

A Reason to Rejoice

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[0:00] What a wonderful morning, would you agree?! Share with the world.

And really, that's what we talked about last week, if you were here, wasn't it? That we have a message to share with the world. And what did God's Word tell us to do? From last week, do you remember? Shout it from the rooftops.

Not to be afraid to get into a place where others are going to hear you, to share the gospel message of Jesus Christ. This morning, we're going to look at some people that were sharing the gospel message of Jesus, but Jesus kind of reminded them about something.

So, Luke chapter 10, we're going to begin in verse 17. And I'm going to ask if you're able, if you'd stand. I know you just sat down, but as we read God's Word, I would like you to stand. Luke chapter 10, beginning in verse 17.

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through your name. And He said to them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

[1:32] Behold, I give to you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Let's pray. Lord God, thank You again for Your presence in this place, for Your Holy Spirit in our lives, for just the joy that we can have through knowing You, for the Christian family You've set us in, for the truth of Your Word that we can read from right now.

And I just pray that You would just continue to speak to our hearts. Help us to learn, to grow, to just become closer and closer to You. In the name of Jesus we pray.

Amen. You can be seated. Amen. chapter 10 back in verse 2, look what it says.

Therefore said he to them, talking about Jesus, the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few. What he was saying is there is a lot of work to be done. Is that the truth?

[3:11] Yes. How many people do you know in your life that do not know Jesus Christ? How many people do you think there are in this county that don't know Jesus Christ?

How about in Ohio that don't know Jesus? How about in the United States? How about in the world? You start to think on that scale and you understand there is plenty of work to be done.

It is not a job that we can ever say, oh, well, we're done. We're good now. Folks, if there are people that are lost, our job is not done. And that's what Christ is saying.

The harvest is truly great, but the laborers are few. The problem isn't that there isn't plenty of work. The problem is we need more workers. So certainly the workers that have been called better be working, and that's us.

So that's what Jesus was saying. And he says, Pray you therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

[4:16] And if you look at the first verse, you'll find he was telling this to 70 people that he had called. And then he sent them out two by two to go to different areas and to tell them about Jesus, that he was going to be coming, that he was going to be sharing, to prepare the way for him.

So these 70 went out, and they shared. And it says that Christ had given them the power, and they had this power that Christ had given them in their lives.

Were they excited about that? Yes. In the verses that we read, it talks about their excitement. In verse 17, the 70 returned again with what?

Joy. What do you think that looked like? So they're coming back after Christ sends them out. These 70 people are returning, and it says they were returning with joy. What do you think that looked like? Do you think they were strolling in?

All right, we got that done. Now what do you want us to do? What do you think it looked like? Really, get a picture in your mind. What do you think it looks like to return with joy? Enthusiasm? [5:24] Excitement? Talking. When you have something that's really you're enthusiastic about, that you're joyful about, are you talking fast and just have a lot to share? That's how I picture these 70 as they were returning.

I think it was kind of a celebratory atmosphere. They were returning with joy. And look at what they said. Lord, this is something we were excited about.

Lord, even the devils are subject to us through your name. What does that mean? They were casting out demons. Are demons real?

Yes. Angels real? Yes. Demons real? Yes. Satan real? Yes. Because Christ even says that. The next thing He says in verse 18, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Satan was a fallen angel, along with a third of the angels it talks about. So demons are real. But they were saying that we had the power through your name to even cast out demons.

[6:28] Look at what we were able to do and able to accomplish. Is that something to praise God about? Yes. Is that the greatest thing to praise God about? No.

I mean, it's something to get excited about. But it's interesting to me that Christ reigns them in a little bit and redirects that joy that they had.

Because the joy that they were feeling was a joy in an accomplishment, wasn't it? What we were able to do, we were able to cast out demons. It was in Jesus' name, but this was an accomplishment that we were able to make.

Look, Jesus took that joy and He refocused it in another area. Look at what His response to them was. Look at 19 first. He said, Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

He says, I've given you power over the enemy. He says, yes, it's true. You've been able to do these things and accomplish these things because I gave you that power. Christ is acknowledging that.

[7:38] But the greatest thing that we have to rejoice in has nothing to do with what we can accomplish. Do you know what the greatest thing we can rejoice in is?

Yeah, look at what Christ says. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not. The accomplishments are wonderful and they're great, and you can praise God for them, but He says the greatest thing to rejoice in, but rather rejoice.

And this is a phrase that... I don't know, it's on my mind a lot this week. Rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

So there's a question that comes about because of that, and that question would be, is your name written in heaven?

How do you get your name written in heaven? Do you just show up?

[8:39] Is it like a roll call in school? Present. Then how? I ask a question. Accepting Jesus, a personal relationship, being born again, born of the waters, as Jesus was telling Nicodemus that we're going to talk about this week.

Is your name written in heaven? There will be so many other questions you answer in life. There will be lots of other things that you experience.

Your name is going to be written in a lot of lists in your lifetime. Think how many names or lists your name is included in in your life. Over a hundred?

How many times do you think your name has been included in a list? If you're in the church directory this year, you're going to be included in a list, right?

We tried to put that list together to get everybody. If you're at work, guess what? There's a payroll. Are you on that list? You hope so, don't you? If you're retired, maybe you're getting Social Security.

[9:52] Is there some big list somewhere? Yep. Yep. Live people, dead people, they're all on it. Lists. Are you on other government lists? Yes.

All of us. We're on lists. Yeah, lists you may not want to be on. You're on them. Lists you don't even ask to be on. Are you on mailing lists? Are you on call lists that you wish you weren't on?

We're on lists all over. All over. There is no other list like the one that Jesus is talking about here.

It is not a list that you're on just because you exist. It is a list that you are written on when you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Your name is then written in heaven. And what does that mean? It means eternal life. It means on that final day, that judgment day, and folks, there will be a judgment day.

[10:56] You do know that, right? There will be a judgment day. And if your name is written on that list, do you know what? Jesus is going to say, they're on the list. They're one of mine.

And that means an eternity. Competing with my granddaughter. That means an eternity in heaven. That's what Christ is saying you should rejoice in. We're going to have a bunch of kids here this week in Bible school. What is our desire for them?

That their names are written in heaven. Cody is going to be sharing with churches in the future and wherever God leads him, here and in other places.

What should be Cody's greatest desire for each person he's sharing with? That their names are written in heaven. Talked about some that are going to Johnny Camp, Lisa and Armando and Ron and Doug.

[11:55] What should be your desire for the people that you interact with there? That their names are written in heaven. You have co-workers that you work with. What should be your desire?

That their names are written in heaven. Because folks, there is an alternative to that. Madison talked about consequences this morning.

If your name is not on that list, there is a consequence. I want you to look in another scripture this morning. In Revelation, last book of the Bible.

Revelation chapter 20, verse 15. We're talking about a name written down.

We're talking about a list again. Revelation chapter 20, verse 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life.

[12:55] So whoever's name was not on that list. Here's the consequence. It's cast into the lake of fire. It's a consequence, isn't it?

It's a devastating consequence. It is an eternal consequence. That's what makes it so different than any other consequence you may get here on this earth.

We all have consequences we don't like. If you're a child, you may have to sit in a corner. You may get a spanking. You may whatever. That's temporary. If you're an adult, you might get a ticket. You might get a fine.

You might spend a few days in jail. I don't know. Guess what? It's all temporary. If your name is not written in the book of life, the consequence is eternal.

And this should highlight to us how important a question this really is. But it should also encourage us to know how much we need to rejoice if our names are on that list.

[14:05] That we need to be so thankful for that. That we need to be so excited about that. Because again, Jesus told people, that's what your joy should be about. That your name is written in heaven.

That should bring you great joy. This should override anything else you go through in life. You can go through something and you can say, boy, this is hard, but my name is still written in the book of life.

Boy, I wish I didn't have to go through this, but my name is still written in the book of life. I wish I didn't have this sickness or illness, but...

Finish the sentence. My name is written in the book of life. It is meant to bring us joy beyond any circumstances we go through right now.

Look in one other scripture. The last one we're going to look at also in Revelations 3, verse 5. Revelations 3, verse 5.

[15:09] Folks, this is where our joy comes from. The message this morning is so simple.

It's that we have something to rejoice in. And that is when our names are written in the book of life. And we need then to make sure we get as many other people's names written alongside ours as we possibly can.

Revelation 3, verse 5. He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment. And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.

If your name is not blotted out, what does that mean? It's in there. But I will confess his name before my father and before his angels.

That's Christ speaking. And he's saying, if your name is in the book of life, I'm going to confess your name before the father. Their name is right here. He's going to tell God. Their name is right here.

[16:07] They are one of mine. On to heaven. Do you rejoice in that? Does it excite you?

Remember, I don't know what you're going to go through in this life.

I don't know what I'm going to go through. I don't know what I might face tomorrow. I don't know what I might face later today. All of us know, even if our lives seem really good, can that all change very quickly?

A phone call, a wrong decision, an appointment to the doctors, all that can change so quickly. So that's not what we're supposed to primarily rejoice in because that's temporary.

Jesus is saying, rejoice in what's eternal. And that's your name written in the book of life. Now, this morning, if you're here, if you've never invited Christ into your heart, if you don't know that your name is written in the book of life, you can leave here knowing that.

Don't say like one of the kids said, well, maybe tomorrow. We're good at that. But the Bible says we're not guaranteed tomorrow. We're not. The Bible says that we can know that we have salvation.

[17:17] I know our time is getting away, but don't tune out. One of the saddest things for me as a pastor is when I talk with someone about their spiritual life and they tell me, well, I think I'm okay.

God doesn't want you to think you're okay. He wants you to know that you're okay. He wants you to know that your name is written in the book of life. Not, well, when I die, I think I'll be all right.

He wants you to know that you'll be all right. If you have invited Jesus Christ into your heart and ask Him to forgive your sins and are striving to live a life for Him, your name is in the book of life.

Does that mean you're living a perfect life? You're not making mistakes? No. That's why the blood of Christ is so necessary for our forgiveness. But folks, if you've not done that, ask Christ into your heart.

He died for you. Ask Him to forgive your sins. Your sins will be forgiven. And you will have something to rejoice in that your name will be written in the book of life.

[18:23] And Jesus will confess your name before His Father on Judgment Day. Jesus is saying that is something to rejoice in. It says the angels rejoice when someone accepts Jesus Christ.

What a wonderful thing to rejoice about. I hope this week at Bible school that there are angels rejoicing all over. But I also hope every Sunday the angels are rejoicing when we turn our hearts over to Him.

Maybe you've been a Christian for a lot of years. You say, I really haven't been living the life I know God wants me to live. Well, make that decision today. Live for Him. It's never too late to start living for Him.

And rejoice if your name is written in the book of life. Let's pray. Lord God, I thank You for this day. I thank You for Your Word. I thank You just for the joy and the excitement, the peace, the hope, just all the things that it can bring us.

Lord, I also ask if there is anyone here that is not for sure if their name is written in the book of life, that they would leave here knowing that it is. And Lord, I pray that each one of us would leave here having a desire to share with others so that they can know their name is written in the book of life.

[19:28] There's not a limit to how many can be on the list. Your desire is that everyone is on the list. So help us to share faithfully. Help us to realize how important it is, the consequences for not being on the list.

Lord, we also need to share that truth with people. But Lord, I just pray that our hearts are open and that we pray others' hearts are open and the names written on the list grow.

Lord, help that to be our desire. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.