

THE RIGHT SPIRIT IN MINISTRY | LUKE 9:37-62 | PASTOR MARK BOFILL | 11/30/2025

Restoring A Boy (37-42) | Reminder of Betrayal (43-45) | Reality of Greatness (46-48) | Recognizing Ministers (49-50) | Rebuking Destruction (51-56) | Real Assessment (57-62)

INTRO: As we continue in **Luke Chapter 9**, we must remember that **JESUS IS DEVELOPING HIS DISCIPLES** so that they would one day Spread the Good News of God's Kingdom. – As they descend from **the Mountain of Transfiguration (9:26-37)**, we are quickly reminded that **the disciples are "STILL IN MINISTRY TRAINING!"** – Luke now includes **SIX sections** which reveal the need for **THE RIGHT SPIRIT IN MINISTRY**

I. RESTORING A BOY (37-42) – **READ:** *The Next day...* we're told that the multitudes were there (37) – And with this crowd we have another story of an "only child" who needs help from Jesus (cf. 7:12; 8:42).

A. Jesus Heard the Man Cry (38-40) – To **implore**, means *to beg someone earnestly or desperately*. – He **begged for mercy (Matt 17:15)**. (*Jesus hears our cry, but do we make it our practice to implore Him for the needs of others?*)

1. He Describes **His Son's Torment (39)** – *"A spirit seizes him..."* – It takes control of him, shaking him violently so that he becomes rigged and mute (Mark 9:17). – Matthew's account describes him as **an epileptic**, who *suffered severely*, often throwing him into the fire or water. (*Imagine watching your son suffer like this!*)

2. He **Implored** the Disciples for **Help (40)** – *But they could NOT cure him (Matt 17:16)*, nor *cast him out (Mark 9:17)* – This brings into question **WHY?** – Why couldn't godly men help? (*We might ask the same, Why would God even allow this? – Godly people don't always have answers, but only God does! This why we must come to Jesus!*)

B. Jesus Helps The Man's Son (41-42) – After hearing the man's story, **Jesus was frustrated with the disciples** inability to perform the exorcism. – *He bluntly identified the problem...*

1. He Addresses Faith (41) – **oh faithless generation... Jesus had given the apostles authority over demons (9:1)**, but here we see that **some had No Power!** – (Rom 11:29) explains that *the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable*. However, the **EFFECTIVENESS** of such **power required: FAITH, PRAYER, and FASTING!**

a. **The Disciples Faith (tt. Matt 17:19-21)** – They asked Jesus **WHY** they were powerless, and Jesus made clear that their inability was rooted in their own UNBELIEF! – **FAITH** is required for supernatural work!

• **FASTING** and **PRAYER** is also necessary to Help Maintain Effectiveness! – While **Fasting** keeps you operating in the Spirit, **Prayer** keeps you connected with the Father's will.

b. **The Man's Faith (tt. Mark 9:20-24)** – Having *rebuked* His disciples, Jesus said *"Bring him to Me."* – He then proceeded to have a conversation with the father. (**READ**) – *I love the man's confession, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"* **He admitted the imperfection of his faith**, (*Begging Jesus for help to increase Faith!*)

2. **He Rebukes the Unclean Spirit (42)** – In (Mark 9:25-27), **the boy seemed to be dead...** but Jesus took him by the hand and **RESTORED HIM!** – **He Gave him back to his father!** (*Jesus's mission is to bring us back!*)

P/A – Here, Jesus **DEMONSTRATES** that the **Spirit of Healing and Restoration is the RIGHT SPIRIT in MINISTRY**. – *When people are in need it is the greatest good to help them*, to bear their burden with them (cf. Gal 6:2) – This also Teaches Us that: **Faith, Fasting, and Prayer** is necessary to minister effectively! (*Our attempts to restore others without spiritual power is in vain!*) – On another note: **This teaches not to give up on our kids!**

II. REMINDER OF BETRAYAL (43-45) – **READ:** *All were amazed at God's Majesty (43)*, i.e., the **"Mighty Power."** And they attributed the works of Jesus to God (*which is the right association*)

A. Jesus Redirects Focus (44) – **Sink down into your ears** i.e., **PAY ATTENTION!** – Though glorious things were happening in Ministry; **Jesus reminded His disciples that His mission had not changed! He still had to die on the cross!** – His **"Betrayal"** would soon come by the hand of **JUDAS ISCARIOT (cf. 22:21-22,47-48)**.

B. Jesus' Saying was Mysterious (45) – “*They did not understand...*” The disciples still had not grasped the spiritual importance of Jesus’s messianic mission, so they could only respond to the predictions of His impending death and resurrection with *misunderstanding* (Mark 9:31-32) and *sorrow* (Matt 17:22,48)

P/A – Here, Jesus provides a *Spirit of Prophecy*, which is **RIGHTLY NEEDED in Ministry**. – The disciples forgot the reminders of Jesus’ suffering and resurrection until after His resurrection (Luke 24:6-8). – We also see a *Spirit of Betrayal*, which is obviously the **Wrong Spirit!**

III. REALITY OF GREATNESS (46-48) – **READ:** In (Mark 9:33), we learn that when Jesus came to Capernaum, He questioned the disciples about *what they disputed on the road* as they traveled there.

A. Jesus Perceives a Dispute (46-47a) – The disciples were **constantly learning and doing ministry with Jesus and one another**, but it seems that when Jesus gave them power over demons, they started to compare themselves among themselves, as if one amongst them was greatest. (*Pride in Ministry/Heart* (47)

THE DISCIPLES...

1. Were concerned about their own personal advancement in the Kingdom Administration.
2. May have disputed because some could not cast out demons and others could.
3. Might have become envious because only three had been selected to be with Jesus on the mountain.

P/A – Jesus understood their motives and impulses... it was **NOT the RIGHT SPIRIT IN MINISTRY!**

B. Jesus Proclaims True Greatness (47b-48) – He then provided an object lesson for them, *by taking a little child into His arms* (Mark 9:36), and explained what a RIGHT SPIRIT looks like within the Kingdom of God!

1. **Like a Child (47b)** – A toddler is helpless, lowly, and dependent, ... innocent, without developed pride.
2. In (cf. Matt 18:2-5) Jesus teaches that “true conversion” should result in **CHILDLIKE FAITH which is rooted in HUMILITY!** – **And Humility is what truly makes one great!** – (Phil 2:3) *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.*

a. Jesus said, whoever... *“Receives this little child...receives me.”* (48a)– If the child was a representation of Himself, and He is a reflection of His Father in heaven, then Jesus indirectly pointed to Himself as the Greatest in the kingdom. (*Which He truly is! – But He didn’t parade the fact.*)

b. Jesus makes it clear that in the Kingdom of God there is a reversal of values involved! – So...

c. Jesus challenges His followers to be the least! – *The last will be first* (Matt 20:16); and *“the least will be the greatest.”* (48b) – In Mark’s account, Jesus tells the twelve, *“If anyone desires to be first he shall be Last of All and Servant of All.”* (Mark 9:35) – **THIS IS THE REALITY OF TRUE GREATNESS.**

P/A – Being *As a Child* and being *Least Important* are **NOT the typical ways** that people think of **“Being Great!”** – A Great person doesn’t have to PROVE IT! – ***A Spirit of Humility is the RIGHT TYPE of SPIRIT in Ministry!***

IV. RECOGNIZING MINISTERS (49-50) – **READ:** I find this section interesting because the Bible generally refers to the apostle John as the Beloved Disciple (John 21:20). But here, we see him *as a Son of Thunder!* (Mark 3:17; Luke 9:54) – *He was offended that...*

A. Jesus’ Name Used to Minister (49) – The Beloved Disciple scolded the man because he was not part of the **A-Team!** (*Sectarianism*) – Evidently, he was *“Casting Out Demons... in the name of Jesus!”* – **Notice it was not because of wrong THEOLOGY**, but John’s motive appears to be that of **JEALOUSY!** – (*Remember, we just read that some of the disciples were unable to cast demons out of the man’s only son!* – (v.41) Yes it’s happens in ministry!

B. Jesus Permits Right Ministry (50) – *Jesus immediately corrects John Spirit (50a)* – He says, “*don’t do that!*”... don’t FORBID him! – In (Mark 9:39) he said, “*for no one who works a miracle in my name can soon afterwards speak evil of me.*” – And in (50b), Jesus made clear, “*he who is not against us is on our side*”

1. As Disciples, we are to **Recognize those doing good for God’s kingdom!** ... they are your brothers and sisters in Christ... Amen! – However, **God’s kingdom is open to a broad range of people**... (Phil 1:15-18)

- All are to be considered God’s children unless their actions/beliefs oppose God’s work. – The apostle John later warned us to TEST the SPIRITS of Others (tt.1 John 4:1-3)

2. As Disciples, be aware that **Jesus identifies OPPOSERS!** – Any action that *causes one of these “little ones” to fall* would be in danger of judgment and being removed from the community of faith. “*Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes*” (Matt 18:7)

P/A – *As disciples of Jesus Christ we need Spiritual Discernment to distinguish and determine how to respond to Muslims, Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and such.* – **ACCEPTANCE**... to those who are children of faith, who **CONFESS JESUS CHRIST AS LORD**, but **REJECTION**... to those who oppose faith in Jesus Christ.

- Furthermore, we live in a time where **the line has been drawn in the sand!** – **YOU MUST STAND for your FAITH** in Jesus Christ and **OPPOSE** those who antagonistic towards the gospel of peace!
- **Q:** Will you faithfully minister in these Troublesome Times? – (Mark 9:49-50) says, “*For everyone will be seasoned with fire,*” and *every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace with one another.*”

P/A – **The Spirit of Division** amongst believers is the **WRONG TYPE** of Spirit in Ministry. – (Rom 12:18) says, *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

V. REBUKING DESTRUCTION (51-56) – **READ:** Luke tells us that “*the time had come,*” which marks the start of a new part of the Gospel of Luke (9:51-19:44). – It was Jesus’ plan to die for the sin of the world at Jerusalem. – The phrase, “*to be received up*” refers to **Jesus’ ascension from the Mt. of Olives, (not resurrection)**

A. Jesus’ Focus (51-52) – As He *set His face to go, He also sent forerunners before His face to prepare for His entry into Samaria* – Guzik points out that “*There are two kinds of courage — the courage of moment, which requires no previous thought, and a planned courage, which sees the difficulty ahead and steadfastly marches towards it. Jesus had this kind of courage; He saw the cross on the horizon, but still steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.*” – Guzik (Opposition was ahead, but He was ready!)

B. Jesus Forsaken by Samaritan Villagers (53-54) – *Samaritans were considered as half-breeds* because Jews from the Northern Kingdom **intermarried with non-Jewish colonists** after the conquest of 722 B.C. (2 Kings 17:24). – As a result, Josephus explains that “*There was a strong hatred between them through their history, Samaritans at times, murdered Jews in their pilgrimages*” – **Josephus**

1. Their **Reason for Rejecting Jesus is Stated (53)**, “*Because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.*”
2. **The Reaction of James and John (54) – Vengeance... Destruction!** James and John, upset by Jesus’ poor reception among the Samaritans, **offered to destroy the city!** – They wanted to *call down fire like Elijah,* if Jesus permitted them. (cf. 2 Kings 1:10) *Whoa!* – **Is this the Right Spirit in Ministry? Absolutely not!** ...

C. Jesus Forbids Destruction (55-56) – I can imaging the look on Jesus’s face... **What!** (Crispy Critters! ha)

1. He Rebukes (55) – As He turned to them, He **REBUKED** them {Grk. *Epitimao*}, i.e., to censure severely, or to chide; He said, “*You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.*” – This principle warns us from falling into this sin. – *Sadly, many in the church today still manifest this same spirit. Allowing their Sin Nature to manifest!*

2. **He Corrects (56)** – Jesus ‘response to these Samaritans **demonstrates the Right Spirit in Ministry!** – He did “...*not come to DESTROY men’s lives, but to save them!*” which is **the Goal of Jesus’ Mission!**

- Jesus’ response was **GRACE** rather than Destructive Fury!
- **Jesus does not force** anyone to receive Him! (**Matt 5:38-48**) *Go the 2nd mile, Loves your enemies, etc!*
- Jesus just moved on to the next village (**56b**) – *And we should do the same... move on... Leave it to Jesus!*

Righteous Vengeance is to be left to the Lord! (2 Thess 1:7-8) *when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (James 2:13), True greatness is marked by mercy, not judgment!*

P/A – Jesus knew that **A Spirit of Destruction and Vengeance** is the **WRONG TYPE** of Spirit in Ministry.

VI. REAL ASSESSEMENT (57-62) – In this final section, **Jesus tests True Discipleship.** – He speaks to **THREE** would-be disciples, who exposed their lack of Commitment and Sacrifice.

A. Jesus Addresses the Impulsive Disciple (57-58) – **READ:** According to (**Matt 9:19**), he was a **scribe**, who was probably used to living comfortably. – He was fond of Jesus’ mission, so he **volunteered** himself!

1. He Heard The Man’s Claim (57) – *Lord, I will follow you wherever you go.* – **It was a verbal commitment!**

2. **He Explained the Reality of Accommodations (58)** – *‘You mean there is no Holiday Inn on the way’* – This man was zealous and enthusiastic to follow Jesus because he **thought ministry would be glamorous.** – But Jesus made clear that such amenities were not promised! – Jesus’ statement also **challenged him to CONSIDER THE COST of following Jesus (9:23-26)** – Notice, there is no mention of response from the man!

P/A – If your motives for following Jesus are **based on hyped-up emotions**, sooner or later you will burn out!

B. Jesus Addresses the Procrastinating Disciple (59-60) – **READ:**

1. He Called Another Man to Follow (59) – **He heard Jesus’ voice directly!** – What a privilege to have a private personal invitation from Jesus. – **But this man GAVE AN EXCUSE to Jesus!** – *“Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”* – His father hadn’t even died yet! – **The man wanted to follow Jesus, but not just yet!**

2. **He Explained the Need for Priorities (60)** – Jesus calls him out on his procrastination! – I’ll paraphrase it for you... *Let those who are “spiritually dead” bury their own people!* – **The Priority for a True Disciple is to be the Gospel of the Kingdom!** – Paul declared... *“Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”* (1 Cor 9:16)

P/A – (**Matt 22:14**) tells us that *Many are called but few are chosen.* – You may be called, but if you procrastinate by making excuses, **you will never be used of God!** (*This is a problem for so many!*)

C. Jesus Addresses the Indecisive Disciple (61-62) – **READ:** *In a similar fashion*, this man volunteered!

1. He Heard The Man’s Claim (61) – **His issue** is exposed by use of the word, *“But!” I will follow You...* – Notice also his claim: *“I will follow you,”* did not include the phrase, *“wherever you go”* – **The man’s dilemma (61b), “...first, let me say farewell to my family”** – **He was unsure of his calling!**

- **A warm goodbye to family is fine**, but if it gets in the way of obeying God, it is sin! (Rom 14:23b)

2. **He Explained the Need for Commitment (62)** – *“No one having put his hand to the plow, looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”* – A plowman who looks back makes a crooked furrow!

- This **agricultural metaphor** calls **Disciples to Personal Assessment!** – *To Keep our eyes on Jesus!*
- A True Disciple also **HOLDS ON!** – *A plowman who lets go is no plowman at all!*

- **Paul didn't look back!** – (Phil 3:13), *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and **reaching forward to those things which are ahead**,*

P/A – **A Spirit of Sacrifice and Commitment** is **NEEDED** in Ministry. – People will say that they are committed, but the cost must first be considered! **How great is your willingness to count the cost**