



Smith Rock
COMMUNITY CHURCH

Community Group study guide

LUKE

J E S U S F O R E V E R Y O N E

**For the week of
12th July 2020**

Against the odds



When we have an important task to accomplish and there is a lot riding on the outcome we will throw everything we have at the task. The same is true for an army going into battle; the general will not send in a battalion or two of new recruits when he has the fire power of many well trained regiments at his disposal.

Yet some of the greatest victories in our history books have come "Against the odds," where the outgunned and out numbered have prevailed.

As Jesus sends out disciples on mission it seems He is going "Against the odds."

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. 2 And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4 Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. 5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the labourer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. 9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' 12 I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 But it will be more bearable in the judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 15 And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades.

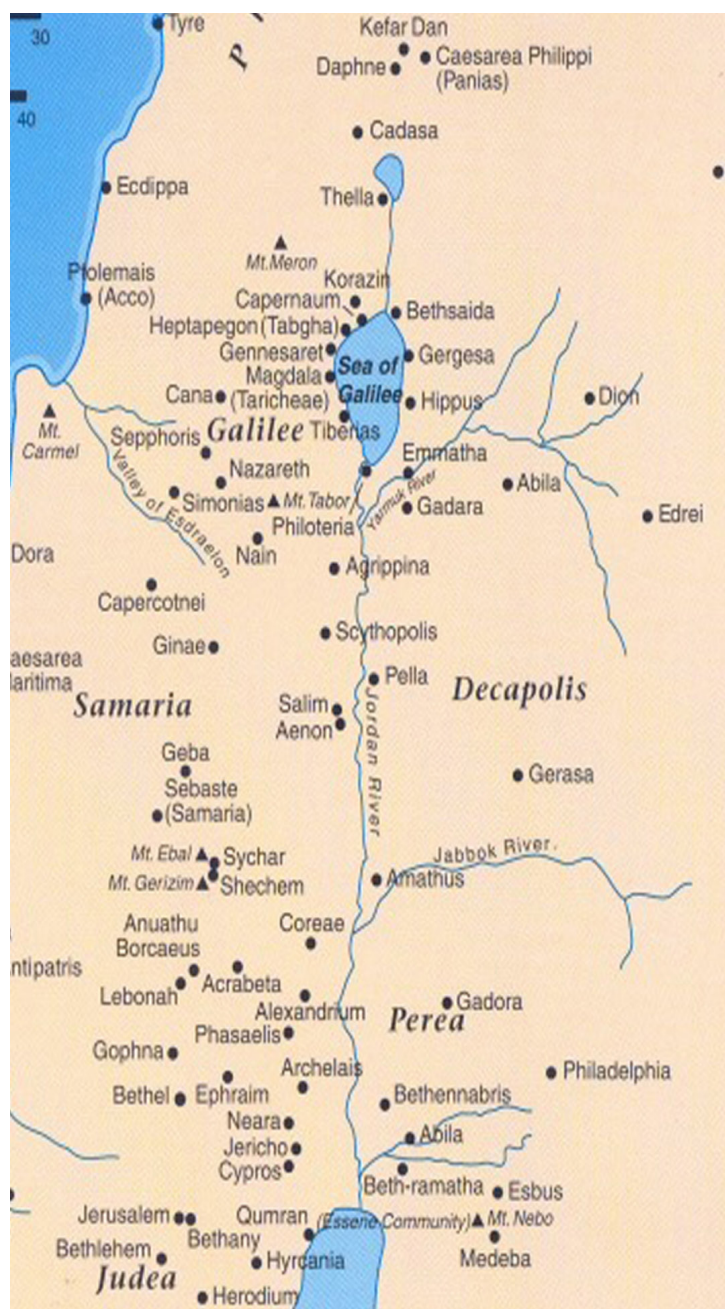
6 *"The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me."*

17 *The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"* 18 *And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."*

21 *In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. 22 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."*

23 *Then turning to the disciples he said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."*

Luke 10:1–24 (ESV)



Commentary

Jesus has already sent out a missionary expedition before when He sent out the twelve Apostles, but now He is sending out other disciples - seventy or seventy two of them depending on the reading of the text. Then number twelve was significant as it represented the twelve tribes of Israel, and the number of disciples sent out on this mission could represent the number of nations in the world, or tie back to the number of assistants given to Moses to help him lead the people of Israel.

The disciples are sent out in pairs, no doubt this was for practical support of each other, but the law also required the testimony of two, and when Jesus speaks of Church discipline in Matthew chapter eighteen, He says that two or more are required for the Lord to hear the matter. This could refer to judgement as much as proclaiming the word if the word is rejected.

The disciples are to go before Jesus, preparing the way for Him, and Jesus tells them there is plenty of opportunity for harvest, in fact the harvest is greater than the present number of harvesters and they should pray for more!

As with the mission of the twelve, the disciples are to take only the bare essentials with them so that they rely on God's provision. The mission is urgent, and therefore they are not to dawdle on the way in idle chit chat, but they are to get to where they are going. When they enter a town or village they are to look for a "person of peace," someone who is willing to welcome them in and give them lodging and food. As they enter they are to pronounce peace on the place or person and stay there. The Apostle Paul tells us that Jesus is our peace, Jesus makes our peace with

God by paying for our sins on the cross, and defeating death. Our greatest fears have been overcome by Christ and we can live at peace. Christ came to extend peace to the world, and as His disciples our mission is to continue to extend God's peace to the world. Jesus' disciples are dispensers of peace. If a person or a town does not receive the peace that is offered to them, then the disciples are to leave and shake the dust of the place off of their sandals as a sign of judgement. Peace has been offered and rejected, and as Jesus goes on to say at the end of the passage that those who reject His disciples reject Him, and those who reject Jesus, reject the Father.

Those towns such as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum who have been offered God's peace, and have seen the signs of God's peace and yet have rejected it, Jesus says will stand in greater judgement than those who haven't been offered God's peace. Why? Because says Jesus those places like Tyre and Sidon if they had seen and heard what the towns in Galilee had seen and heard they would have jumped at the chance to receive it. The kingdom of God has been brought near to them, and yet they have rejected it.

The disciples are to proclaim the Gospel and dispense healing, and they return celebrating what they have seen happen at the name of Jesus.

Jesus had warned them He was sending them like sheep against wolves which gives us the idea that the disciples weren't up against people but they were up against the powers of darkness and the devil himself. Jesus confirms this when He says he saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven. It is hard to know

exactly what Jesus is talking about here; was this an actual event then or was He seeing in the future? Perhaps what we can say is that when the kingdom of God is brought near to people and places by disciples of peace and received, Satan's grip on this world is reduced. Despite going out as lambs against wolves nothing can overcome the name of Jesus.

Jesus tells the disciples that their celebration should not be over what they have seen happen, but rather that their names are securely written in heaven. Jesus also rejoices and thanks the Father for how He has made the kingdom know; not through the wise and powerful but through the "little children," who He has chosen.

Another reason for the disciples to celebrate is they have got to see what so many prophets had longed to see before them.

Group Study

Open the group with prayer and discuss how you have used your application from last week's study in your life, and what you have learned from it.

Describe a situation where you took on something which seemed "against the odds." How did you feel as you started? What did you think the outcome was going to be? What more resources do you wished you had had?

How do you feel about the odds of Jesus' commission of you to go out as His disciple?

What do you think it means for us to bring the kingdom of God “near” to someone?

How can you be a “person of peace?” What does that look like and why might that be attractive to people around you?

Why do you think Jesus tells His disciples to find people of peace and how would you know one?

When you look around your neighbourhood, town, region what do you see?

In response to what you see, what are you asking Jesus for?

Jesus says He sends His disciples out as lambs against wolves. What or who do you think He has in mind when He says this?

Read Ephesians 6:10-20 and discuss how we can fight the enemy as lambs against the wolf and prevail.

As you wrap up this week’s study, what is the thing Jesus tells you to celebrate the most? Talk about how why that is the greatest motivation for celebration.

What lesson will you take from this text, and how will you put it into practice this week?

Personal study time

Read Matthew's account of Jesus' arrest and reflect on what resources Jesus had at His disposal and what He did and how we are to represent Him today.

47 While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. 48 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; seize him." 49 And he came up to Jesus at once and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed him. 50 Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you came to do." Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him. 51 And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?" 55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me. 56 But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples left him and fled.

Matthew 26:47–56 (ESV)

Reflection

Read the passage below as Jesus talks about His sheep and how it can give you strength today?

11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12 He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13 He flees because he is a hired

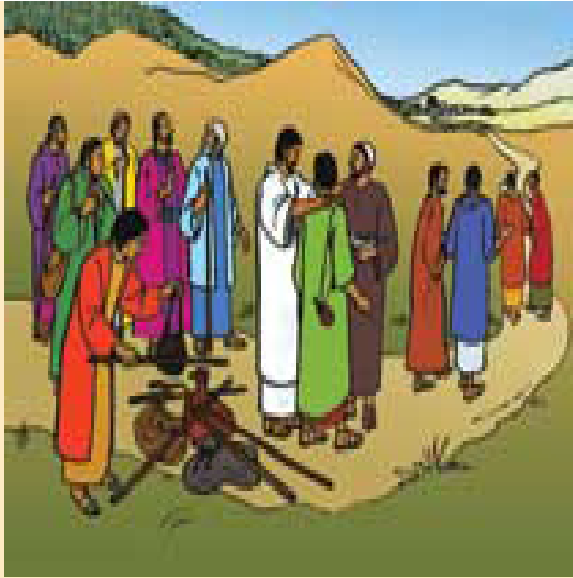
hand and cares nothing for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

John 10:11–16 (ESV)

Reflection

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal blue lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

KIDS CORNER



The Great Adventure

1. When you think of someone who's had an awesome life, who comes to mind?

Life can feel like an adventure. There are so many places to go, so many dreams to pursue, and so many opportunities waiting to be grasped. And the younger we are, the more options there seem to be. But what if, instead of following our own paths to an awesome life story, we completely followed after God and the story He wants for us? Does that seem a little boring? It shouldn't be! God wants the best story possible for our lives, and His plans always turn out to be way better than ours - even if our plans

seem cool and exciting.

When Jesus sent out His seventy-two followers, they experienced such incredible adventures and lived such unbelievable stories! The way God worked His glory and goodness in their lives was so cool, He let them have power over bad spirits, the ability to heal people, and even protection against dangerous snakes and scorpions! Just imagine if they had instead followed after the lives they had wanted on their own. They would have missed out on the amazing plans the Lord had for them! Our lives are the same way. We might not see supernatural events, and we may still have to stay away from snakes and scorpions. But, we can trust that when God writes our life stories, they become more amazing, more significant, and way more powerful than we ourselves could ever dream of.

2. How do you feel about following after God and leaving your life story up to Him?

