

Message #47

Luke 10:10-16

There are many tragedies in life that may be avoided by simply obeying sound advice from people who tell the truth:

- 1) Don't drink and drive. Every day 29 people die due to drunk driving.
- 2) Don't play with matches. Every year 20,000 fires are started by children with matches.
- 3) Don't play with guns. Every year over 2,500 deaths occur by gun accidents.
- 4) Don't take drugs. Every year over 70,000 people die of overdose.
- 5) Don't be swayed by peer pressure to smoke. 133,000 people die per year of lung cancer caused by smoking.
- 6) Don't swim out too far. Every day 10 people die by drowning.
- 7) Don't get involved in some immoral relationship. Every year 23,000 die because of disease.

These tragedies could be avoided if people would listen to good advice. The problem is many people won't. Most people are too proud to listen to sound advice. They are too proud. They want to live life their way and the results are often tragic.

This fact is not only true for this life; it is also true for eternity. **The best advice that any could ever hear is this - believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and obey the Word of God. Do not reject Jesus Christ.** This is sound advice. This is simple advice. This is secure advice. Most won't heed it.

When Jesus Christ was here on earth, He emphasized this time and time again. He challenged people to believe in Him and hear and heed the Word of God. He warned that if one does not do this, things will end in eternal tragedy.

That message was so important that He sent His disciples out to communicate it. He was well aware of the fact that many would not listen so what He said was this:

THOSE WHO REJECT THE MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST, PRESENTED BY ONE WHO IS SENT BY JESUS CHRIST, WILL BE REJECTED BY GOD AND WILL RECEIVE DAMNABLE JUDGMENT.

Micah, in writing about the Word of God, said, "Do not my words do good to the one walking uprightly?" (Micah 2:7b). The obvious answer is "yes." However, those same words become a damnable judgment to one who rejects God's Word and that is precisely the point of this text.

The church is not supposed to be a place where people play church and enjoy entertainment. It is supposed to be a place that carefully teaches the living Word of the living God and those who reject it, will regret it.

Jesus Christ obviously believed it was important for Him to give specific instruction to His people about rejection.

There are at least four reasons why Jesus gave this teaching:

Reason #1 - To instruct His disciples as to how to handle rejection.

A disciple of Christ is under no obligation to put up with rejection forever. They did not have to hang in there forever and hope things change.

Reason #2 - To encourage His disciples.

William Kelly said a disciple often faces the mindset of who are you to tell us, when you are just like us. This encourages disciples to keep going. Keep preaching and keep ministering.

Reason #3 - To instruct the hearer.

Those who hear the Word of God are responsible to respond to the Word of God.

Reason #4 - To warn and intimidate the rejecter.

This is no game. This text should scare one into making a decision to believe in Christ and obey the Word of God. The end result for one who refuses is eternal disaster.

There are three basic truths that Jesus presents here:

TRUTH #1 – Rejecting Christ’s disciples will bring God’s judgment. **10:10-12**

From these verses we may discern that a disciple has two main responsibilities to those who reject him and his message: 1) He has the responsibility to warn them; 2) He has the responsibility to leave them.

Responsibility #1 - The responsibility to warn. **10:10**

In **verse 10**, Luke said that Jesus challenged His disciples to go out in the streets and warn people verbally. It would appear that the warning is for individual and collective city rejection. This is rare language from the pen of Luke, which is basically saying go into public places, streets plural where people are and warn them that they have rejected Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God and there will be damnable consequences for them as individuals and for them as a city (Luke 13:26; 14:21).

When Jesus was here on earth, these disciples had the responsibility to go to these cities and tell people about Him and the Kingdom He can give. Those who rejected their message were not just rejecting the message of men, but the message of God.

People need to be warned that if they reject Jesus Christ, they will end up burning forever. They need to be told this.

Responsibility #2 - The responsibility to leave. **10:11-12**

No disciple has to put up with continual rejection. In fact, this verse encourages the disciples to publicly demonstrate that they are leaving, by wiping the dust off their feet. This was a symbolic act that basically said, I am severing all ties and responsibilities from you and am leaving you guilty and doomed.

Keep in mind that these disciples were not taking their message to the lost heathens of Africa, Asia, Australia or Europe. These disciples were taking their message to the religious Jews of Palestine.

Christ knew that these disciples would present a message that would cut into their souls and so He said if they reject you, walk away from them. **Leave them to Me and My judgment.**

During the days of the early church, when Paul and Barnabas proclaimed God's Word and were rejected, they "shook the dust off their feet" and left Antioch (Acts 13:50-51). The religious crowd rejected them, so as a statement "against them" Paul and Barnabas walked away. **So this shows that this principle was applicable and extended beyond the Kingdom offer into the Grace Age.**

It is a deadly thing to reject the Word of God and the warnings of God in any dispensation. In fact, in **verse 12**, Jesus tells His disciples just how serious it is. Come judgment day for that person who rejects the Word of God, regardless of the city in which he lived, it will be far worse than what happened to Sodom.

The thing that will be worse about it is that Sodom was destroyed by fire and brimstone in one moment. The one who rejects Jesus Christ and the Word of God will burn forever. Jesus says it will actually be "more tolerable" in that day for Sodom when it was judged than for the city or the person who rejects Jesus Christ.

Now Sodom is not exactly one of the top ten favorite cities of God. The Bible brings out many negative things about Sodom:

- 1) The people of Sodom were exceedingly and continually wicked. Gen. 13:13
- 2) The sin of Sodom was open and not hidden. Is. 3:9 (Hidden sin indicates a conscience)
- 3) The destruction of Sodom was quick. Lam. 4:6
- 4) The destruction of Sodom was complete. II Pet. 2:6

What Jesus is saying here is that the judgment against Sodom is the more tolerable city judgment than the one that will come against the religious person who rejects the truth about Jesus Christ and rejects the Word of God.

People have the privilege today of hearing truth that is expounded from God's Word. They have the privilege of hearing about Jesus Christ. Those who have this opportunity have responsibility. If one rejects the disciple and His message, there will be eternal consequences.

There is no question that judgment will, in part, be based on how much exposure one had to God's truth (Luke 12:47-48). To actually have Jesus Christ on earth and actually have one of His Apostles or empowered disciples come to your city and communicate truth was a tremendous privilege. But those who rejected them will be held highly accountable.

TRUTH #2 – Rejecting Christ's ministry will bring God's judgment. **10:13-15**

In these verses, Christ names three cities in which He Personally ministered or where His Apostles had personally ministered: 1) Chorazin; 2) Bethsaida; 3) Capernaum.

Every one of these cities had some remarkable display of God's power as it was connected to Jesus Christ. These were big populated cities in Galilee and some amazing things had been done in these places:

In Bethsaida, a mega crowd of thousands of people had been fed from five loaves and two fish (Luke 9:10, 14).

In Capernaum, Christ had cast out demons and healed many people (Luke 4:31-36, 38-41). Jesus specifically says that the people of this city will end up in Hades. This place is described later in the book by Luke as being a place of fiery torment that is so torturous that one drop of water on the tip of a finger would quench a thirst (Luke 16:23-24).

We don't know a lot about Chorazin. Many speculate that it was about three to five miles north of Capernaum and obviously it had great exposure to Jesus Christ and His miracles.

In **verse 13**, Jesus makes a remarkable statement. He says that had the same things been done in the cities of Tyre and Sidon, they would have totally humbled themselves in sorrowful, humble repentance.

Tyre and Sidon were not cities of which God spoke favorably. In fact, in Ezekiel 26-28 they are described as proud, dominant, money-hungry cities that were cruel to the children of God. God promised severe judgment upon these two cities which Nebuchadnezzar (573 B.C.) and Alexander the Great (332 B.C.) literally fulfilled by destroying them and bringing them to nothing.

Now one might ask if God knew that sending His messenger to minister in this city and perform miracles would in fact have produced repentance, then why didn't He do that? There are a couple of answers to the question. First, God's program, when Christ was here on earth, was aimed at Jews, not Gentiles. Second, these two cities were proud and they oppressed Israel to the point where God did not want to save them, so He used different powers in history to destroy them.

These cities were heathen cities. These people were heathens who lived out what they were and they were far better off than the religious phonies who heard the truth and rejected it.

We need to understand this point because most don't. We will often hear how sad that those poor heathens have never heard about Jesus Christ. The saddest is the religious people who have heard about Him.

I was in a store one time and there were a line of people waiting to buy lottery tickets because the jackpot was so large. They were all discussing what they would do if they won. I heard things like we would take a trip; we would buy a new home; we would buy a new car; we would pay off all our bills and our kid's bills. One person started laughing and mockingly said to the rest of them of course we would give 10% to our church, wouldn't we? They did not know who I was. They all had a good laugh at that. I thought the day you get before the Lord, it would have been far better if you had never heard about giving to God than to waste your money on a ticket and laugh at the concept and make fun of it.

TRUTH #3 – Rejecting Christ's disciples is the same as rejecting God. **10:16**

This would be great encouragement for one who was a disciple of Christ. It is a warning to those who have the privilege of hearing the Word of God presented by one authorized to present it.

The message of this verse is very clear:

- 1) Those who listen to Christ's disciples are actually listening to God. **10:16a**
- 2) Those who reject Christ's disciples are actually rejecting God. **10:16b**

The word "reject" means to disregard. One who disregards the true messenger of God and his message actually rejects God Himself. That is the way God views it. Again most are backward in their thinking. They tend to think, those poor natives in Africa who have never heard. The one who is the poorest is the one who has heard.

There are many lessons to learn from this text written by Dr. Luke:

- 1) The disciple's job is to communicate the truth of God about Jesus Christ with people.**
- 2) If a person wants to reject Jesus Christ, God will let them, but there will be consequences.**
- 3) If the disciple's ministry is rejected, there comes a point when he needs to walk away.**
- 4) Those that reject the true message coming from a true messenger are rejecting God.**
- 5) The worst eternal judgments of all will be given to those who heard the truth and rejected it.**
- 6) Rejecting Jesus Christ is the worst thing one may do. It is the unpardonable sin that will lead to eternal damnation.**