

1 And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. 2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing. 3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece. 4 "And whatever house you enter, stay there, and take your leave from there. 5 "And as for those who do not receive you, as you go out from that city, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." 6 And departing, they began going about among the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was happening; and he was greatly perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, 8 and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others, that one of the prophets of old had risen again. 9 And Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded; but who is this man about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him.

10 And when the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done.

I'm so very glad that you all are here this morning because this chapter begins a new era, a turning point, a something different that is important to us as disciples of Jesus, math-e-tas means learners, to understand.

This is a significant turning point in the 3 year ministry of Jesus. Up until this point, it has been a one man show. Jesus does all of the teaching, healing, casting out of demons, etc. It was all Him.

We're at about the 18 months point. A year and a half into three years. And I can't help having a silly thought. We are locked into a time space continuum. That's all we know. I look at age 67 and think to myself, whatever it is that the Lord is going to accomplish through me, time is limited.

It may be a day, a year, maybe I've got 25 . . . who knows. Jesus not only knew, He is the one who invented this time space thing. Before this moment in time in the story of His ministry, He dwelt in eternity. A day is a 1000 years and a 1000 years is a day. No time. No limits. He just is and always

was and always will be. Except even the word always is only there to help our limited brains try to understand. In eternity, it might be more correct to simply say; HE IS.

But back to Luke 9. Jesus is half way through the 3 years. He is training 12 men to continue the work when He is crucified, risen, and then ascends back to His Father in heaven.

He's training 12 men to accomplish a massive thing. Mind boggling. They really don't have a clue. They would be overwhelmed if they did. We can look back through the centuries with 20-20 hindsight, and the task before these 12 men is not less than to turn Satan's world upside down.

Their job will be to take the message that the world is condemned in sin and judgement is closing in, but God has made a way for men to be redeemed. Bought out of this condemned world, sins forgiven, and eternal life with God gained.

Their job will be to take that good news to the whole world. They don't have a clue. They'd be instantly overwhelmed if they knew what we know now, looking backwards.

Jesus chose 12 men to take the message of salvation to the whole world. In 18 months, He'll be crucified and the war of the universes between God and Satan is up to 12 men. And not just any 12 men, these are 12 common, painfully ordinary, non descript, nobody special men.

Do you ever wonder what the conversation in heaven must have been like? God and Satan, and God tells Satan, you're going down. Oh, yeah, how's that going to happen? See these 12 men? Those 12 men???? ha etc.

Something like that. Those guys?? You've got to be kidding me. Look at them! You're going to take me and my authority to reign on this fallen planet

down and those guys are going to do it?

1 And He called the twelve together,

We can think about this and probably be fair to say, their development happened in stages. Stage one is where we get a little window in John's gospel where Andrew tells Peter, hey we've found the messiah. And some fishermen who are down at the Jordan river to see John the baptist, hear about Jesus, and follow Him. They come to faith. There is the initial call to faith.

They don't immediately drop everything. They go back to their fishing business. They're believers. Their faith is real. They've got kids to feed, and wives and families and they go back to work, fishing.

I'm sure it goes something like that for all 12. Initial faith. Then later, He calls them to leave the fishing business behind, and travel with Him. He names 12 disciples who will be with Him continually.

We don't know the details about how their families were cared for in that situation, but we know that God provides for families. Nobody in the kingdom starves to death. John Bunyan wrote pilgrims progress in prison. God could have delivered him from that. He didn't, and the most important book besides the Bible perhaps ever written was written in hardship. His wife and children were under duress, but none of them starved. God cares for His own.

Back to the disciples. They've been in phase two. They have accompanied Jesus everywhere for more than a year. Watching Jesus. Being with Jesus. It's 18 months in, and phase three is about to commence.

Jesus has purposed by the grace of God, to make a final sweep through the region of Galilee, a final preaching tour, but now it's not just going to be Him alone. He calls His 12 apostles and He is going to commission them to go on a limited preaching tour, 2X2, without Him. Suddenly one alone, becomes 6 groups of 2 sweeping Galilee. Plus Jesus goes on alone without them

preaching, until they re-gather.

This is something totally new. And it's a micro-cosm of how 1 becomes 6 becomes 12 becomes 70, becomes 4900, becomes millions, becomes the whole world. Maybe Satan wasn't laughing so much when he sees even this first multiplication happening.

The message is the same. But now there's a multiplier of 6. Quickly that multiplier will be times 70.

Let's ask another question that I think is fascinating. *1 And He called the twelve together,* . . . why 12? I think the answer is fascinating. It's a God thing.

God planned to have a presence in Satan's fallen world. He chose Abraham and made promises to Abraham that the whole world would be blessed in him. His bloodline. His family.

Abraham has Isaac. Isaac has Jacob. Jacob's name is changed to Israel. Israel has 12 sons who become 12 tribes. But by the time Jesus arrives, Son of David, Son of Judah, Son of Israel, the religion of the Jews is so corrupt that it's impossible to find one person in the priesthood or the rulers who like Abraham, is a believer in the God who saves by His grace alone.

Completely corrupt. You work your way to heaven by keeping the law. And then they had corrupted God's law so that it was completely lost in oblivion.

The 12 apostles of Jesus are a judgement on the 12 tribes of Israel. Not one of them is from the priesthood, or the rulers. No pharisees. No scribes. No rulers of Israel. These men are no-body's in Israel. Common ordinary nobody's that the ruling religious class called accursed.

In our parlance, these men are hicks. Rednecks who live in fly-over land. Jesus selects His men from a basket of deplorables. That's exactly what the scribes and pharisees and rulers in Jerusalem thought and said. Scum. Like

me.

Why 12? In Luke 22 Jesus will say these words to His 12 nobodies; 28 *“And you are those who have stood by Me in My trials; 29 and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

He chose 12 men who would be apostles of the church. Those 12 men and their close associates would be used by God to author by divine inspiration the New Testament that we are studying. Those 12 men are the foundations stones of the church that we are part of 20 centuries later. Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone. They are the foundation stones, and we are individually stones in that structure.

And finally, those 12 nobodies will have their names on the 12 foundations of the New Jerusalem. Rev. 21: *The wall of the city had twelve foundations bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

In this chapter this morning, Jesus is about to commission those 12 nobodies to begin transforming the world. Satan should be worried. Very worried. Very afraid of what 12 nobodies can do when God works through them.

1 And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases. 2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing.

There's so much to talk about just in those first couple of verses. So much confusion going on today. So much we can learn right here. *1 And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and to heal diseases.*

That raises the question; Do all christians have power and authority over all the demons, and do we have power and authority to heal diseases? Why do we even need to ask that question today? The reason is there's tons of

confusion about this. Tons of distractions.

Let me start with a history lesson. No, hold that thought. Let me start with the original purpose for the miracle powers and healings.

There's tons of messiahs. Everybody wants to come up with some deal and be the next messiah. Then and now. Who do you listen to? Who's the real deal?

Well, the answer is, when Jesus walked the earth and while the ground floor of the church was getting started from the foundations, the apostles, it was the guys doing the miracles. That's who you listen to. Real miracles. Casting out real demons that don't want to get cast out. Healing real diseases like legs that never walked and eyes that never saw. Raising the dead. Listen to those guys. They've got something new and important to say. So does everybody. Listen to the guys doing the real miracles.

In Romans 15 Paul is giving some credentials and history about himself to the church at Rome and he says; *18 For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit;*

Likewise to the Corinthians he says 2Cor 12:12 *The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.*

The writer of Hebrews also affirms; *3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will*

The pattern as the church is being formed in the first century after Christ by the apostles was that they affirmed who they were and what they said with miracles. But by the end of Acts, the miracles are gone. Paul can't heal his

friends who are sick and the other apostles can't heal Paul. Paul tells Timothy, drink some wine for you stomach ailments.

By the time the New Testament gospels and letters were written, the miracles that brought it about, were finished.

How do we know who to listen to now? You study this book. The teaching has to be in accordance with what was written by the guys who lived during that miracle time. That's how we know who to listen to. Does it conform to this book. Is it sound doctrine? Is there fruit?

The miracles ceased for all of the centuries until all the confusion we have today started in the last century. And those miracles and healings are proven to be phony, over and over. The people come with wheel chairs and go home with wheel chairs. They come blind and go back home blind today.

Special powers for a special time and a new and different message. When the book was complete, they ceased. There's a famous quote from St. Thomas Aquinas in the 12th century; *Entering the presence of Innocent II., before whom a large sum of money was spread out, the Pope observed, "You see, the Church is no longer in that age in which she said, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" — "True, holy father," replied Aquinas; "neither can she any longer say to the lame, 'Rise up and walk.'"*

You can search through the church fathers from the second century to the 19th and you won't find miracles mentioned. They ceased after the first century and in the exact time frame that the new testament was being written.

I believe the same is true for casting out demons. If you think you have a demon, I'll pray for you and with you but I won't be ordering the demon to go anywhere. That's the Lord's business at this point. And I believe demons can torment and attack us, but they cannot indwell believers. 1Jn. 5:19 "greater is He that is IN you than he that is in the world" If Christ is IN you, demons cannot be.

That view is called the cessationist view because we believe the miracle gifts ceased. It also squares well with scripture that tells us the miracles were the signs of an apostle. The apostles who are the foundation of the building. We're the 21st floor.

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We could also ask, why healing? God could have given His Son and the apostles any method He desired to prove that they are messengers of God. He could have given them laser eyes that burn holes in people and set them on fire. He could have made them float a foot off the ground. Lots of possibilities. Endless. Why heal diseases.

Well again, it fits the old testament prophecies. Jesus quoted Isaiah 61 and then told His hearers in the synagogue in Nazareth, it spoke of Him.

*18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES,
AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE DOWNTRODDEN,
19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."*

I think physical healing by the apostles and Jesus was a picture of the spiritual healing that can happen inside every heart that repents of sin and belongs to the Lord Jesus.

We should be reminded that before the fall in the garden, there was no sickness, no need for healing. After the fall, disease and sickness entered the creation. It's an outward manifestation of the inward sickness and disease that sin has wreaked on our souls. Our spirits were dead because of sin.

Physical healing, the kind that Jesus and these apostles would bring, is a

picture outside of what God can do inside.

vs. 2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God,

That term, the kingdom of God, encompasses the complete gospel. We're still proclaiming the kingdom of God today exactly as Jesus told these men to do it.

We've talked about this often. Within those words lies the full understanding of the good news then, and it also is the good news today. *The kingdom of God is at hand*, or if you will, the kingdom of God is here. It's present.

What you're proclaiming with those words is this. This world and all that is in it is condemned. Sin reigns, we are all born into sin, and we are condemned with this world. God won't allow sin to be present in His heaven. 1Jn. 5:19b *"the whole world lies in the power of the evil one"*

That word kingdom means authority to reign. Authority to reign. In this condemned world, Satan has the kingdom. Satan has the authority to reign. And he holds every sinner captive in that reign.

So then, what we're proclaiming; the good news is that the Authority to Reign of God is here. As opposed to Satan. We can be delivered from sin, delivered from captivity, delivered from this perishing world and by God's mercy and grace to us, we can come out of this perishing condemned world and belong to God. We come out of Satan's authority to rule and reign over us because of sin, and we have our sins forgiven by the blood of Jesus, and we move into the authority to reign of God.

It's like a transfer of ownership. Before we were condemned and trapped under Satan's authority because of sin. Now we can repent of sin, come away from this world and its sin, and transfer into the authority of God to reign over us. Our sins are forgiven, removed in Jesus, and our dead spirit is quickened to life.

That's the good news Jesus sent the 12 to proclaim. It's rare, but that's the same good news we are to be preaching today. The kingdom of God is here. It's at hand. It's available to any and all repenters.

And some day, in the future, The authority to reign of God will cover this earth. Satan will be deposed. All kingdom rejecters, all who refused the Lambs blood to purchase them out of their sin, will perish and be judged. Evil will be judged.

I have a great quote from John MacArthur about the preaching of the kingdom of God. He says; *"You go out and you preach this, you preach that there is a kingdom of God as well as a kingdom of Satan. There is a kingdom of light as well as a kingdom of darkness. You preach that the kingdom of God is now present. You can enter the kingdom of God if you will repent of your sin and if you will call for God's grace and believe in His Messiah. They were then launched as preachers of salvation, preachers of the kingdom."*

That's the good news. This world is condemned. This world is perishing. Sin has ruined it. Judgement is coming upon it. You can escape the judgement of God if you repent and call on Him to save you with His grace and mercy. His Son died for your sins.

The good news is you can change your citizenship from a condemned perishing judged world to God's world. You can have a place at the table in the Kingdom of God. You can be quickened from death to LIFE! That's excellent news.

3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece. .

This first trial run was to be an exercise in faith. For this time and purpose He sent them with nothing but the clothes on their persons. You don't need a bag for money, collect no money for your blessings on others. Don't take money. Don't even take an extra tunic. Take nothing, your Heavenly Father will provide.

4 *“And whatever house you enter, stay there, and take your leave from there.*

Lodging in their place and time was by hospitality. The Inns were rough places, usually brothels. They were avoided by decent folk.

Jesus incorporates a wonderful rule for them. No social climbing. Someone offers to take you in, and later someone more important and higher in the social structure offers you a better lodging, you stay put.

Don't forget that they were equipped with miraculous powers. Once the folks catch on, all of a sudden the rich folks are offering you a plush room at their place instead of the crummy room at the kind poor folks place who took you in when you were unknowns.

Jesus says, you better be leaving from the original place that offered you comfort and dwelling. I think it's a good principle today. We see these preachers who have some natural ability and the bigger churches are like bigger fish that keep eating the smaller one. Opportunity knocks.

You folks haven't got anything to worry about. Nobody's making me any offers. I'm completely invisible out here, and that's how I like it.

5 *“And as for those who do not receive you, as you go out from that city, shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.”*

You may enter a village that won't have you. We just saw that at Gadera. They begged Jesus to go away and leave them be. He did.

Shaking off the dust from your feet was a Jewish custom already in place. When a Jew had made a journey to Gentile lands and was then entering his own country again, he would ceremonially shake the dust of Gentiles, Gentile sins, Gentile customs from his feet as he entered Israel again.

It was a sign that you were leaving the godless people and godless customs

behind in the godless nations as you returned to God's enlightened people. Israel was to be separate from the nations.

Jesus here draws on that custom and says, if the so-called Jews reject you, you react to them as if you're leaving a godless gentile place behind you. Gospel offered. Gospel rejected. Shake the dust off your feet as you leave. It was a judgement on good news rejecters.

6 And departing, they began going about among the villages, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere.

The result is that the gospel message, and the healing miracles ministry has just been magnified by 6. These apostles of Jesus are sweeping through the villages of Galilee. They're not leaving a stone unturned.

What was the impact? The impact was that Galilee was buzzing. And that buzz made it to the ruler of the Galilee who is one Herod Antipas.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was happening; and he was greatly perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, 8 and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others, that one of the prophets of old had risen again. 9 And Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded; but who is this man about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him.

Some were saying that John had risen from the dead. Herod is hearing the buzz. Galilee is on fire with these guys going from place to place, eradicating disease, and preaching of the authority to reign of God.

That might be upsetting if, one, you're the ruler and someone else is claiming an authority to reign greater than your claim. And two, it might be upsetting if you're the person who beheaded John, who the folks are saying is the possible cause of what's happening.

Herod was trying to get an audience with whoever's in charge up there. And

God's not allowing that to happen.

Last week we looked at the idea of "fear not" in the Bible. 103 times. Fear not. Jesus says that 14 times. Fear not. But guess what. If you're Herod and you are engaged in an un-repentent war on God . . . be very afraid.

Some who are singing Don't be afraid, let your faith be stronger than your fears, blah blah blah, should be very afraid. If you're in an unrepentent sinful lifestyle, be very afraid. Herod was afraid. And rightly so! Murder God's prophet over a lascivious dancer and vile lifestyle. Be afraid. Judgement is coming.

10 And when the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done.

We're going to pick up the narrative here next week. Wouldn't it have been fun to be in that room hearing all the stories of what God was accomplishing through 6 teams who go out preaching with attendant signs of an apostle.

I hope some day in heaven we get to hear every story of how God glorified Himself through these apostles. And then moving forward after the harvest of believers who go and tell others as God works through the church.

20 centuries of stories of how God rescued people out of the condemned world into His kingdom.

We don't have attendant miracles, but we have this book that contains within it's words the same power to work miracles in peoples hearts. God is still rescuing people out of this condemned world and fitting them for the next.

This is a relay race, and the baton has been handed off to us. The race began in this passage we studied this morning. It's still "the acceptable year of the Lord". We have the baton, and we need to run this race. Are you running?