

Jesus: the I.D. that's Hidey  
*Luke 9:7 - 9*

Nutshell: Jesus' identification is elusive to man because *we* are hiding from God. We must see the importance of Jesus' identity and of urging the question upon our generation.

I. Context: Jesus sending out the Twelve on an evangelism tour.

II. Text

**Luke 9:7** And Herod the tetrarch heard all the things being done by Him, and he became quite puzzled, because of some *folks'* say-so that John had been raised from *the* dead, **8** and of some that Elijah had appeared. Yet others *that* a prophet- one from the old *times* rose again.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

A. An outline of Luke to this point

I. About this Letter: So you'll know about this Jesus, 1:1-4

II. Testimonies to Messiah's coming. A boyhood turning point, 1:5-2:52

III. John proclaims repentance for Christ's coming, 3:1 - 20

IV. Messiah's Entry Credentials: Baptism and Genealogy, 3:21-38

V. His Initiation: Fasting and Temptation, 4:1 - 13

VI. His Self-Introduction and Hometown Rejection, 4:14 - 30

VII. Jesus: The FIRST MAN with all authority over demons, sickness, and nature, 4:31 - 5:11

VIII. Turning-Point Healings, 5:12 - 32

A. Repatriating a leper, 5:12 - 16, touching the unclean outcast to preview His taking of our exile/ disease into Himself

1. Israel's unclean laws were pictures of spiritual reality

2. Uncleanness pictured death and alienation from God. Jesus came to gain ascendancy over both.

B. Forgiving sin, 5:17 - 26, thus declaring His Deity

C. Healing/ renewal of a man's (Matthew's) soul, 5:27 - 32

**IX. New and Old Covenants:**

- A. NC = OC *replacement*, ~~patch-up~~, 5:33–39. NC: Law in ♥.
- B. 6:1-11, OC Sabbath *strict*, but intended as a *help*.

**X. Picking The 12, 6:12-16; teaching / etc., incl. Tyrites, 6:17-19**

**XI. Jesus' manifesto: the **SERMON ON THE PLAIN**, 6:20-49**

- A. *Earthly* evidence of the *spiritual* traits in the Sermon on the Mt. (Matt 5). Literal poor vs. rich. We are to love our haters. We must give generously, living by pity.
- B. Only right teaching creates right living. Convict *self* 1st. Only building on Christ will survive life's floodplains.

**XII. Messiah's **MISSION** Portrayed in His Interactions**

- A. Forecast: A **Gentile** seeks Jesus for a healing, Lk 7:1-10
- B. Forecast: Hope still held out to **Israel**: Nain widow, 11-17
- C. John's Q. A.: 2 diverse comings & an interval, 7:24-30
- D. John & Jesus differently wise. Both rejected, 7:31-35

**Kid-speak:** Who's the man God sent to tell everybody that Jesus was coming and to get ready? John the Baptizer.

E. Love for Jesus is tied to forgiveness. The sinful woman had both; Simon the Pharisee lacked both, 7:36-50.

F. 8:1-15, 4 Soils = 4 kinds of "hearing" of the **Word**. Only a "virtuous and sound heart" is living and fruit-bearing

1. Hence, take care **HOW** you hear that Word, 8:16-18.
2. Mary as mom not an insider; Word-doers only, 8:19-21

G. It is a Word of power over nature (8:22-25), demons (8:26-39), sickness (8:40-48), and death (8:49-56)

**XIII. Messiah's **COMMISSION**, the first**

A. Jesus enables and authorizes the 12 for His own type ministry, but with no provision except what townfolk would provide. Towns not receiving them were disassociated from Christ, 9:1-6

B. 9:7-9, While the 12 are on their evangelistic tour, the increased reports of Jesus' activity raise Herod's level of interest, but no one can tell him who Jesus is.

**Outline:**

- I. Reports of God's King reaches a ruler, v 7-8
  - A. Is he John?    B. Elijah?    C. Some other old prophet?
- II. Mere curiosity about Christ is doomed to fall short, v 9

- C. The record of the Apostles' preaching, healing, and exorcising ministry isn't completed until 9:10 ff.
  - 1. *In the meantime*, Luke inserts this record of Herod's reaction to the increasing news about Jesus, 9:7-9.
  - 2. Mark has the same order:
    - a. Jesus sends the 12, Mk 6:7-13
    - b. Herod's reaction to Jesus, Mk 6:14-29 (much longer)
    - c. The 12 report back, Mk 6:30-31
  - 3. The insertion of this Herodian episode may indicate that the mission of the 12 lasted a while
    - a. After all, they "passed through, village *by village*," Lk9:6
    - b. This would have retraced Jesus' steps, since His prototype mission had been quite thorough (8:1)
    - c. During this possibly long interlude (a year?), news of what Jesus had been doing finally has time to 'bubble' to the top tier of local society- to Herod
- D. Lk 9:10, "And Herod the tetrarch heard all the things being done by Him"
  - 1. "Things done by Him"- Jesus, not the Apostles
    - a. Their deeds hadn't had time to reach Herod yet
    - b. Though Jesus ministered at the same time, Matt 11:1
  - 2. "Tetrarch," a compound word, "ruler of a fourth"
    - a. The territory of Herod the Great (this Herod's dad) had been divided into four parts, 1 for this Herod and the other 3 to his other 2 sons and sister
    - b. Secular records call this fellow Herod Antipas
    - c. He ruled the Galilean region. His brother had ruled Judea so badly that Rome replaced him with a procurator, which office Pilate eventually filled
    - d. The Herod in our verse will be involved with Jesus' trial. The NT calls Herod a king.

**Kid-speak:** King Herod heard about Jesus. Are kings supposed to worship Jesus too?

- E. "Heard all occurring by Him"
  - 1. The news of Jesus had risen to the highest regional level
  - 2. In Rom 15:20-21, Paul references Isa 52:15, which says that kings will learn of Christ
    - a. Chatter was and is part of the process
    - b. News = information = words. We are creatures made in

God's image, therefore creatures of words.

3. Ps 2 says that kings oppose Christ
  - a. That would be Herod's eventual stance, when Pilate sent Jesus back to him, Lk 23:6
  - b. Great men are still men. They still have hearts naturally opposed to God.
  - c. But they need to hear about Christ. We must pray and work to that end.
4. **Q.** Did the news Herod received about Jesus show genuine familiarity with Him, though?
- F. "And he became quite puzzled"
  1. **A.** No. Conflicting reports, just as in John 7, where they couldn't even decide on His birthplace.
  2. "Quite puzzled," the root word is, almost literally, "non-sequitur"; more accurately, "doesn't travel."
    - a. With its prefix, *dia*, "doesn't travel at all."
    - b. Like our "That dog don't hunt," but meaning it made no sense. Herod couldn't put it together.
  3. This is the same word for the crowd's reaction to hearing the Apostles later speaking in their languages, Acts 2:12

**Kid-speak:** King Herod was hearing all kinds of guesses about who Jesus was. Are a lot of people still confused about who Jesus is? Yes.

- G. "Because of some *folks*' say-so that John had been raised from the dead, and *the say-so* of some that Elijah had appeared. Yet others that a prophet rose again- one from the old *times*."
  1. All good opinions! Even John, Lk 20:6, though beheaded.
    - ✦ a. But is that enough? No.
    - b. Even making Jesus the HIGHEST teacher leaves him, with the rest of them, LOWEST in power to save
  2. "Say-so" is passive infinitive (4x), a cross between "to say" and "having been said"
    - a. Robertson calls it "a neat Greek idiom." In Heb 7:11 & 11:24, it effectively means "called" or "named."
    - b. The people were wondering what to call this Jesus
  3. "From the old *times*" could be "from the ancient *people*"
- H. Three prominent guesses were circulating about Jesus, all based on His remarkable traits:
  1. He was John come back

- a. Jesus' origin was shadowy enough that some could imagine that his supposed *childhood* might have been the actual *hearsay*: in reality, Jesus was John arisen
  - b. Thinking He was John would have been based on His *speaking*, since John did no miracles, Jn 10:41.
  - c. Repentance was central to both their messages, Matt 3:2; 4:17
  - d. Herod himself believed Jesus was John, at least at first, Matt 14:2; Mk 6:16
    - i. From our next verse, it sounds like Herod might have talked himself out of that idea
    - ii. or at least sought to
2. Option 2: Elijah had made his promised appearing
- a. Notice the “appear” part, not arose. Elijah was one of two men that didn't die.
  - b. Malachi 4:5-6 promised his appearing and its effect
    - i. Good on them to know this!
    - ii. And believe it!
  - c. John was not Elijah himself, Jn 1:21, though he ministered in the same spirit, as Jesus explained, Matt 11:14; 17:10-13. Hence, Elijah himself is yet to come.

**Kid-speak:** Some people thought Jesus must be Elijah. But was Elijah supposed to come back before Jesus' first coming? No, before His *second* coming.

- d. But Elijah was promised **before** (Mal 4:5) the coming of Christ, Mal 4:1-2
    - i. But if Jesus was Elijah, He *could not be* the Christ
    - ii. Though such a contradiction resting in their heads would fit the pattern
  - e. Elijah's just *gotta* be one of the two witnesses in Rev 11, eh? Enoch the other.
3. Guess #3: Some other ancient prophet had risen again
- a. Is this any better than Lk 7:16, His status now being reckoned as one of the recognized prophets?
  - b. Now we use “risen again” language, since the other prophets had died
  - c. Jeremiah was mentioned, Matt 16:14.
  - d. Notably, Moses is about the appear with Elijah, but this will not be the coming of Elijah prophesied in Malachi,

which includes “the restoration of all things,” Matt 17:11

4. Some called (or would call) Jesus Beelzebub! Matt 10:25

★ I. The striking thing is that NOBODY EVEN CONJECTURED His real identity!

1. No one here guessed, “Uh, maybe the Messiah?”

2. They’d already asked John if he was Messiah, Jn 1:21.  
How could they not at least guess it concerning Jesus?

3. At some points they did conjecture Messiah

a. Jn 7:41, but even then it was drowned out by a confused mixture, Jn 7:41-43

b. (“The prophet,” comparing Jn 6:14 with 7:40, must have been Elijah)

**Kid-speak:** People tried to figure out who Jesus was, but did they think He was the Savior God promised to send to us? No!

J. But until they correctly answered the dilemma of WHO IS JESUS, they could not come to God, 1 Jn 2:22

1. It is the same today

2. So if people aren’t asking, **we** must be posing the question

**Luke 9:9** And Herod said, “I myself beheaded John, but who is this about whom I myself hear such things?”

And he sought to see Him.

K. This Herod seems intelligent, like his father

1. He eventually rules out the John report, probably reasoning that no one actually claimed that Jesus had suddenly appeared out of nowhere; so it couldn’t be John resurrected.

2. But he knows Jesus is unusual. Reports of miracles are always going to be attention-catching.

L. “And he sought to see Him”

1. He’ll be glad when he finally sees Jesus, Lk 23:8

a. But he will mock and humiliate Him

b. His interest had only been to see a ‘trick’ performed

2. In the meantime, his response will include seeking to have Jesus killed, Lk 13:31

a. To which Jesus will replay curtly, pegging his murderous, clever nature (“fox”), Lk 13:32

b. And giving Herod a veiled Gospel testimony, including

- the Resurrection
- c. Which should have made Herod inquire better

**Kid-speak:** King Herod wanted to see Jesus, but did he want to learn from Jesus? No, he just wanted to see Jesus do a miracle.

- M. With our full-bodied volume of doctrine now completed in the NT, we can be very clear about our “perfected” Christ’s identity
1. Yet it is still *unclear* to many, even in the churches, where misrepresentations of Him still abound
  2. So human ignorance has not advanced beyond the first century, which had not advanced from previous generations
    - a. *Willful ignorance* is to purposely “ignore.” That’s always there with man.
    - b. *Mental ignorance* means it’s hard to put it together. In that case, men have to respond to Christ’s goodness, Jn 3:21.
      - i. If He’s good, why am I not drawn to Him?
      - ii. If He’s not good, why don’t I go ahead and vilify Him?
- N. Christ’s identity is still the core issue
1. He is the true light that shines into *everyone’s* darkness, Jn 1:9
  2. But peoples’ natural darkness means they avoid Him
  3. Especially with the NT, we can affirm Christ’s dual nature. But it raises the questions:
    - a. If He is man, how can He be God?
    - b. If He is God, how can He be man?
  - ◆ 4. And we *want* this dilemma. It is central to the message of Christ.
    - a. His dual nature inevitably leads to this affirmation: † How can we be saved unless He is both?
    - ☑ b. Note how Jesus’ identity naturally leads back to the subject of SALVATION

**Kid-speak:** Should we be asking people, “Who do you think Jesus is?” Yes! Then we can help them find out!

- O. Numero uno: Who is Jesus?
1. *Why* is He that?
  2. What does He say about *me*?
  3. Where will I go for salvation if not to Him?
- P. What has the message of Christ done for me?
1. Taken away my sins?

- a. Am I profoundly, constantly thankful?
- b. Or do I continue in deliberate sin?
- 2. Given me a new heart and mind?
  - a. Am I feeding them for growth?
  - b. Am I exercising them in worship and service?
- 3. Give me the Spirit?
  - a. Do I walk in Him? Gal 5:16
  - b. Do I pray in Him? Jude 1:20
- 4. Given me a certain hope?
  - a. Do I remind and assure myself?
  - b. Enough to rejoice?

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”) Difficult progress in faith can at least hold to the right object of faith: Jesus.

V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong? How have I lost righteousness?**  
Is Jesus’ identity central to my life?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**  
I will pray, “Jesus, You are...” and identify Him in praise. I will also pray for opportunities to pursue His identity with others.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**  
Jesus, You are my Savior, the one who loved me and gave Himself for me. I rest me in You.

Wrap-up: Jesus’ I.D. Elusive. Until He finds us, we are hiding behind every tree of every conceivable garden and forest. We climb the trees! We swing branches at Him! We don’t know Him because we don’t *want* to know Him.

What an unparalleled blessing just to know Him, then. It is enough. It is my personal ‘enough’ *if it fills me*.

Spend sufficient time in prayer and meditation for it to fill you.