

Disciples Reproved

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[0 : 00] Let us turn again to Luke chapter 9. Luke chapter 9, and I want us just this morning to look at these verses that we read.

Again, just looking, as it were, at an overview of them, as we're looking at this gospel. And if we could read at verse 46, An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest.

And Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side and said to them, Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

For he who is least among all of you is the one who is great. Now, this argument that broke out amongst the disciples, We read about in verse 46, Comes right after Jesus has told them about the fact that he's going to be delivered up.

And he's talking here about the death that he is to die. And it really is quite an extraordinary argument. Because here are these disciples, And they're walking side by side with the greatest person ever to walk this earth.

[1 : 22] And at this incredibly solemn juncture, In the experience of our Lord, Where, as we read a little later on in verse 51, When the days grew near for him to be taken up, When he was going to be put to death, He set his face to go to Jerusalem.

And here is this great weight upon our Lord, And he's beginning to teach the disciples about what's going to happen to him. All they're concerned about with is, Which one of them is the greatest?

And they're arguing amongst themselves about their own position, Their own popularity, Their own greatness. And it just shows us how, By nature, We are so incredibly selfish and egocentric.

Now, Obviously, At this stage, The disciples didn't have a great sense of love for one another. Because love does not want to lord it over others.

Love does not want to be the boss. Jesus makes that very clear, That love is in the business of serving. These disciples hadn't come to understand this.

[2 : 38] Because they thought that greatness involved lording it over, Of being the, Sort of the one that was, Sort of received the greatest love.

The one who had the greatest position of authority. And I think a very important test, Of our own love towards others. It's a very simple one in a sense.

And you ask yourself this, In all situations, In all the varied experiences of life, As you deal with others, And see others, And reflect upon others, And are involved with others.

Are you genuinely pleased, For other people, When good things happen to them, When they are promoted, When they are elevated, When they get on?

And are you sorry for them, Do you feel genuine sadness, Compassion, Sorrow in your heart, When anything, Anything I say, Goes wrong for them.

[3 : 41] If that is the way that you feel, In your dealings with people, Then I would say it indicates, That there is a heart of love there. But the opposite is true.

If you secretly, In any way, Resent, Anybody getting on, Anybody being elevated, Anybody being promoted, If there is within your own heart, There is grudging, Resentment, Or that there is, Secretly in your heart, A sense of, Quiet triumph, When anything goes wrong, With somebody else.

Then I would say, That it is indicating, A lack of love. Because, These things show us, Very clearly, Just, What our heart is really like.

And nobody can understand, Or know that, Except yourself, Because we can't see into other people. And sometimes even, We have difficulty, In discerning and understanding, Our own heart. But that is one of the most, That is one of the most, Obvious levels, At which we work.

Is if we think well, And we want the best for others. Or if we, Resent, Others getting on. Well anyway, These disciples, The Lord had a lot still to do, Within their hearts, And within their lives.

[5 : 04] And the more humility, That is within a person's heart, And within a person's life, The more, That they rejoice, And the more, That they love to see others, Get on.

So they'd be arguing here, Who was the greatest? Who had the most authority? Who was the most valuable, Amongst them? Which one of them, The Lord preferred, Out of them all?

You can almost hear Peter, I would, You can always, If you were trying to imagine, Listening in on that argument, And you could almost hear Peter saying, Look, I'm the leader. I'm the main man here. And I'm sure each of them, Would be saying it, John would be saying it, And James would be saying, Ah, Jesus took us.

You can almost hear, The three disciples, These three, We were in, When Jairus, His daughter was raised, We were on the Mount of Transfiguration, Saying to the other disciples, You weren't.

But you know, If you had spoken to Peter, A wee while later, Or just after he had denied Jesus, And you said to him, Hey Peter, Are you still the greatest? You could almost see him, Signaling you, Go away. No, I'm not the greatest.

[6 : 09] No, Just please leave me alone. You see, The Lord will often bring us, To places and points. If we think we're something, We're not. If we elevate ourselves, And think of ourselves, More importantly, Than we should, The Lord will soon see to it, That we're taken down, One way or another, And we're brought to see, That we're not, What we thought we were.

Peter, Certainly came to discover that. And then, What do we find that Jesus did? Well, He took a child, And he placed this child, Beside himself.

And, It was a very vivid, A very powerful demonstration, And, I think it was showing, It was showing very much, Something of, The way of the kingdom, And how we live in the kingdom.

Because if you look at, A young child, And we're talking here, Of a very young child, If you look at a child, A child is somebody, And in fact, If you went to the level, Of a baby, A baby is somebody, Who is helpless.

A baby cannot, Do for themselves. They are completely, Dependent, Upon another. And that is the way, That we come, To Jesus.

[7 : 20] If for one moment, A person thinks, That they have, That they come to Jesus, But, They only need Jesus a bit, That they can do the rest, Themselves. They haven't come, To understand, What the gospel is really about.

We have to come, In absolute dependence, Just as a little baby, Just as a little child, Is one who is, Completely dependent.

Again, A little child, Will trust implicitly, Their parents. They have this, Wonderful trust. They believe, They just, So trust, There's this, Full persuasion, That they're like, They don't, They're not analyzing it, They're not trying to think it out, And work it out, And sort of saying, I wonder, Can I, It's just a natural, Trust, A natural, Implicit trust, That is in with the little child, About that parent, And that is how it is, In the kingdom, It's the same, There's this natural, Trust, When I say natural, That is by grace, It is the nature of grace, To give this total trust, In the Lord, We believe, Implicitly, We trust, Our life, Our all, If you're here today, As a believer, That's what you've done, You've trusted your life, Your all, Your everything, To the Lord Jesus Christ, And you believe in him, Totally, And absolutely, Many things, You don't understand, But you believe,

With all your heart, And again, A little child, Is somebody, Who isn't looking, For position, Who isn't looking, For great levels, Of lordship, They don't think, Like that, And so it is, In the kingdom, The child of God, Is looking, Not, For their own glory, But they're looking, Towards, The glory, Of God, Is that how you are today, See here, Often we say to ourselves, You know, Am I really, A Christian, Or not, Well there are many things, That will show us, We tear marks of grace, Things that, Indicate to us, Whether we, In the kingdom or not, And one of them is this, Is our life, About our own glory, Our own, Promotion, Or are we thinking, About the glory of God, Are we saying to the Lord, Lord, Please use me, Please, Speak through me, Please,

Work through me, Lord, May you be seen, Through me, And if we have that attitude, If we have that prayer, Then that is obviously, Somebody who is, A child of the kingdom, And so we find Jesus, Dealing with the disciples, With their argument, And then we come, To something about John, And John says, In verse 49, Master, We saw someone, Casting out demons, In your name, And we try to stop him, Because he does not, Follow with us, But Jesus said to him, Do not stop him, For the one, Who is not against you, Is for you, Now here's John, This great man, This great disciple, A disciple whom Jesus loved, And, It is very obvious, Because we're going to see, Two things here, About John, But the first thing, That we're looking at here, We see twice, John making a mistake, When you go to the epistle,

[10 : 52] John's letters, You find here, A man of, Great love, But you know, When you read, About John, In the gospels, Particularly in the earlier, Part of the gospels, Seems a very different, Kind of character, In fact, The nickname, That was given, To James and John, They had a nickname, They were called, The sons of thunder, And I don't think, They'd be called, The sons of thunder, Unless, They were kind of thunderous, In their disposition, And what we see of John, Just a little later, Because James and John, Are asking Jesus, In the very next section, If they can call down, Fire from heaven, To consume, The Samaritan village, Is this a man of love?

You go to 1st John, 2nd John, 3rd John, 1st John, Is that chapter, That oozes love, It's just, Pouring out love, Is this a loving, John?

Doesn't seem to be, And it's the same, With Peter, When you go to the letters, That Peter wrote, And you're, You're reading, Peter's patience, And he's advocating, The need for patience, And how to deal, With suffering, And trial, In this world, So different, To the Peter of the gospels, Because Peter in the gospels, Is this impetuous character, Who's always racing into things, And then thinking, Oh man, I should have done this or that, The man who's always speaking, Before he thought, Thought it out, And what we have seen, In the life of Peter, And of John, Is Jesus at work, Through his spirit, Transforming, Subduing, Bringing, Bringing, To bear, The fruit of the spirit, Into their lives, So that as the years go on, And as they become old men, You see the transforming work, Of God's grace, That's what happened, In Peter's life, It happened in John's life,

And it's happening, My friend, In your life, That's what's taking place, Year by year, And God is at work, And sometimes, It's a step forward, And a step back, And sometimes, It might be two steps backward, But it's still going on, And as the years go on, There should be this, Mellowing, There should be this, The person coming, More and more, To reflect, The image of the Lord, Jesus Christ, But anyway, John comes, And he says to Jesus, Master, We saw someone, Casting out demons, In your name, We try to stop him, Because he's not, Of our group, He's not, Doesn't follow with us, He's not part of our group, So we try to stop him, And you know, The disciples, In a sense, And John here, It's an age old thing, Same, There's nothing new, Under the sun, They're refusing, To accept anybody,

Who doesn't belong, To their group, See there's nothing new, Under the sun, Still the same today, And that is often, A problem within, The Christian church, Now of course, The Christian church, Is so wide, And there are, So many, Different ways, And different forms, But the thing, I believe, One of the messages, That Jesus is teaching here, Is our need, Of accepting, One another, If people, Are following, The Lord Jesus Christ, If people, Are warring, Against the kingdom, Of darkness, And seeking, To promote, The kingdom, Of God, Although, There might be, Different styles, And different forms, The key thing, That unites us, All together, Is the Lord Jesus Christ, They are our brothers, And our sisters, We must never, Lose sight of that, Even although, There might be differences, There might be things, For instance, There are all the different, Denominations,

[14 : 53] And we might have, Different forms of worship, And things, And that's fine, But, We've still got to, Recognize them, As brothers, And sisters, In the Lord, And that's a point, That Jesus is making, You're not to start, Saying, Sort of, Condemning, Because that's, Exactly what, What John was doing, He was trying to stop them, And Jesus is saying, Listen, They're with us, They're with us, I think it's a very, Very important point, It was J.C. Ryle, A great writer, I'm sure, We're all familiar with, With his writings, But you know what he said, In this particular version, Very interesting, Thousands in every period, Of church history, Have spent their lives, Isn't that, Have spent their lives, In copping, John's mistake, They have labored, To stop every man, Who will not work for Christ,

In their way, From working, For Christ, At all, They have imagined, In their petty, Self-conceit, That no man, Can be a soldier of Christ, Unless he wears, Their uniform, And fights, In their regiment, They have been ready, To say of every Christian, Who does not see, Everything, With their eyes, Forbid him, For he followeth, Not with us, Now that's from, One of the most, Perceptive, And well-known writers, From a bygone day, And you know my friends, It's still true, To this day, And then we see, The next thing, As we mentioned about, John, We find him here, The son of thunder, Displaying this passionate, In a sense, It's a passionate, Zeal for Christ, But it was a zeal, Without knowledge, And that's a dangerous thing,

Zeal without knowledge, And compassion, Can create, Absolute havoc, Within the church, Now, Before we look at, The particular incident here, We see that Jesus, Tells us in verse 51, When the days drew near, For him to be taken up, He set his face, To go to Jerusalem, And he sent messengers, Ahead of him, Who went and entered, A village of the Samaritans, And so on, But when the days, Drew near for him, To be taken up, He set his face, To go to Jerusalem, And this shows us, That Jesus, Was keeping a heavenly, Timetable, Every step he took, And it carries with it, The idea, Where he sets his face, That Jesus is so, Aware of what's ahead of him, He knows, It's going to be, Not just difficult, It's going to be, The most awful thing, That anybody's really,

Had to endure, In this world, No person, Has ever, In this world, Had to endure, What Jesus, Had to endure, The spiritual, Physical, Emotional, Mental, The combination, Of all these agonies, Put together, No other person, In this world, Living in this world, Has ever experienced, What Jesus experienced, Because on the cross, All away aside, From the physical, And mental, And emotional agonies, He experienced, What constitutes hell, Real hell, People talk about, Hell on earth, Well Jesus alone, Experienced, Through hell, On earth, Where all the wrath, Of hell, Was poured upon him, Where every comfort, And prop, And support, In grace, And by the spirit, Was removed from him, He was all alone, Experiencing this, Upon his holy soul,

Tied in, With all the physical, And mental, And emotional agonies, And that is why, It says, He set his face, Because this is, An awesome thought, And he knows, That's why he was, On the floor, Of Gethsemane's garden, Saying, Oh father, If it's possible, Let this cup, Pass from me, But not as I will, But as thou wilt, And so back here, Jesus has to set his face, It's like, It's a determination, He knows what's involved, He knows what ahead, He knows what it's going to cost, But he's got to go, He's got to meet it, Face on, And that dispels, From us forever, The idea that Jesus, Was taken against his will, No, All the time, He was giving, And giving himself, They couldn't have taken him, Unless he had, Handed himself over, He had said, This is the hour, Jesus, All the time, It's talking about, The hour,

[20 : 01] Sometimes he will say, It says, His hour had not yet come, So they couldn't take him, But then it says, Jesus knowing, That his hour had come, There was a heavenly timetable, And every step, Jesus was taking, In the fulfillment of it, And so we find, This is Jesus, And he's moving, On to Jerusalem, And so they came to this village, Of the Samaritans, Now as we know, The Jews and the Samaritans, Just didn't get on, There was a, Debruted hatred, One for another, And we find, That this Samaritan village, Didn't want Jesus, They rejected him, Now, At one level, I suppose you can understand, John, John is here incensed, Because John, For all his early mistakes, Loves Jesus passionately, And he is so incensed, At the behavior, Of this village, In rejecting Jesus, And particularly, Here they are Samaritans, Well, And he says, To Jesus, Lord,

Do you want us, To tell fire, To come down from heaven, And consume, And Jesus rebuked them, You see, Jesus at this time, As his savior, One day he will come, As judge, One day his fire, The wrath, The burning wrath, Of the lamb, Will be seen, And discovered, And it's going to be, A fearful thought, A fearful prospect, That is why people, Will call upon the mountains, And the hills, To cover them, And to shelter, From the wrath of the lamb, But at this moment, Jesus, And he is still the savior, And it's in mercy, He has come, It is in love, That he has come, And he, He said to John, He rebuked John, Oh, There's a day, When the fire of God, Will fall in wrath, Upon all his enemies, Upon all those, Who have rejected, And turned aside,

But at the moment, It's not the fire, Of his judgment, But it is his mercy, And his love, And his grace, That is being displayed, And that is why, Jesus is saying to John, No, He rebukes John, For what, For what he's saying, And then we find, Jesus moving on, From there, And just in a word, We find, As they were going, Along the road, Someone said to him, I will follow you, Wherever you go, Now, Here we meet, Three people, Who, It's almost like, Flirt, With the idea, Of following the Lord, Jesus Christ, And I'm not going to go in, To look at each case at all, Just to say one or two things, People find, Jesus' response here, Sometimes quite harsh, But, What we've got to remember, Is that, Jesus reads, Every person, Like a book, And Jesus answered, Each, Or spoke to each person, Because he was seeing,

Right into that heart, You remember, The rich young ruler, That came to Jesus, And this rich young ruler, Seemed so promising, But Jesus went right to the core, Right to his heart, He knew, This young man had a problem, He knew there was a rival, On this young man's heart, To himself, And who was, Or what was that rival, It was wealth, Riches, That was his God, And Jesus said to this young man, Oh he said, You know, Go and sell all that you have, Give to the poor, And come follow me, Now Jesus is not giving, A command here, Some people think, That that's a way of discipleship, Not at all, Jesus is not giving here, A command, That that's part of discipleship, That every person has to go, And sell all that they have, In order to follow Jesus, Not at all, It was specifically, Specifically to that one person, Who had a problem, And the problem was money, Wealth, That was his God, The love of money, And Jesus is saying,

Until you deal with this problem, You cannot be my disciple, And so there's no question, Whatever, But these three people, Had different kinds of problems, And Jesus is dealing, With the issues, With the problems, And that's why, Initially it sounds harsh, Now, Jesus is saying, And he's actually showing us here, That however important, People are to us in our lives, And they are, And however important, Family is, And family is incredibly important, At a human level, More important than, Anyone else, But Jesus is showing, There's even someone, Of more importance, And that's me, Jesus is showing, The priority, Of himself, Over, Everybody else, And everything else, Now many people believe, When this man asks, Let me, Can I go, Let me first go,

[25 : 07] And bury my father, Nobody thinks, That this man, Who's asking, Can I go, And bury my father, Is being refused, To go, And do, What is, One of the most important, One of the most loving, One of the most essential, Things any person can do, Most people are, Agreed, That this man's father, Hasn't died, That he's asking, Can I wait, Until, My father dies, And then I will come, And follow you, And once he's dead, And then buried, Then I'll come, And follow you, That's what people believe, That Jesus is speaking, About here, And that, Another of the things, That he's showing, Is the absolute, Urgency, Of the gospel, It's a, It's imperative, Go and proclaim, The kingdom of God, This is the most important, Thing that people can hear, It's more important, Than anything else, In this world, This world is so,

Preoccupied, With everything else, People today, Are so involved, With climate change, With finances, With government opinions, With how government, Legislation, With what is happening, In the world, Well, All these things, Might be important, But there's one thing, Of supreme importance, And that is the kingdom of God, The message, Of the kingdom, And Jesus shows, That this message, Has to take priority, Over everything else, Go and proclaim the word, Go and tell people, People are dying, People are going into eternity, Tell them, That Jesus Christ is saviour, Preach the good news, Jesus is saying, There has to be, A single mindedness about it, And he gives this illustration, At the end, No one who puts his hand, To the plow, And looks back, Is fit, For the kingdom of God, In other words, You can't be going, In two directions, At the same time, You can't be going, Forwards and backwards together, Jesus is showing,

The danger of looking back, When we begin to follow him, We're told, Remember Lot's wife, She came out of Sodom, But Sodom didn't come out of her, The Israelites came out of Egypt, But Egypt didn't come out of the Israelites, They kept hankering back, And you will find, How destructive, These forces can be, We have to be careful, Because we're moving on, In following Jesus, The apostle Paul, Is a great example, He said, You know, That I might know, Paul was single minded, In following, There was an old man, In the Bible, Caleb, One of the great men, Remember the spy, Along with Joshua, Who brought back, A good report, Do you know, What it says of Caleb, When he was an old man, That he wholly, Followed the Lord, He totally, Followed the Lord, What a wonderful thing, To be said in old age, Here was a man, And his life, Was one of commitment, In following the Lord,

Through the rough times, And the good times, Well may that be the way, That we follow the Lord, That's what he wants from us, Wholehearted discipleship, May we seek to follow him, May we seek to proclaim, The glorious news of his kingdom, And may we indeed be willing, To be used by him, Because we're only here, For a very short time, Our day, Will soon be over, Don't live it, So that you look back, With regret, And say, I wasted my time, But that you might be, Willing to be used, By the Lord, Let us pray, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Oh Lord, Our God, We give thanks, For the word, That we have looked at today, And we realize, That the demands, That our Lord, Is placing upon us, Are demands, Of a whole life,

Forgive us Lord, For the times, We want to keep little bits, Back ourselves, And that there are, Times that, We may be not following, The Lord, Like Caleb did, And we pray, Lord, To forgive us, And to give us a desire, To follow the Lord, With all our heart, We pray to bless, This word, Into our hearts, Into our souls, Into our minds, Go before us, And part each one of us, With thy blessing, And we pray to, Keep us safe, And forgive us our sin, In Jesus name, We ask all, Amen, Amen,