

A Lesson on Mercy

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Good evening to our Wednesday evening discipleship Bible study. Before we start the lesson, let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, thank you for this opportunity to go before your throne of grace that we may be able to obtain mercy to find grace to help in time of need. Pray father that you would help all of us including myself to be attentive to the word in such a way that it would create a response from our hearts, Lord, that would please you father. So I pray that you would bless it this message to that end for asking in Jesus name. Amen.

All right. So if you will can turn to Luke chapter 9 and we will be continuing our lesson on discipleship verses 51 through 56 this evening. Just as a way to kind of build up to this specific lesson, I want to rehearse what the first and second lesson were about. So the first lesson was what the Lord Jesus desired in his disciples, and there was a warning in there in that message to not be too excited about what you think or a disciple would think in the flesh what greatness means. Right? The example that I shared in that sermon or in that Bible study was that we can have a perception of greatness that is from the flesh and then to compare is the way that the Lord Jesus' perception of greatness and the idea was Jesus said this in that text when we went through that lesson was he said he that is least among you the same shall be great. So it's an **inverted** view of what the flesh perceives as greatness according to then what Jesus says about what greatness looks like and he can illustrate it by receiving a child in Jesus' name. That's what it says there in the text in verse 48 of chapter 9 and essentially he said to the effect, "This is to give you a lesson on **humility**." A lesson on humility that is to bring about in a true disciple of Christ the idea that it's the one that thinks of himself the least, not the one that thinks as himself as the great in his kingdom. So that was a very humbling lesson for the disciples.

Then in the second lesson that I brought is that we saw the Lord Jesus correct, by the way it was gentle correction, his disciples over **divisiveness**, that to not be divisive of others who don't follow in their in their own eyes, Peter, James and John speaking of in their exclusive group, that anyone outside of their exclusive group, there's a question mark there. And the idea was Jesus corrects their misguided viewpoint of what it means to be a follower of Christ again and they missed a point and it's said in verse 50, he says, "for he that is not against us," Jesus speaking, "is for us." And then I mentioned about how they missed the whole point in verse 50 was that they were doing good work. They were casting devils out, right? in Jesus' name. They missed that whole thing because they were so focused, so narrowminded, only thinking about themselves instead of seeing ultimately what is the good work that this other disciple was doing. And so being divisive can lead to pride and then can lead to then **jealousy**. And I didn't point this out in that that message, but later when I thought about it, you'll see in verse 37 and 42 that they were powerless to cast out demons. They were they themselves couldn't cast out demons. And so this outside disciple was able to cast out a demon. And so there was some in their heart this jealousy,

this pride, like how dare you type of attitude, you know. And so Jesus corrects that. He says, "No, this this so-called outside disciple that you think is not a follower of me, you know, he's actually is able to do it because it's in my name. It's in my name, in Christ's name." And then I ended that message with to remind ourselves as true followers of Jesus Christ is to remind ourselves of Luke 9:23 that in order to truly be a follower of Jesus Christ is we have to **die to ourself**. We have to die to that pride of and jealousy and divisiveness and pride of position and all these things. And then once we do that's when we are true followers of Jesus Christ.

Now, this third lesson tonight is going to be a lesson on **mercy**. A lesson on mercy. So, let's let's examine that tonight. So, if you look down with me, verse 51, we're going to read 51 through 53. Okay? So, just read it with me silently. Says here, "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers before his face, and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him, and they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem." So, let me just set the scene here. The idea is that the Lord Jesus and his disciples are on their way to Jerusalem and they and Jesus stops in a Samaritan village and then the villagers refuse hospitality because in the backdrop of all this there's a hostility between the Jewish people and the Samaritan people. Okay? And so the apostle Luke here introduces the subject of **Christ's passion** in verse 51. So it shows the seriousness and also the tenderness behind this part of the text. Let me just read it again. It says, "When the time was come that he Jesus should be received up." And so this part of the text really softens up the blow that the Lord Jesus has to go through, all that suffering and and the and death that's ahead of him. And here he's passing by to the Samaritan village and he's not being welcomed. He's not being welcomed on his way to Jerusalem.

And so it says in the text, he **steadfastly set his face**. That's important because that word steadfast is important for all true believers. We see that in 1 Corinthians 15:58. I'm not going to read the whole text, but the whole idea is steadfast is this idea of a **firm and unwavering commitment while facing trials**. While facing trials and doing it ultimately for to please Christ, to please Christ. And obviously here he is pleasing his father, doing the will of God, and he he knows that ultimately it is death on the cross that he will face. But he doesn't get distracted. He doesn't waver at the thought that the Samaritans were going to be hostile. His mind was focused on doing God's will. So the Samaritans believed, let me just bring out a little bit more about the Samaritans. They believed that a Messiah who went to Jerusalem for the feast because that was in the time of the Passover was coming. They they believe that if the Messiah was to come for the feast in Jerusalem that that very action demonstrated that he was not the Messiah. That's the the thought that came to the Samaritans why they refused the Lord Jesus in this setting because he's going to Jerusalem and that but by that very action that's why that word Jerusalem is there specifically because that's where he's going and they're going, "No, that's not where the Messiah is supposed to be." Because in their view, in the Old Testament, you would see that the Samaritans worshiped on the mount of **Mount Gerizim**. They worshiped on the Mount Gerizim and they considered that as the holy mountain of God and we see later on that Jesus corrects that and said we don't worship in mountains, we worship God in **spirit and in truth**. Right? That's in the New Testament. And so, just going back to the text, they're they're expecting Christ, but they're not but but they were expecting him to go to Mount Gerizim, and they didn't see that. They said they saw Jerusalem and, "Okay, that's not the Messiah. That's not the Messiah." And

so, that's their issue. Their issue was still worshiping in Mount Gerizim. That was their center of all religion, not the Lord Jesus Christ. And so that's the backdrop, verse 51 through 53.

Then we go to verse 54. Here we're going to see that the apostle John and James is filled with anger at the Samaritans' attitude of rejecting the Lord Jesus. And we see here, it says here in verse 54, "And when the disciples James and John saw this, they said, 'Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, as Elias did?'" And so here the disciples' reaction suggests let's send fire from heaven as Elijah did in 2 Kings 1:10-12, that their focus the disciples' focus here is on **their own importance**, not what what Jesus wants to do. They just immediately react. They don't wait on the Lord Jesus. It's like, "This is this is what I think we should do, Lord Jesus." Is that what a true follower does, is tell Jesus what to do? No. So, we're going to see the reaction of the Lord Jesus Christ to their response. Because to them, they thought, "Oh, look at how dishonoring they are to the Lord Jesus. Look at how they just insulted him." And they don't even think about the Lord Jesus and how he's going to respond. And it's like they take it personally. They take it personally. When it was reflected, it was supposed to be reflected on the Lord Jesus. They reflected upon themselves. And so there's a misalignment there. There's a lesson here that we can see that a **self-centered defense of status** appearing here again, position blinds them to the very grace and mercy that defines the Lord Jesus Christ. They they they they don't see that in the Lord Jesus at this stage because they see that they they want to command down fire that the Lord Jesus would somehow do that for them. But no, that that is not what we're going to see in the Lord Jesus Christ. He in fact extends mercy. He instead gives **grace** even when facing insult.

So look at verse 55 with with me. Verse 55 says this. "But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.'" Let's just look at that word **but**. This appears many times in the scriptures. It's a very important thing because it's the idea of a **sharp contrast**. That's what that word but is to signify. There's a sharp contrast in this part of the text that immediately precedes the event that happened in verse 51 to verses 53 and 54. And what was that event again? That impulse of command fire from heaven to consume this this this because the unwelcoming Samaritans. And then we see this word but. A sharp difference in the text because this part of the Bible when it's saying but is that it signifies a change from a **human reaction** to a **divine reaction**. A human reaction to a divine reaction. And the great example of this word but is we see in Romans 5:8. "But God demonstrates his own love toward us." It's always this divine response, this viewpoint when we see that word but. So in this passage again going back to here in the text emphasize a sharp contrast between the disciples' immediate desire for condemnation and then Christ's part of **mercy**. And so the disciples' impulse was to mirror Elijah. To them that thought they thought that was the right response, you know, fiery judgment. But the Lord Jesus demonstrates that no, that's not what we do when it comes to what I want them to see. So instead instead of what? Yes, in the future there will be judgment. We see that in Revelation 20:11-15, but that's not judgment now. That's in the future in the second coming of Christ. As long we're still living in the first coming of Christ, that judgment is reserved for later. And so the present moment is what? Characterized by **mercy and grace**. Mercy and grace. That is right now from the time that Jesus said this till now continues on, John 3:17, grace and truth.

So then let's look at the next word from but is **he**. That's the Lord Jesus. And this is a pivot again. We're pivoting here that every true disciple is defined by the person of Jesus because their zeal is

going towards what they want to do. But we see in the text, "No, let's see what Jesus wants to do." So it's changing their perspective from again their wrong perception. We've seen this first lesson, second lesson. We see this again here appearing and instead we are to fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 12:2. Let's see what the Lord Jesus does in response. And so the focus is immediately shifted to him. To him. And we know that again John 1:14 says he is full of grace and truth. And so vengeance vengeance must be filtered through his character of being full of grace and truth. That that's what we are to do. Everything is in him. And when we do, then we get to be enjoined as it were to his grace and truth in response to insults. And so Luke emphasizes Christ's authority by naming him here and then serves a reminder the disciples' lack of power to unleash divine wrath independently. They want to do it independently. No, it's must be under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what we see here. No, you don't get to do whatever you want. Look at what I how again how I respond to judgment.

So then he **turns**. We see that in the text turned. He turned. And so Jesus' reaction is an actual **physical action**. The Apostle Luke points this there's a physical movement in him. It's not just a mind thing. Like he literally shifts his body. From he was just just visualize this. He's he's walking with the Samaritans. He's talking with them and they're insulting him. They don't they're like, "No, you're not the Messiah." And then the disciples, you know, say, "Let's command this fire from heaven to them." And then you see Jesus, he turns and goes, "Okay. Let me respond to that. No more on the Samaritans. It's now my attention is on you." That's the idea we see here illustrated. So Jesus's action is purposeful. There's a physical action that's involved and his intention is now suddenly turned to do something in response to the disciples. Now we see here there's a **direct personal engagement**. See the Lord Jesus Christ goes direct with us. There is no like, "Oh wait." When there's something wrong in a true disciple, the Lord Jesus will be direct and there will be a personal engagement with his disciple. Amen. That is exactly right. We see this in Mark 5:30. We see this in Luke 10:23. He is consistent in the way he he responds to his disciples. So we see swiftness. We see attentiveness in his correction in this in this in this idea of turning. And look, Revelation 3:19 says this, "As many as I love, his true disciples, I rebuke and chasen. Be zealous, therefore, and repent." He wants them to **repent**. He loves them. He chasens the ones he loves. So Jesus' immediate response shifts from the Samaritan villages again to his disciples highlighting that the problem lies with the disciples' attitude and not the Samaritans' rejection. Did you catch that? It's it's it's it's amazing, right? We can get so focused on what we want to do when again it's what does the Lord Jesus want to do in any situation that we're in where there's hostility and insults.

And then now we see another conjunction that's a word that is a connecting word. We see that word **and**. And so he turns and he rebukes his disciples and he corrects them. And again the response like consistent with Revelation 3:19, Ephesians 4:15 says this that he speaks the **truth and love**. There's so many lessons in that. Amen. When we speak in truth, we should do it always with love behind it. And so the word describes a **firm verbal correction**. That's that word rebuke. And it's the it's the same essence, the same level of authority when he silenced the storm in Mark 4:39 or when he silenced the demons in Luke 4:41. It's like he just speaks and it's it's done. Amen. So, is he speaking to you when he speaks to you? Is it done or do you still have to need more chastening? I would love that we all do it when he first directly responds to us. Amen. And we respond accordingly. So by rebuking rather than praising their so-called zeal, he reveals that **zeal without love is misplaced**. See, they had zeal, they had enthusiasm, but they lacked

what? The most important thing is love, truth with love. And so each rebuke is supposed to realign us as true disciples of Christ with God's mission of redemption. We see that in John 20:21. So again, he's rebuking disciples James and John specifically because they have a **fiery temperament**. You know, fire that's misdirected can cause great damage. Amen. And so even the Lord Jesus called them the sons of thunder in Mark 3:17. Like, "You guys are just this is your flesh. You just have some fire within you, but it's always misdirected. You know what? I'm going to correct you again. That character trait is not a good one." It wasn't supposed to be encouraging that they're sons of thunder. It was to actually rebuke them. And so now this is the opportunity to rebuke them for how they responded. So Christ disciplines his disciples to prepare them to reflect his spirit, Christ's spirit. For instance, Apostle John who was again quick to judge with fire later penned these words, 1 John 4:7, "Beloved, let us love one another." See, that's what a true disciple does when he's redirected. Amen. He understands what love is. Do you truly understand what love is? Do you truly understand? That's something to think about here in the text.

So, the disciples were corrected. By the way, they were corrected **privately**. That's that turn again. He was now talking with this group and, "I'm no longer dealing with the Samaritans." And that's, you know, there was some insight here. That's how we're supposed to be in church polity when one of us sins. We're supposed to go privately. We're not supposed to just go, "Hey church, there's a problem here." No. Jesus shows his example. You go privately. You go privately first. And it was private, wasn't it? Two disciples. Two disciples. So that's Matthew 18:15 as an illustration for us as the church and how we are supposed to discipline.

And so let's go back to the text Luke 9:55. Jesus confronts an illdirected zeal, enthusiasm for judgment and asserts instead his merciful authority and it's his mercy. It's mercy. He withholds what they deserve. That's mercy, right? He withholds what they deserve. And so his action turns rebukes his disciples firmly and underscores this very important core lesson that as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ we are commissioned to mirror the Lord Jesus. Again, I reflected that in about Matthew 18:15, that we abandon wrath when we're insulted and instead **extend mercy**. That we prioritize **salvation** instead of judgment. And we submit to correction so that the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ serves in and through us for redemptive purposes. Right?

And we're going to see what that redemptive purpose is in verse 56. Look down with me. "For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village." Here is a crucial important lesson to remember the Lord Jesus and **his mission over our mission**. We see this in the text. The Son of Man came to save lives, not to destroy them. This statement sets the tone for what is to follow. It is to show us that the purpose is to align again with his redemption, not retribution. Just going further into the New Testament, 1 Timothy 2:3-4 says this, "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

And then the example of the Lord Jesus, another part of this text is look at where it says **went on to another village**. It's important to look at that because it shows something here that sometimes the gracious response following what the Lord Jesus does here is to move peaceably. Romans 12:18 says this, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Isn't that amazing? It's not according to our time, but according to his time. This is how we

extend mercy. And so, we are to reflect Christ's character. And here's some more truth. Here's some truth with gentleness. We see this in 2 Timothy 2:24-25. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves, if God per venture will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." You see, until someone really gets the truth, there's no reason for here to oppose them because they're not opposing us. They're opposing God and his word. And I love that word in verse 25, **meekness**. Do it in meekness. That word is important. I I preached on this text before. But the idea is **meekness is strength under control**. It's not weakness. It is strength under control. So instead of, "I want to just do what I want to do," it's like, "Wait a minute. What does God want to do in this situation?" He wants me to speak truth. But are they getting the truth? I can't force the truth on anyone. None of us can. Only God can allow that truth right to settle into the heart. He is the one that draws people to himself. We cannot do that. Our responsibility is to do it in meekness to speak the truth and once they acknowledge the truth. Amen. That's what we want to pray for that that they acknowledge the truth as it says here in verse 25 of second Timothy.

So when the door closes here, we see the door closed on the village of the Samaritans, that we are to **accept God's timing and keep serving elsewhere**. So Jesus goes to another village. He says, "I that's not the right time for them to be saved. Let's go on." Sometimes we get stuck. We go, "Oh, it's not it's not working out here. So I I guess my mission's on. I guess I cannot be seeking the truth anymore. I guess I cannot be meek anymore. But it is him that determines it." Amen. For the acknowledging of the truth, we must serve somewhere else, as it says here, and they went to another village. So let **mercy triumph over judgment**. That's what we are to get out of this text, confident that God alone is the judge. Romans 12:19, "Dearly beloved says, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, sayeth the Lord." So, we are to check our own spirit to see if it's aligned to God's governing love and his spirit. We are to extend mercy especially to those who oppose just like we see here in this lesson. And then to receive correction when correction is needed by the Lord Jesus. Because you know what? When the Lord Jesus rebukes us, it's actually a **gift**. It is actually grace extended to us to steer us back to him and away from our flesh. Always remember that he rebukes us with love. And we are to ultimately align to him for his saving purpose in every interaction we have. That is how we are to live as true followers of Christ. That's how we're going to make the most impact. That's how God is going to use us for more more impact. May we all want and desire more of him and less of ourselves because it boils down to this that the **Lord Jesus is always right. We are always wrong**. And how you think about that makes and determines how you are going to respond to this message. Are you going to receive this with humbleness as in the first and the second lesson? Because he is teaching us to be humble, meaning depend on him, depend on him, not on myself, not on myself. Hear from him, not want to do what I want to do, listening to our own hearts. No, you see he doesn't want us to live with the hardened heart the way we used to live before we knew Jesus Christ. You see, he changed and turned our hearts forever but we will occasionally fall back to our flesh but he will always redirect us with love and he'll do it with truth as well. So right now the response is will you answer in humility or will you stay hardened in your heart? May you do what's former. Amen. May you do what's former. Amen.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for this very important lesson on mercy. Lord, we all need more and more mercy. And not only for ourselves, but Lord, we are those that were already saved but bought, washed, and cleansed by our sins. How much more we need to extend mercy to others, especially during this time of Thanksgiving approaching, Lord. Many of us may not be in a home where there are Christians and we as Christians are supposed to witness to them and there might be hostility in that room or insults going left and right. Help us to have a spirit of Christ in those situations as believers in the Lord. And so that situations where it felt more having a judgmental spirit would be instead a spirit of meekness like the Lord Jesus Christ. So that we actually see opportunities instead of problems. And that's how the Lord Jesus saw everything. And so I pray father that we would just have the spirit of Christ this Thanksgiving. And ultimately, thank you for our salvation. And we want others to receive the same response, to be thankful for what Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross, to pay for our sins, to give us eternal life, to be able to walk with him for all of eternity. Pray this and ask in Jesus name. Amen.