

Being Clear Luke 9:1-9

think he should be doing but what the boss says he should be doing.

This past week I spent a little bit of time on Monster.com looking at some job descriptions. In case you don't know that website is a tool many who are unemployed will use when searching for work. I want to reassure you that I am not tendering my resignation or looking for other employment. Employers will post open positions. They also have dozens and dozens of sample job descriptions. Employers who are starting a new business can use these samples to tailor the job description for their specific needs. They range from accounting managers to auto dealer salesman to customer service reps to dental hygienists, legal secretaries, graphic designers, payroll supervisor, loan specialists, quality assurance technician, even truckers. They did not have any job descriptions for food tasters or clowns. I might have applied.

Now a job description is the formal expectation that a company has for each employee and does several things.

It identifies the position.

It describes the qualifications for that position, including any required certifications or ongoing education credits.

It describes the duties or responsibilities for a position including how that position interfaces with others in the organization, equipment they may be using and other various expectations like travel.

It becomes the benchmark for performance evaluations.

Last week I was talking with someone who has been frustrated in his position because people are coming to him and saying that he is supposed to be doing this or he should be doing that. So I encouraged him to sit down with his manager and share his frustration about expectations that others are placing on him of things they believe he should be doing and ask his boss to review his job duties so that he is clear what is expected not by what others

As we begin chapter 9, Jesus turns another corner in His public ministry. When He first came on the scene following His baptism in the Jordan River, His ministry was done alone. He healed diseases, cast out demons and taught spiritual truths. As a result, great crowds followed Him. Some became devoted followers and travelled where ever He went.

A shift in His ministry came when He called 70 to go out by twos and spread the good news about Him. From that group Jesus chose 12 who would become His closest disciples. It would be this group that He would train to carry on His work. They gave up their occupations to attach themselves to Him and learn from Him. They were with Jesus 24/7.

In this chapter another shift in His ministry takes place. Jesus is nearing the end and He needs to give them added responsibilities to test them and prepare them for the ministry they would be involved in. We could say that chapter 9 is an overview of the job description Jesus gave to His 12 disciples. Their role is now shifting and Jesus tells them in this passage His expectations.

With your Bibles turned to **Luke 9:1-9** we note three things from the text.

There is a clear mission with power

There is a clear method for provision

There is a clear misunderstanding that is perplexing

I. A CLEAR MISSION WITH POWER – v. 1-2, 6

We see two very clear duties from this passage related to their mission.

They had a mission that provided healing.

They had a mission that proclaimed the gospel.

Let's talk first about the mission that provided healing.

A. A Mission That Provided Healing – v. 1

Jesus is now ready to launch them out on their own. They have followed Him, they have watched Him and now it's time to see if what they have been observing has sunk in.

My Dad began to teach my brother and me how to drive when we were 13. He took us down to the pole barn area of camp behind the west side ball diamond. It was off the main camp road away from anything that might otherwise get destroyed. Sitting behind the wheel of a 1961 Impala with its manual transmission he was in the passenger seat coaching us. When we were ready to drive on our own we were allowed to take the trash to the camp dump. Mind you it was only two hundred yards away but that was big stuff. Then we could drive to the old camp office to get the mail and then to the west side dining hall to get some groceries. But no matter how proficient I felt driving around camp I'll never forget how nervous I was taking my driver's test.

The disciples had been with Jesus for some time and now He gathered them together and told them it was time to drive on their own. Notice something though that is important for them and is important for us. We have talked recently about life issues we encounter that if He brings you to it, He will bring you through it. Here's another important principle to keep in mind: *if Jesus gives you a task to do, He will give you the tools to do it.* Notice verse 1 again. **“He gave them power and authority...”**

When Jesus gives you a responsibility He will give you the ability.

Power in Scripture is translated a number of different ways depending on the context. It can be translated might or mighty or miracle. The Greek word here is *dunamin* from which we get our

English word dynamite, TNT. Just the mere mention of the term and we envision great explosive power. So it is speaking of strength.

David has some cards about the Civil War. One of them describes what became known as the Battle of the Crater. At Petersburg there was a mine and utilizing a corps of engineers the Union army developed a plan in which they would fill the mine with explosives and detonate it hoping to totally obliterate the Confederate army and end the war. It was a horrible disaster.

The disciples were given power by Jesus.

The disciples were also given authority by Jesus. Now we might think they are the same, but there is a difference otherwise Luke is being redundant.

Where power is the ability or strength to do something from the exertion of some force, authority is the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action.

Power is the force to throw a ball from third to first with some measure of speed. Authority is the ability to call the guy out at first because the throw beat the runner.

Warren Wiersbe differentiates the two in this way: **“Power is the ability to accomplish a task, and authority is the right to do it.”**

I may have the power or strength to knock out this wall (if I had a sledge hammer), but I wouldn't have the authority.

Chuck Swindoll provides a helpful illustration. Authority is like a traffic cop who has the authority by raising his hand to stop traffic, but he does not have the power (strength) to stop a two ton vehicle. He can put up his hand all he wants, but if the vehicle doesn't obey his hand signal, it will crush him.

Jesus gave to His disciples both the power and the authority to cast out demons and heal diseases. Keep in mind, it wasn't there's, it was His. The authority to do so came in the power they utilized to do that task.

They were told to go out into the towns and villages of Galilee and heal folks of demons and diseases. In last week's message we learned that Jesus had that power and now He was giving them His power to do the same. Part of their mission was to provide healing.

But their mission wasn't limited to just a physical one, they also had a spiritual aspect to their mission. Verses 2 and 6 tell us about it.

B. A Mission That Preached the Gospel – v. 2, 6

How would you like a job description as simple as the one Jesus gives the disciples? Just two tasks: heal and preach. The word preach in this verse is different from the word preach in verse 6. In verse 2 it is a word that means to proclaim, to cry aloud and indicates that wherever they went they were to proclaim the gospel, make it known publicly, spread it widely. They were acting as a herald sent by the king with a message. It is a word that emphasizes the method more than the message. In your going make the gospel known. It's interesting that in verse 2 the word "sent" is the verb form for apostle which means sent one. It was their task to go out and in the Greek it is in the active indicative tense indicating that it was to be a continuous action. The same idea is in verse 6 in the word "went" which speaks of their repeated action.

At many mission conferences *O Zion, Haste is sung.*

*O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,
To tell to all the world that God is light;
That He who made all nations is not willing
One soul should perish, lost in shades of night.*

*Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace;
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.*

(This stanza is not in our hymnals)

*Behold how many thousands still are lying,
Bound in the darksome prison house of sin,
With none to tell them of the Savior's dying,
Or of the life He died for them to win.*

*Proclaim to every people, tongue, and nation
That God, in whom they live and move, is love;
Tell how He stooped to save His lost creation,
And died on earth that we might live above.*

They were to proclaim the gospel.

In verse 6 the word preach is the word from which we get evangelize. This word emphasizes the message. In this case it is the message about Jesus as the Messiah, the essence of the Gospel, the person for whom Jews in countless generations have waited. He had come. And the healing part of their mission would authenticate the spoken message about Jesus.

Authors of the Bible Knowledge Commentary, Walvoord and Zuck write "The fact that the 12 healed in Jesus' authority and power showed that He was the Messiah who could bring in His kingdom."

There is no greater message to proclaim and Jesus was giving them the power and the authority to proclaim it.

Now I want you to note something very important. If you don't hear anything else I say this morning I want you to get this. ***The disciples power and authority derived from and was dependent on Jesus.***

When Jesus gives us a task, He gives us the power to do it. So don't go and try and do it in your own power. ***The disciples power and authority derived from and was dependent on Jesus.***

Here's our task.

Matthew 28:18-20

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven He stated that He had all authority in heaven and on earth. In the same vein as what Jesus told the disciples in our passage, He was now saying to all His followers: "I have authority and I'm giving you that authority to make disciples and you make disciples by proclaiming the good news about Jesus."

Acts 1:8

Acts 4:7, 33

Acts 6:8

Paul wrote **"We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me."** (Colossians 1:29)

Christ provides the strength we need to do the task He gives us. When the disciples went out, they went in the power and authority of Jesus. That same power and authority is ours as we go to proclaim Jesus to those who are without the Savior.

They had a clear mission with power given to them, power to provide healing that would authenticate the gospel about Jesus.

In verses 3-5 notice a clear method for provision.

II. A CLEAR METHOD FOR PROVISION – v. 3-5

Here's the first point.

A. A Method That Showed Reception – v. 3-4

Here again the instructions of Jesus are simple. As they went from town to town and village to village, they were to take nothing for their journey. Don't take a staff, don't take a bag, don't take anything to eat, don't take any money, don't even take an extra coat. Take nothing.

I'll be leaving to go down to the Cincinnati area in a week. Robyn will expect me to take along a suitcase with a change of clothes for each day. She'll expect me to take along some cash in my wallet for emergencies. I may forgo snacks for the trip only because I have a physical on the Monday following my return. I'll probably take a jacket because the weather is always so unpredictable this time of year.

When we go on a trip we expect to take those kinds of things along, but Jesus told them not to for two reasons. The first reason is the brevity of their mission and they were not to take anything that would impede their travel, things that would slow them down. Now you need to understand something here. When it speaks of a bag, He is not referring to a suitcase or anything like. It wasn't a tote or a backpack. This is referring to what they knew as a beggar's bag. It was a collection wallet.

Many years ago I had a business trip that took me down to New Orleans right after Mardi Gras. My hotel and the convention was a block from Bourbon Street. As I walked part of that historic landmark, there were many musicians playing instruments – a trumpet and trombone here, a steel guitar there, jugglers and the like – each one had this in common, sitting on the ground where they were playing was either a hat or an open instrument case. Why? It was open because they were asking for donations. It was their beggar's bag.

In Jesus' day, traveling "preachers", if I can use that term, would go from village to village and town to town speaking and they would have a bag where people could put a donation. Jesus wanted to differentiate His disciples and their ministry from that of the others who begged for money as they taught. In essence Jesus was saying to the disciples that they needed to trust God for their provisions and not the donations of people. That was the second reason they were to take nothing with them.

Travels were to be brief and they were to be dependent on God to provide.

Then He tells them how to act when they came to a town. They were to enter the town and find some home in which to stay and they were to stay there the entire time they were in town.

Keep in mind that there weren't many inns in that day and many of the inns didn't have a good reputation. People generally didn't like to travel for a couple of reasons. One reason was because it was dangerous. There was danger from bandits. It's a stretch but maybe part of the reason Jesus didn't want them to take a bag for collections was so they wouldn't get robbed.

And when people traveled they were totally at the mercy of the local people for hospitality. You might recall the incident in Judges where a man was traveling with his concubine when he came to a town. They don't have any place to stay so he set up camp in the middle of the town square. They couldn't phone ahead or contact someone who might know someone with whom they could stay. This couple was getting settled in when an old guy walked by and asked if they had a place to stay. He invited them to stay with him and added that being out in the square at night was dangerous, and he was right. Later that night the wicked men of the town came by, took his concubine and raped her so that she died.

Inns didn't get established until the times of the Persians. They were called staging posts and with questionable practices. While accommodations were free, other services were paid for and it was a feature in most of these places that prostitution was part of the arrangement.

So Jesus instructed them to go and stay in homes. If they were welcomed in the town and invited to stay this was an indication that the townspeople were receptive to the message they were sharing that Jesus was the Messiah. If they accepted the

message they would gladly share hospitality with the disciples.

Now what happened if the town wasn't receptive?

B. A Method That Showed Rejection – v. 5

What in the world is that all about? Let me give you a cultural lesson from Jesus' day. Shaking the dust from one's feet was a symbolic gesture, and it wasn't good. It was practiced by pious Jews in New Testament times. Remember that there was great animosity between the Jews and the Gentiles. If for some reason their travels took them into Gentile territory, the Jews would shake the dust from their feet to show their separation from Gentile practices or influences. Maybe you remember growing up on the playground and trying to avoid getting cooties from touching a boy or a girl. This was far more serious than getting cooties.

When Jesus told the disciples to perform this act, it was a demonstration that the people of the town were being treated as Gentiles. It meant that the people in the town did not believe the message that Jesus was the Messiah and were considered non-believers. By shaking the dust from their feet it demonstrated that the people were making a wrong decision about Jesus. This act showed the town that the disciples were separating themselves from those who rejected the Messiah. It also said that the opportunity to receive Jesus might not be given again. It was an act that showed how serious a decision it was, especially when we consider that Jesus made the statement in Matthew 10 that the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah would be more bearable than on them. The NLT: **"It is a sign that you have abandoned that village to its fate." (v. 5)**

The only recorded incident of this occurring happened in the journey of Paul and Barnabas after they left Pisidia Antioch (**Acts 13:50-51**).

A sign of accepting the message regarding Messiah would be that they were welcomed by the town to stay in a home.

A sign of rejecting the message regarding Messiah would be that they were to shake the dust from their feet as they left.

This demonstrated to the disciples a clear method for how God would provide for them. Obviously if no one accepted the message, the disciples would most likely not be welcome to stay in town.

It was a clear mission with power.

There was a clear method for provision.

The rest of our passage speaks of a clear misunderstanding that is perplexing.

III.A CLEAR MISUNDERSTANDING THAT IS PERPLEXING – v. 7-9

Between verse 6 and verse 7 there is an uncertain time lapse. We don't know how much time has passed but enough that word has reached from the main street of towns and villages to the palace seat. News has reached Herod. This is not the Herod of Jesus' birth who had all the babies put to death, but his son Herod Antipas. Verse 7 says that he was perplexed. What he heard caused him to be puzzled, confused, baffled, stunned, bewildered. Why? Let's consider first a misunderstanding by the multitudes.

A. A Misunderstanding By the Multitudes – v. 7-8

Herod had heard the news about all the miraculous things that were happening in his region of Galilee. People were getting healed of diseases and demons. From the lowliest person in Galilee to the highest person in the palace, everyone was talking about this Messiah. If talk of a Messiah was true that would mean trouble for Herod. Amazing things were being done in the name and by the power of Jesus that couldn't be denied by even the greatest skeptic. Yet in spite of the miracles many still

remained unmoved, unwilling to see the facts and change their opinion of Jesus. **How do we know that?** Look at the misunderstanding by the multitudes. Consider what they said about Him.

What was it Herod had heard from the street?

Some said John had been raised from the dead. Sometime earlier Herod had thrown a big party. His step daughter came out and danced away, an act that really pleased Herod and his guests. Under the influence of his emotions he offered her anything she wanted. Prompted by her mother she asked for the head of John the Baptist. He had been put in prison there in the palace for denouncing Herod's divorce and remarriage to his brother's now ex-wife. She resented John for his condemnation of that decision so took revenge by asking for his death. They thought John had come back to life.

Some said Elijah had re-appeared. The Old Testament tells us that he was swept away by a fiery chariot up into heaven. They thought he had come back as some believed he would according to their understanding of Old Testament prophecy.

Still others said that one of the other prophets from long ago had come back.

Incidentally we are going to see these opinions come up again later in this chapter.

In spite of the many miracles and teachings about the Messiah, many still had a misunderstanding about Jesus.

B. A Misunderstanding By the Man – v. 9

If there is anything that comes from Herod that is of value to us, it is in his question, a question that we all must answer at some point in our life. **“Who is this I hear such things about?”**

He was skeptical about what everyone else was saying, especially since he knew firsthand of the

death of John. It couldn't be him. There had to be another plausible and rational explanation. But we do see that He is curious about Jesus and tried to see him.

He got his opportunity sometime later. We read in **Luke 23:8 "When Herod saw Jesus, he was greatly pleased, because for a long time he had been wanting to see Him. From what he had heard about Him, he hoped to see Him perform some miracle."**

His curiosity went so far as only to want to see some miracle. He had no further interest in knowing about Jesus. **How many people do we know like that who are only interested in Jesus so far as He can do a miracle? Save me?** No, I'm not interested in that, only a miracle.

Somewhere between this moment in the palace and when Jesus finally stood before him at His trial before His crucifixion, whatever, if any conviction Herod may have been under had evaporated and his heart had become hard toward Jesus, toward any spiritual transformation that could take place. His curiosity brought no compelling conviction or eternal change in his life. He died not knowing the real identity of Jesus, but in his death he now knows that what he heard about the Messiah was absolutely true. Like the multitudes, he too, had a misunderstanding about the Messiah.

There are many today who have a similar misunderstanding about Jesus.

Some think He is a legend, doing things that campfire stories are made of.

Some think He is a liar. He knowingly deceived many to follow Him.

Some think that He is a lunatic. He was crazy and some people were crazy enough to follow Him.

The reality is and the disciples came to realize this when we read in Acts 2 that they spoke with power

about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus that He is the Lord.

There are only two responses today that we can make when we walk out those doors in a few moments. We can either walk out convinced that He is the Lord and choose to trust Him and go in His power or we can walk out just like the multitudes and Herod convinced that He is something other than what He claims to be.

Their mission was clear.

Their method was clear.

But for many there was still a clear misunderstanding about Jesus.

Are you clear today about who He is?

If so, you have a mission to proclaim the gospel in the power of Jesus.

If you aren't clear about who Jesus is, you have misunderstanding to get cleared up today. Know for sure that Jesus is the Savior. See an usher or see me after the service and we would love to share with you about Jesus. Have the question answered today: **"Who is this I hear such things about?"**