclaimed the Good News to the Pharisees, you'd expect them to jump up and down in joy, right? Because here is the Messiah whom they've been waiting for.
- But... that's not what happened. Because of all the wisdom that they thought they had, the Pharisees became prideful. And instead of trusting in the Truth that Jesus proclaimed, they relied on their own understanding, and they rejected Jesus.
- So it's ironic. Because they might've considered themselves to be "wise and understanding," but to God... they're foolish because they've rejected the Truth, and they've rejected the only way to eternal life.

Now, on the other hand, "little children" refer to those who are childlike. This is the group that is able to understand and receive the Truth - because they have child-like faith.

What is "child-like faith"? Well, think of a child asking their father a question. As the father answers the child's question, the child accepts their father's explanation as truth, even if the child might not have completely understood everything that the father had just said.

In the same way, Jesus' disciples were able to receive the Truth and put their faith in Jesus because of their child-like faith. So even though they might not have completely understood everything that Jesus had said, they faithfully received his Good News as the Truth instead of relying on their own wisdom and understanding.

And this is what Jesus is rejoicing in! That the Father has revealed the Truth to us not on the basis of human wisdom and understanding, but by His gracious will - by His grace alone. It's gracious because God didn't need to reveal His Truth to anyone, but He chose to reveal it to us.

So let's rejoice in what Jesus rejoices in! Let's rejoice that the Truth - that leads to our eternal life - has been graciously revealed to us!

- So let's not misplace our joy in our own wisdom and understanding, and on how much we think we know (because that can lead us to be prideful like the Pharisees).
- Instead, let's properly rejoice in the Truth that has been revealed to us. Because when we do that, we correctly take the focus off of ourselves and off of our own wisdom, and we correctly place the focus on God, on His wisdom, His Truth, and on what He has graciously revealed to us.

And what this means for us today is that if we truly understand and have received Jesus - and his Good News, then be reminded that it was because of God's gracious revelation. It wasn't because of our own wisdom and understanding.

So as disciples, let's not think that we're smarter, wiser, or better than those who have not yet put their faith in Jesus. Because the Truth wasn't revealed to us because of our own wisdom and understanding - it wasn't by our own merits so we cannot boast.

And for those of us who feel a bit discouraged because you feel like you don't know a lot about the Bible or that the Bible is a bit difficult for you to understand or that you still have a lot of questions. It's okay, don't be discouraged. I encourage you to keep going, keep spending time in God's Word. Know that God didn't reveal the Truth to you because of how much you know. Rejoice that the Gospel has been revealed to you by grace, and rejoice that you've received it by faith.

And for those of us who have not yet put our faith in Jesus, we invite you to know more about Jesus - the one who is fully man and fully God, the one who loves you and died on the cross for the sins of his people. So I encourage you to ask any questions that you may have to the person you came here with, or to anyone around you, or even to me after our service ends. We'd love to talk to you more about who Jesus is and what he's done for us.

So first, let's rejoice that we have eternal life. And second, rejoice that the Truth is revealed to us. And third... rejoice that we are chosen to know God.

3. Rejoice that we are chosen to know God (vv.22-24)

Verse 22 says this:

²² 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 anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

We're reminded again that God is three persons in one being - God the Father, The Son, and The Spirit. And here - Jesus, the Son, is specifically highlighting this special relationship that he has with the Father.

First, Jesus rejoices that the Father has handed over - or has entrusted - him with "all things" - with everything. Everything - including God's chosen people - has been entrusted to Jesus.

Then, Jesus continues to rejoice in this relationship that he has with the Father. Jesus essentially says that no one other than the Father truly knows the Son. And that no one other than the Son truly knows the Father.

So the image I'm imagining in my mind is a circle. And inside this circle are those who know the Father and the Son, and those outside the circle are those who don't know. And I'm imagining that only the Father and the Son are inside the circle, while everyone else are on the outside. Because only the Father and the Son know one another.

But then... Jesus says, "... and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

So anyone to whom the Son chooses can also know the Father and the Son!

So now I'm imagining the circle growing bigger. And in the circle are now the Father, the Son, and all of God's chosen people whom He has chosen to reveal himself to.

And this is what Jesus is rejoicing in - he's rejoicing that we have been chosen to know who God is! And as his disciples, we should also rejoice in this privilege that we have of knowing God.

Interestingly, the Greek word for "know" that is used in this verse does not mean a superficial knowledge of someone. It means a deep, intimate knowledge of someone. In the Bible, the same Greek word for "know" is used as a euphemism to mean sexual relations - as in a husband and a wife intimately knowing one another.

So what's been revealed to us is a deep, intimate knowledge of God. Not just a superficial knowledge of God. And again, this has been revealed only by grace. We didn't earn this privilege, it was only because God chooses to reveal himself to us. Otherwise we wouldn't be able to get to know who He is.

And this logic makes sense. Because imagine us trying to really get to know someone. Imagine you're trying to get to know me. You may know of me and know something about me, but you won't truly know me unless I choose to reveal and share who I truly am to you.

And by His Grace, that's what God does. He chooses to reveal Himself to us:

- The Father sent the Son from Heaven to Earth so that we may come to know the Son.
- And as we know the Son, the Son reveals to us who the Father is so that we may also come to know Him.

In John 14:7 (NIV), Jesus says this:

⁷ If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Jesus is saying that if you know him, then you also know the Father.

So if we're asking, "what is God the Father like?" Then to get the answer, what we can do is look at Jesus. Look at who Jesus is and what he did, and from there we can know what God the Father is like:

- So look at how Jesus lovingly corrected the seventy-two disciples - and we can know that God is gentle.
- And look at how Jesus died on the cross for our sins - and we can know that God deeply loves us, and that he is gracious and merciful to His people.

As God's chosen people, it's such a privilege to be able to know Him intimately. Let's rejoice in this privilege that we have of knowing God.

Verses 23-24 then say this:

²³ Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! ²⁴ For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

So after Jesus rejoices, he turns to his disciples. And he tells them that they are blessed because their eyes have seen what many prophets (like Isaiah) and kings (like David) desired to see, but did not see.

So what have the disciples' eyes seen?

Well, at that moment, their eyes must've been focused solely on Jesus. They must've been directly looking into his eyes, as Jesus turned to them.

And it must've been clear to them that they're blessed because they have seen the Messiah in the flesh.

So while many prophets and kings desired to see the coming of the promised Messiah but did not see it, the disciples were not only able to see the Messiah but they were able to have a special relationship with him - to chat with him, walk with him, eat with him, and live life-on-life with him. They had such a special privilege!

Now for us, as his disciples today, our privilege is not less than what the seventy-two disciples had. Because on this side of redemptive history:

- We can also have a deep and personal relationship with God through His written Word.
- And we now have a clearer understanding and a fuller picture of God's redemptive plan - of Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.
- And we as the church (whose foundations have been laid by the apostles) - we are one body in Christ.
- And we have the Holy Spirit in us, working in and through us, sanctifying us to be more like Christ.

So our privilege as disciples today is so great. Let's not take that for granted.

As Jesus rejoices that we have been chosen to know who God is, let's also rejoice in this privilege that we have of knowing God.

And one way that we can rejoice in this privilege that we have is to reveal Jesus to others just as Jesus has revealed himself to us.

We can reveal Jesus with our lives. So that when others see us, they may see a glimpse of who Jesus is:

- We can be loving and gracious to others even when they've upset us - and through that, we can reveal that Jesus is loving and gracious
- We can be patient and kind to others even when things aren't going our way - and through that, we can reveal that Jesus is patient and kind.

And as we reveal Jesus to others, and as we faithfully do God's work, let's be reminded not to misplace our joy in what we do, or in our own power and authority, or in our own wisdom and understanding. But

instead, let's rejoice in what Jesus rejoices in because when we rejoice in our eternal life, in the Truth that has been revealed to us, and in our intimate knowledge of God; then we will be focused not on what we've done, but on what Christ has already done for us.

Now to help us with our next steps, here are 3 life applications that we can do...

Life Application

1. Rejoice that we have eternal life
 - Intentionally set aside time this week to just be still and rejoice that your name is written in Heaven.
2. Rejoice that the Truth is revealed to us
 - Start your day this week by joyfully spending time in God's Word, and rejoice in the Truth that is revealed each morning.
 - E.g., lift prayers of thanksgiving, sing worship songs.
3. Rejoice that we are chosen to know God
 - As Jesus has revealed the Father to us, let's reveal Jesus to others (to our family members, friends, coworkers/classmates, and neighbors).

The One Thing

As his disciples, let's rejoice in what Jesus rejoices in.

Conclusion

I'll close us in prayer before Pastor John/Eric comes up to lead us in response.