

SERMON - ST. LUKE - 18 OCTOBER 2009  
St. John's Anglican Church, Greensboro, North Carolina

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*Luke 10:2 (KJV)*

*Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Today, we are celebrating the feast day of Saint Luke, Saint Luke the Physician, or as Paul described him once as the “Beloved Physician.”

Luke, as the author of both the Gospel bearing his name and the Acts of the Apostles brings a Gentile approach to these writings and is the most literary of writers of the synoptic Gospels.

We can say a lot about Luke the person. But today, let us talk about the Gospel that is presented for his feast day. There is some speculation that Luke, himself, was among the Seventy chosen by our Lord for this missionary endeavor.

But, rather than concentrating on the person, let us look at the message.

*Luke 10:1 (KJV) After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.*

What is happening here, is that Jesus is appointing missionaries to go before him to prepare for His visit to the places where He is planning to go. Much like “front men” that precede a major evangelist’s crusade, Jesus had them go two by two to those towns and villages.

It is also interesting that he sent them out “two by two.” Saint Gregory the Great in a homily on this passage points out that our Lord sent them out to preach in pairs because

the precepts of charity are two fold: to love God and to love our neighbor. He goes on to say that charity cannot exist except between two persons: love is only possible when we reach out to another. In other words, love cannot exist in a vacuum.

Speaking of love. I was talking on the phone the other day with Father Mike Stranz who passed on this quote he believed was from Saint Augustine. *God loves us so much that if you or I were the only sinner in the universe He would still sent His Only Son to redeem us.*

*Luke 10:2 (KJV) Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.*

*The harvest is great but the laborers are few.* The Greek used here for laborers is *ergates* which really means “field-hand.” Jesus is not just sending them out to be out there but to work, to toil for the Kingdom. But today, that statement is still just as true, *The harvest is great but the laborers are few.* Twenty percent of the members of any parish do eighty percent of the work. St. John’s is no different. If you look around, it is the same people, the same members, that do the majority of the ministries here. We are no exception. I am not going to say anymore about this but just look around.

*Luke 10:3 (KJV) Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.*

Even today doing the Lord’s work is dangerous. To be a Christian is to go against the popular stream of society. To be a Christian is to be different. If you are not, you better take a good look at yourself. To be a Christian, a good Christian not just a nominal Christian, requires a commitment, a commitment to God that transcends any other commitment, any other commitment to job, family, whatever, your own life maybe. Without that commitment, the wolves, today’s world, will tear you to pieces.

And finally, we hear *Luke 10:4 (KJV) Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and*

*salute no man by the way.*

The journey that we face in our daily lives is difficult. We, as Christians, should travel light. We shouldn't be burdened down by a lot of "stuff." We should avoid over-possession of anything. Just like a back-packer, we should not carry anything in our lives that is not necessary to our survival. In our case, our survival as Christians.

We are called by our Lord each day to preach the Gospel, to go in advance to prepare the way for his Kingdom. But we are called to preach the Gospel not with words, but by how we live our lives as Christians.

Amen.