

Confessing the Truth and Living the Truth

Sermon 28 in the Luke Series

Luke 9:10-27

Today we resume our series in Luke. The bulk of the message will be from 18-27, but we will start, where we left off in verse 10, which also provides a useful introduction to our passage this morning.

Read verses 10-11

Introduction to the passage 18-27

v. 10 – is their return from the preaching mission.

v. 1-6 showed the authority given to the Apostles by Jesus Christ to announce the coming of the Kingdom of God (v. 2).

Christ Jesus preached the same message Himself, when the multitudes came to him (*of the Kingdom of God*) *Genitive*. **11b**

The disciples preached “in the stead of Christ”.

They proclaimed a Messianic message.

They healed.

They cast out demons.

Contextually, we learn about what preaching THE KINGDOM of GOD means

v. 6

They were not preaching some FUTURE Messianic Kingdom.

There message was Messiah had come.

I want you to note that.

This is important as we come to the rest of the message.

This message created quite a stir. Jesus was now going PUBLIC in a way He hadn't done before.

It was noticed in the courts of Herod the Tetrarch.

It was noticed in all of society.

This was the cause of the growing opposition against Christ by the religious leaders.

We come now to the feeding of the Five Thousand – v. 12-17

We are going to just read this passage.

I am going to leave it to Pastor Jeff to expound the passage in his Sunday night series from the Gospel of John.

This is one of those few places where John and Luke “intersect”.

John gives us much more data.

John ties the feeding in with Christ as “the living bread”.

I don’t want to simply preach what he will be preaching in about a month – so I’ll leave this passage to him.

I. Peter’s Confession – v. 18-22

1. v. 18

-- ONLY the disciples were present when the question is asked.

-- the context is vital.

They had returned from their PREACHING mission.

They had proclaimed THE KINGDOM of GOD and PREACHED the GOSPEL.

Who did the crowds think Jesus was?

2. v. 19

■ John the Baptist – Herod’s opinion. A forerunner to Messiah

■ Elijah – again – a forerunner to Messiah

■ A PROPHET – a great one of God – but not Messiah

■ ONLY IN JOHN’S GOSPEL – as we will see when Pastor Jeff gets there – did ANY speculate that He was Messiah – but even then – they got it wrong.

It was their desire to take Him and make Him KING.

It was their desire to establish a PHYSICAL kingdom – in opposition to the Romans who were their INVADERS and OPPRESSORS.

Notice what was not being said, “HERE IS MESSIAH.”

“Here is the fulfillment of the promises to Israel”.

“Here is the One we have been waiting for to provide redemption”.

Every one of these answers falls short of the reality of who Christ was.

3. v. 20 a

The pronoun Y O U is important.

It is PLURAL and EMPHATIC.

It calls for a confession of faith.

It opens the door for a greater understanding of His true mission.

The disciples seemed to think a physical kingdom WAS coming.

No doubt – some of the actions of Christ perplexed them.

We will see they were confused right to the end.

THEY DID BELIEVE HE WAS MESSIAH.

But, they could not understand why the kingdom was not being brought to them in a physical sense that they could see.

John and James wanted to sit at the right or left hand in the kingdom. It wouldn't be until after the resurrection the SPIRITUAL NATURE of the kingdom would be fully understood.

Even Peter's great confession shows Peter did not FULLY understand all that it meant to be MESSIAH.

There is MUCH understanding – there is not FULLY understanding.

Matthew 16:16-23

It ends with a rebuke of Peter – by the Lord when Peter rebukes the Lord for foretelling his death.

This lack of FULL understanding can be found right in the context of Luke.

9:43-45

4. v. 20 b

A great confession.

There was no doubt in Peter's or the disciples minds (except maybe for Judas) that He was Messiah.

-- There was confusion as to HOW he was Messiah.

-- There was misunderstanding as to his MISSION as Messiah.

-- There was NO DOUBT

– THIS IS THE ONE prophesied of in the OT Scriptures

– The One Given to Redeem and Deliver Israel

-- The Christ – The Messiah – The Promised One.

And the very next verse added to this confusion and wonderment.

5. v. 21-22

Tell no man.

They were going back into “stealth mode” once again.

- What looked like was going to be an OPEN DECLARATION THAT YOUR KING HAS COME – now goes back into secret.
- His hour had not yet come.
- Christ was not ready to FULLY reveal Himself – yet.

The commentator William Hendricksen makes these very good comments on this first REVELATION OF THE REJECTION and THE DEATH of CHRIST.

1) **This prediction was necessary.**

Peter had confessed Jesus as “the Christ of God.”

Jesus commended Peter and told him he was correct.

Peter, and the disciples needed to be taught what it meant TO BE the Christ – they, and the Jewish leaders – obviously did not know.

2) **This prediction was startling.**

He would die. He would be killed?

He would be subjected to rejection and suffering?

The OT Scriptures plainly tell us these things – but it is much easier to understand them AFTER the fact – than before.

I’ll add a third

3) **This prediction was full of promise**

-- On the third day, we would rise.

-- This is a plain declaration that He is Lord over death itself.

-- This is a plain declaration that ALL THAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN was ordained by the eternal plan of the Father.

THIS they would understand AFTER he rose from the dead.

II. The COST of True DISCIPLESHIP 23-27

1. The Predictive Prophecy

We already saw Christ foretelling HIS OWN death.

Now, he tells us HOW he was to die – on a cross.

Spiritually and figuratively (and in some cases literally) WE, as His disciples are ALSO called to willingly take up a cross and DIE on it.

There be some here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.

6 views

1) Transfiguration

Advantage – it does come next, contextually, in all 3 gospels.

Only 3 saw the transfiguration, so it would fit the naturally implied meaning that not all of them would see it.

Disadvantage – it was only a temporary glory

-- one would naturally interpret these words to mean a somewhat distant future – not just the next week.

2) The Resurrection and Ascension

This is when Christ was glorified. This is when we can speak of THE FATHER HAS GLORIFIED THE SON (v. 26). At the final judgment, there will be the full revealing of those who were ashamed and those who were not ashamed. But, we can speak of the Kingdom of God coming in fullness at the resurrection and ascension. Judas did not live to see the resurrection, so it fits the naturally implied meaning that not all of them would see it.

3) The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

On the day of Pentecost, when the New Testament era begins with power and New Testament Churches begin to be established, as opposed to the Old Testament Temple system.

4) The Advance of the Gospel

During the Apostles lifetime – the gospel advanced throughout the known world. The kingdom came with power – the Book of Acts records just a small portion of this early church history.

5) The Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

This has become a popular non-dispensational interpretation. It does have the advantage of being a futuristic – explanation of v. 26. But there is one primary disadvantage. The words of Jesus are given as a promise to the disciples and not as words of warning to the Jewish nation. We find many warnings given to the Jewish nation that fit 70 A.D., but I do not think this fits the form of one of them.

6) A Promise that the Jewish Race will continue until the Second Coming

This is the explanation many of our Dispensational friends give.

This comes from a literalist linkage with v. 26

They conclude that THIS CAN ONLY be the Second Coming.

Afterall – the Lord has not returned in His glory YET.

So – the “*some standing here*” refers to those still around when Jesus returns – not the literal disciples who are hearing these words.

This has been a traditional interpretation by our Dispensational friends.

By Dispensational, I mean, they look at this New Testament age as a () – and the Kingdom doesn’t really come until the Millennium.

Now, this is an interesting interpretation – because by taking it – they do damage to their own hermeneutic (scheme of interpretation).

They take it out of the realm of the immediate audience – and *spiritualize* it to mean that it will be a long-long-long time until Jesus returns and establishes his physical kingdom – IN OTHER WORDS – NO ONE STANDING THERE WOULD ACTUALLY SEE THIS HAPPEN – IT WOULD BE THEIR VERY DISTANT BLOOD RELATIVES THAT WOULD ACTUALLY SEE IT.

This is quite an exegetical JUMP for those who claim to say they take the Bible LITERALLY and that we should NEVER spiritualize what Jesus is saying.

They will often criticize us for taking the promises given to Israel and applying them to the church – the New Israel.

You aren’t taking the Bible literally.

Certainly – this interpretation – held by many who criticize us -- is not taking the Bible literally.

Many modern Dispensationalists have seen their own inconsistency here – they realize they are violating the very principle they espouse.

That forces them to either become MORE PROGRESSIVE in their thinking – and agree with OUR interpretation (hence the term Progressive Dispensationalism – as espoused by Biola and others)

OR hold the line with Old Style Dispensationalism and Literalism – which then forces the prediction to “the Transfiguration seen by Peter, James, and John”.

They do this by defining the word “kingdom” as royal splendor”.

That’s a bit of a stretch – in my opinion -- since the exact same Greek construction – in the Accusative with a Genitive “THE KINGDOM OF GOD (TAn Basilean tou Theou) now is means something different than it did in v. 2.

Obviously, the disciples were not commissioned to go around and talk about Jesus “royal splendor”.

In my opinion, this explanation is driven MORE BY PRE-CONCIEVED ideas than by trying to exegete the Word of God.

CONCLUSION:

I don’t think we should separate views 2, 3, 4. The Kingdom of God includes ALL of them. This is “the coming” of the Kingdom. It comes and comes and continues to come with more and more power. In that sense, the Kingdom HAS come, and the majority of the disciples saw it come – and saw it come more and more as the gospel continued to expand in the first century. So, we are talking about THE GOSPEL AGE. I also think you can also put THE TRANSFIGURATION here – contextually – as we view it as a preview of this gospel age.

2. Take up Your Cross and Follow Me v. 23

Confessing Christ means that He must be crucified.

You can not CONFESS Christ and DENY the crucifixion.

The reason He came was to die for the sins of His people.

1) The Command of Daily Self-Denial

Our flesh hates to hear about self-denial.

What would YOU DO if you could do ANYTHING IN THE WORLD you wanted to do -- Get away with it – and there were NO consequences?

Our flesh would LOVE that – but it doesn't exist – and we should praise God that it doesn't exist.

Our flesh often desires THE WRONG THINGS.

So, we must practice SELF-DENIAL if we are to do the right things.

One of the blessings of Heaven is – there will be no more self-denial – because our desires will be like those of God – only for what is good – right – and true.

The ministry of Jesus Christ was DOMINATED by the cross.

Our Christian life is dominated by the cross too.

So much so – that we have to willingly take it up daily.

2) What is this “cross” we are to take up?

This is a vital question to answer, because, if we don't know what it is, we can't take it up.

We often hear people talk about a trial as “*This is just my cross to bear.*”

In a way that is true.

But “cross bearing is more than just enduring under trials or difficulties”.

-- It is tied in with denying self.

-- It is tied in with following Christ.

-- The cross was the instrument of His Death.

Luke 9:62

We are talking about DISCIPLESHIP.

We are talking about putting our OLD SELF to death and following Christ.

3) For how long are we to take up this cross?

It's daily cross bearing.

It's to be our WAY OF LIFE.

You finally get to put down your cross – in the cemetery.

Young Christians must bear the cross.

Older Christians must bear the cross.

We carry it ALL OF OUR LIFE – until we arrive at glory – never to carry it again.

4) The Command is admittedly Painful

Christ did not choose this metaphor by accident.
Crucifixion is one of the most horrible deaths devised by man.
The pain of the nails.
The pain of the hours of hanging.
The pain of trying to draw a single breath – over and over.
The pain of unquenched thirst.
The pain of the knowledge of impending death.

On top of all this – the humiliation and the shame that attends crucifixion.

In our lives – the command is painful too.
Obedience to Christ is hard.
The world will not help you to achieve this obedience.
They will mock you.
They will scoff at you.
They will call you a 1000 fools for not running to wickedness with them.

3. The Christian Paradox v. 24

What FEELS like death – actually leads to life.
What FEELS like life – doing your own thing
-- following your own lusts
-- seeking your own pleasure
-- living for yourself

Actually leads to Death
A true Christian never regrets doing the right thing – but there are a world of regrets for those who have “gone off the path”.

4. The Economics of Eternity v. 25-26

What if you could gain the whole world?
You know you can't.
You know you won't.
But – EVEN IF YOU DID – you wouldn't have it for long.

You have to die.
There's no way to avoid it.
When you die, you leave it all behind.

What if you gained the whole world – but – as Matthew and Mark put it –
you lose your own soul?

Who's better off today – THE RICH MAN or LAZARUS?
Who's been better off for the past 2000 years?

I'll be doing a funeral this week for a family friend that none of you know.
I would anticipate doing two more funerals very shortly.
One of the things about a funeral is – it puts everything in perspective.

It's shocking.
It's sobering.
People don't want to think about it – they just want to get through it.

Our mortality is a scary subject.
But, not if you are a Christian.

Make sure you link v. 26 with v. 24.
That is the meaning.

v. 26 doesn't mean you will be judged harshly if you didn't witness for
Christ on a certain occasion. We should be witnesses – but v. 24 linked with
v. 26 are martyrs verses – that teach us it is better to lose our earthly life –
than compromise and die.

Some of our brethren around the world are being called upon – at this
very time to give their life for Christ.

You and I are being called to LIVE our life for Christ.
Right now. Today. And EVERY day.

Pray

Hymn 507 (familiar tune of 549)

Benediction: 9:23-24