

Title: “Christ Sends Us; We Go”

Chris Ryan

Luke 10:1-9

10/18/2026

Service Readings: Isaiah 35:5-8; 2 Timothy 4:5-18; Luke 10:1-9

Empowered by God’s Word and Sacraments, Christ sends us out into the world.

Message:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two^{1a} 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 laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³ Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves....

Go! Empowered by God’s Word and Sacraments, go! Go out into the fields and harvest! What more is there to be said? Go!

What is so striking about this passage is where it sits within Luke’s gospel. If you have your Bible handy, turn to Luke 9. We can actually go all the way back to Luke 3 but chapter 9 works just as well. It’s on page 866 in the Bible in front of you. What I want to point out is what happens *before* Jesus sends the seventy-two. Chapter 9, verse 1: he sends out the twelve apostles. Then he feeds 5000. After that Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ. Then Jesus’ transfiguration. Verse 37: Jesus heals a boy. Then the disciples argue about who is the greatest and Jesus replies he who is least is great. After that the Samaritan village rejects Jesus. And finally, he teaches that there is a cost to following him.

And then we get to chapter 10 where Jesus sends out seventy-two. Are they prepared for this mission? Nowhere before this point do we see Jesus formally training these men. There was no instructional time where he taught them the words to use, there was no test to ensure they had memorized the Torah. He didn’t insist that they role play all the different scenarios that they might encounter on their mission. There was nothing like that. In fact, he didn’t even send them with anything! He sent them with only these words:

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 laborer 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.’

Empowered. Not by their own intellect, not by their own skill. Empowered by God’s Word. That is all they carried with them. But here’s the thing. They didn’t go alone. Last week we talked about discipleship as something we *are*, not something we *do*. We discovered that discipleship is all about identity – our identity in Christ. He clothed himself in us in order to receive the judgement for our sins. And he now clothes us in *himself* so that we can share in this victory. His death is now shared with us so that his resurrection can be shared as well. It is *because* of this identity that we have with Jesus that he can send us out into the world. Go, he tells us!

And like the seventy-two he doesn't first ensure that we know what we are doing. There is no test to take, no certification to achieve. We don't need those things. The only thing we need is Jesus, and he goes with us. And that's the lesson for these seventy-two; and that's the lesson for us. Go! We are empowered by God's Word. He gathers us each week so that he can strengthen our faith with his Word, so that he can remind us that our identity rests in him. He feeds us with his own body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. He gathers and then he sends.

But what does "going" look like in our day? It looks the same today as it did in the day of Jesus. He says, "Go your way." The Great Commission uses similar words: "While going." You see, being sent by him does not mean acting weird in this world. It doesn't mean standing on the street corner with a sign or even fitting Jesus into every conversation at work. Please don't do that! It makes us all look bad! Don't act weird; act different. While going, pack light. You don't need an agenda, you don't need a speech, you need Jesus – and he is already with you. "Go your way" is all about the life you live and how it is a life lived differently than those around you. You have been clothed in Christ. You are grafted to him. He is in you. And he has empowered you with his Word. Your life should reflect it.

Does it? That is really the question this morning. Does your life reflect the reality of who Christ is in you? The seventy-two were told to go out into the world full of wolves and enter into their dens. They were instructed not to destroy, not to shame, but to eat and drink with them. They were instructed to share a meal, to share a conversation, to share life with these wolves. Bring Jesus *into* their dens and *share* Jesus with them. Stay with them, build real relationships with them so that they can see that the life you live is a life that is different from theirs. This is why Jesus instructed them not to go from house to house. It does little good to drop off flyers at homes. Jesus is about *relationships* – between us and him. And so we are called into relationship with others, for it is through these relationships that they can see Christ alive in us.

Are you building relationships with those of the world or are you building walls? Consider your vocations as parents or spouses in your families. Consider your actions in your workplace. Do your actions reflect your identity in Christ? What about your social media feeds? I mention this often in my sermons and even in my teaching because we Christians seem to use them as weapons for division instead of tools for building relationships. All too often we post about the things of the world – of politics and economy. But these posts are full of hateful messages about "the other side" or "those entitled people." How can you post a message like that and then claim to follow Jesus? We should be using these tools to show how we can live as Christians in a world that desperately needs him. This doesn't mean agreeing with the "other side" but it does mean representing them fairly instead of contributing to the hateful and false echo chamber. It means posting that their political position may be contrary to God's way, but wording it in a way that invites them into a deeper relationship and conversation with you. Enter into their homes and eat with them, so to speak. Share in their lives so that you can share your Christian life with them.

I began this message by looking backward in the Gospel. Now I'd like to end by looking forward. After Jesus sends the seventy-two, they return with joy. They say, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" They have seen the power of Jesus at work and they are rejoicing in what he has done through them. But Jesus points them to something even greater than this. He tells them, "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

What Jesus is teaching is that their greatest joy is not in what they accomplish for him. It is in what he has accomplished in you. Your confidence is not in how well you represent him in your lives but that your name is written in heaven. You belong to him.

And this returns us to our starting point. We are not sent into the world to prove ourselves worthy of being called Christians. We are sent because we belong to Christ. We have been clothed in him. Through his death

and resurrection, he has forgiven our sins and he has made us his own. And through his Word and Sacraments he sustains us and continues to give us his gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation.

Sure, we will sometimes fail. We will use words that hurt, actions that do not reflect Jesus, but our failures do not retract his promises. We return to the gifts he has given us, not because we must earn another chance but because he continues to forgive us, strengthen our faith, and send us back out to live a life he has called us to live.

So, go! Go into your homes, your workplaces, your community. You do not go alone and you do not go empty-handed. You go with the Word of God, with the promises of your Baptism, and with the confidence that Jesus is with you. The harvest belongs to him. The mission is his. And you belong to him, too.

Please pray with me.

Lord Jesus, You have clothed us in Yourself, strengthened us with Your Word, and fed us with Your body and blood. Forgive us when we build walls instead of relationships. Send us now in the confidence that You go with us. Help us live as Your people, reflecting Your love to those around us. In Your name we pray. Amen.