

BIBLE STUDY

“THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL, THE LABORERS FEW”

A BIBLE STUDY ON LUKE 10:1–20

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” Luke 10:2

By Jeff Kazmierski

These words of our Lord strike with urgency and compassion. As He looked upon the world—broken, scattered, spiritually starved—He saw a great harvest ready for gathering. Yet He lamented that the laborers are few. Luke 10:1–20 records one of the most formative missionary episodes in the Gospels, as Jesus appointed seventy-two and sent them out into the world. Even today, as the Church stands amidst the darkness of the world, this text exhorts us to pray for laborers and reminds us that the Lord often answers such prayers by guiding faithful pastors, parents, and parishioners to direct young men toward pastoral formation at the Seminary and, ultimately, the Office of the Holy Ministry. The harvest is ready, and the Lord is still sending.

Appointed and Sent

Read Luke 10:1, “The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of Him . . .”

Jesus appointed the seventy-two for a task that was not their own. They were sent ahead of Him—to go where He Himself was to go. Their task was derivative of His. So it remains today: the Office of the Ministry is instituted by Christ and carried out by those He sends.

Pastors do not choose this office for themselves. They are formed by the Church and sent by the Lord through the Church’s call. As Jesus appointed the seventy-two, so He continues to appoint through His Word and the Church’s call. So, look to your catechumens, acolytes, and confirmands. Look to the young men who love the Scriptures, who ask thoughtful questions, who serve with humility. Speak up. Ask. Encourage. Your words might be the spark the Holy Spirit uses to guide them toward seminary preparation.

How does this verse show that Christ Himself is at work through those He sends? How does that shape our understanding of pastoral ministry today? _____

The Harvest Is Plentiful

Read Luke 10:2, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.”

Jesus sees what we often miss. He does not complain about hardened hearts or cultural resistance. He declares that the field is ripe and ready. The challenge is not in the fruit but in the lack of harvesters. In this verse, we see that Christ’s solution is not a recruitment strategy.

What does Jesus mean when He says, “The harvest is plentiful”? What “harvest” is He referring to? _____

How does Jesus instruct His disciples to respond to the lack of laborers? Why is prayer the first response? _____

In what ways might the Lord answer these prayers for laborers today? _____

How might congregations or individuals participate in praying for and encouraging future pastors? _____

Lambs Among Wolves

Read Luke 10:3, “Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.”

The Lord does not hide the danger. The men He sends go out as lambs—vulnerable, dependent, defenseless

in worldly terms. Yet they go with the authority and protection of the Good Shepherd.

Today's pastors face rejection, indifference, and spiritual attack, yet the Word they bear is not theirs, it is Christ's. That makes all the difference.

What does Jesus mean by sending the seventy-two "as lambs in the midst of wolves"? _____

How does this verse shape our understanding of the challenges pastors and missionaries face today? _____

The Message:

Peace, Healing, and the Kingdom

Read Luke 10:5–9, "Say, 'Peace be to this house!' . . . The kingdom of God has come near to you."

The seventy-two are given no gimmicks, only the Gospel. They speak peace, they heal, they proclaim the Kingdom. This is the template for all true pastoral ministry. These tasks are still the beating heart of pastoral formation: preparing men to bring Christ to His people through Word and Sacrament.

What is the significance of the greeting, "Peace be to this house"? What kind of peace is Jesus talking about?

Why is it important that the disciples begin their interaction with peace? How does this reflect the nature of their mission? _____

The Weight of Rejection and the Authority of the Word

Read Luke 10:16, "The one who hears you hears Me . . ."

Rejection is part of the task. The pastor is not called to be popular, but faithful. The Word he preaches carries Christ's own authority. The seventy-two were warned not to be surprised by rejection, and neither should we be.

What does this verse teach about the authority of those whom Christ sends to preach His Word? How does this relate to the Office of the Holy Ministry? _____

How does this verse give both comfort and seriousness to pastors—and to the hearers of God's Word in the Church today? _____

Joy That Endures

Read Luke 10:20, "Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Even faithful service can lead to pride. Jesus gently redirects the disciples' joy, not toward their ministry's success, but toward God's grace. The pastor's confidence rests not in his gifts but in the Gospel. Therefore, it is important to remember that the pastor is not his own. His joy is not in numbers or applause but in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He preaches not himself, but Christ crucified.

What comfort does the phrase "your names are written in heaven" give to Christians today, especially in times of weakness or discouragement? _____

Conclusion: Pray, Encourage, Send

Luke 10:1–20 is both a missionary text and a pastoral one. It calls us to pray for laborers, to speak to those who may be called, and to trust that Christ still sends workers into His harvest to proclaim His victory over sin, death, and the devil. The Lord of the Harvest is listening. He may be preparing someone in your very congregation. Let us be faithful in praying, encouraging, and pointing toward the Seminary. For the life of the world, and for the sake of Christ's flock, the Lord still sends. 🏰



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