

Youth Teaching Resources

July 7, 2019



Season After Pentecost (June 16-November 24)

On the Road with Jesus

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 – “A Mission Trip to Remember”

Luke 10:25-37 – “A Wonder on the Road”

Luke 10:38-42 – “A Better Way to Go”

Luke 11:1-13 – “A Good Way to Pray”

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A Mission Trip to Remember

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

YOUTH Teaching Guide

by Jeremy Colliver

This youth teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Baptists Today*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Baptists Today* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Baptists Today* so they can prepare before the lesson.

PARENT PREP

We pray for our students to walk in the way of Jesus, and then sometimes we get surprised when they actively want to push themselves to further their faith journey. We pray for our students to desire God and then struggle with sending our students out on missions to difficult places. We are to protect our students, but not inhibit their growth. Be open to where the Holy Spirit is leading them. Many times their greatest transformations happen when they are away from home.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Fellowship

Begin your session by showing the clip “Cinderella being bossed around by her Stepmother” from *Cinderella*. If you are unable to show the clip, summarize it to the best of your ability and then facilitate a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) Who does Cinderella have to serve?
- 2) Why does Cinderella have to serve her sisters?
- 3) How is Cinderella’s plight of service different than the service that Christians are called to do?
- 4) Can Christians become “servants” instead of serving?
- 5) How do we know we are called to serve?

Information

Transition to the next section of the session by reading Luke 10:1-20. Allow the students to ask any initial questions they have about the text. As you answer their questions, you may want to provide some of the information found in Tony’s commentary to answer their questions. When the students have had an opportunity to share their initial thoughts, continue the discussion by facilitating a discussion using questions like the following:

- 1) What is the significance of Jesus sending out 70 people? (You may want to reference Genesis 10.)
- 2) What does Jesus want them to do when they go out?
- 3) Why did Jesus send them out in pairs? Why do you think Jesus had them not take anything?

Information *continued*

- 4) How were those sent supposed to handle rejection? Why do you think Jesus sent them knowing that some of them would be rejected?
- 5) How can it be frustrating not seeing immediate results to our service?

If your group would like to dig deeper in their discussion, share some of the insights that Tony provides in the “Digging Deeper” portion of his commentary. You may want to use some questions like the following to facilitate your discussion:

- 1) Were there 70 or 72 people sent out? Does it matter which number was sent out?
- 2) Why do you think Luke is the only gospel to include this story?
- 3) Why does Jesus call out these three cities for their iniquity when they had done good deeds as well?

You may also want your group to discuss “The Hardest Question” if they would like to continue their discussion on this passage. Tony poses the following question to consider as “The Hardest Question”: What’s this about scorpions and snakes?

Transformation

Conclude your session by creating a group covenant for your next mission trip. Create small groups of three to five students and have them brainstorm attributes that mission team members should have. When they have completed their brainstorming session, bring the small groups back together and have them share their ideas. Gather the overarching themes together to form your group covenant. When the covenant has been created, have each team member sign the covenant together.

Close with a prayer asking God for continued guidance as we discern where we are to go and serve next.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

The text—The Revised Common Lectionary skips over the middle of the passage, using Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 as the text. This may be because many scholars consider vv. 12-15 to be out of context for a commissioning: Matthew locates the same warnings in a different context (Matt. 11:20-24). Nevertheless, we will take a look at the entire text.

Seventy, or seventy-two?—The manuscript tradition is almost evenly divided between a reading of 70 or 72 as the number of persons that Luke says Jesus sent out. Seventy is the more natural reading, given its apparent symbolism, but for that reason it’s more likely that scribes would have changed the more difficult reading of 72 to 70. It’s harder to explain why anyone would have changed 70 to 72, unless they were harmonizing it to the popular Greek translation – which also lists 72 nations in Genesis 10, while the Hebrew has 70. In Jewish tradition 70 and 72 were virtually interchangeable, so it matters little. Although the number 72 may have claim to be the better reading, we’ll stick with tradition and speak of the 70.

A hodgepodge account?—As previously noted, only Luke includes this story of Jesus sending a larger group of followers on mission. His account, however, includes several quotations taken from different contexts in the other gospels, suggesting that he has developed the story in his own way.

The statement about the harvest being plentiful and the challenge to pray for laborers is also found in Matthew 9:37-38, and the instructions for the journey are very similar to Matthew’s account of Jesus sending the Twelve (Matt. 10:7-16).

Sodom—The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, according to Genesis 19, because of their widespread wickedness as expressed in their refusal to show hospitality to strangers – not, as is often assumed, because of rampant homosexuality. In the story, Abraham’s nephew Lot had invited two angelic messengers in human form to lodge at his home when “the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house” (Gen. 19:4). They wanted Lot to send the strangers out “so that we may know them” (Gen. 19:5). The verb for “to know” can have sexual connotations, so we presume that they wanted to rape the men. Their motives were not because the residents of Sodom were all gay (“to the last man”), but because they held to a mean and hateful culture that followed an age-old practice of shaming strangers by raping them.

Other Old Testament texts that mention Sodom speak of the city’s wickedness, but do not tie it to homosexuality (Deut. 32:32; Isa. 1:9, 3:9, 13:19, 23:14; Jer. 19:18, 50:40; Lam. 4:6). Some even make it clear that their problem was their uncivil rejection of the visitors. Ezekiel prophesied against Jerusalem, comparing it to Sodom as a sister city: “This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food,

Digging Deeper *continued*

and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. They were haughty, and did abominable things before me; therefore I removed them when I saw it” (Ezek. 16:49-50).

Chorazin, Capernaum, Bethsaida—These three villages on the north side of the Sea of Galilee were criticized by Jesus for failing to repent despite the mighty works that had been done in them. The location of the first century village of Chorazin (now spelled Korazin) is unknown, though the ruins of a 3rd-4th century village built from black basalt bear that name.

The location of Bethsaida is also uncertain: some have argued that a mound known as et-Tell, the ancient capital of Geshur, later became Bethsaida, but it’s located on a tall hill a mile and a half north of the sea, which seems unlikely for a fishing village. A more recent proposal is el-Araj, which is currently being excavated. Located near the ancient shoreline, it seems a more likely candidate to have been ancient Bethsaida.

Capernaum, located by the sea, has been fully excavated. Though Peter and Andrew were originally from Bethsaida, they moved to the fishing village of Capernaum, just five miles to the west, probably because it was in a different Roman jurisdiction. This saved them having to pay taxes when crossing the border to take their catch to Magdala for processing.

Jesus appears to have adopted Capernaum as his home (Mark 2:1, Matt. 4:13), and may have stayed with Peter. During the first century, a room in one house was plastered (unlike any of the other basalt houses in the village) and marked with Christian graffiti. An arch was added, allowing for a higher ceiling, and in the fifth century an octagonal church was built over it. A modern Roman Catholic church now sits atop that, perched on legs so that one can see the ancient ruins beneath (see picture above).



Hades, demons, Satan—Jesus’ pronouncement that the people of Capernaum would go to Hades rather than heaven (v. 15) should not be read as a divine endorsement of contemporary notions about heaven and hell. During most of the Old Testament period, it was commonly believed that all who died retired to a shadowy existence in a place the Hebrews called Sheol and the Greeks called Hades. By the first century, ideas associated with Greek mythology, Persian mysticism, and Jewish apocalypticism led to a belief in two locations for the afterlife, with Hades (also known as Gehenna) as a place of punishment.

Likewise, the messengers’ claim that “even the demons submit to us” (v. 17), as we’ve noted before, reflects an ancient worldview that all illness was caused by demons.

Digging Deeper *continued*

When Jesus (or Luke, speaking for Jesus) spoke of Satan falling from heaven like a flash of lightning (v. 18), he was also reflecting a popular understanding of Satan as a supernatural being who, with his demonic minions, encouraged wickedness and acted in opposition to God.

Jesus often spoke in terms familiar with the popular culture of his day, as did the gospel writers. Many modern readers continue to attribute evil to a wicked deity who rivals God and infects the world with demons, but we are not required to regard these as accurate depictions of reality.

Push, or pull?—Like the 70, all of Jesus' followers are called to kingdom living. We proclaim the good news in many ways: through compassionate living, through specific personal ministries, through the spoken word. The kingdom of God is at work in our lives, and our task is to bring the kingdom near to others.

We can turn people away even when we are trying to do what is right. Whenever Christians come across as smug or self-righteous, they will turn people away. The ugly attitude expressed in some “witnessing tracts,” for example, is patently offensive, and I’ve seen “Christian” T-shirts that reek of arrogance. The love of Christ is shown when we are sensitive to others’ needs, when we are compassionate in our actions, when we are humble in our approach. We are not responsible for the decisions that others make, but we *are* responsible for way in which we witness to them . . . for good, or bad.

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

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What's this about scorpions and snakes?

In verse 19, Luke quotes Jesus as saying “See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you.” It is highly unlikely that Jesus intended for his followers to test the waters by finding a viper to step on or a scorpion to play with, like some “snake-handling” Christians who bring rattlesnakes and copperheads into worship or who drink poison in response to the longer (and spurious) ending of Mark 16.

Scholars often suggest that the text may have been intended to reflect Deut. 8:15, where Moses spoke of how God led the Israelites through a land of snakes and scorpions, or Ps. 91:13, which poetically speaks of how the faithful will tread on “the lion and the adder.”

Snakes and scorpions may also have been intended as symbols of the evil influences in general, or the evil spirits the 70 evangelists said had become subject to them. This is suggested by the following verse, where Jesus added “Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven” (v. 20).

The apocalyptic imagery of the context suggests a background in the late Jewish belief that in the end times, God would defeat Satan and cast him from the heavenly realms. To connect with his audience, Jesus often adopted end-times imagery in his preaching and teaching.

Jesus’ purpose was to assure his followers of divine care, not to suggest that they could not be harmed. In other contexts, he encouraged followers to be faithful even when others slapped them on the cheek or abused them in other ways (Matt. 5:38-41, Luke 6:27-29). Jesus spoke of brothers betraying brothers and children betraying parents as his followers faced persecution (Mark 13:12-13, Matt. 20:21-23). In this very text, the evangelists were sent out “like lambs into the midst of wolves” (Luke 10:3), a clear indication of danger.

Jesus’ point was that Christians could live without fear – not that they could never be harmed on earth, but with confidence that their “names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).