

Title: HIGHS AND LOWS, BLESSINGS AND WOES, LUKE 10:1 – 24
(Chatham, NJ; 07/07/13, AM) [Pt – Topical, Two-Sided Coin]

Theme: Jesus instructs the disciples when they go out and when they return about the highs and lows of experiencing the message of the Gospel.

Purpose: Jesus followers' learned to cope with the highs and lows, the blessings and woes of the Gospel.

Introduction:

1. Jesus sends out 72 disciples to announce the coming of the Kingdom.
2. A number of statements still ring true today.
3. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few," 2. Pray for more workers.
4. "Peace be to this house," 5.
5. "The Kingdom of God has come near," 9, 11.
6. There are highs and lows, blessings and woes as part of experiencing the Kingdom.
7. Paul will later say that we are the fragrance of life to some but the stench of death to others, 2 Corinthians 2:16.

I. The Lows and the Woes (one side of the coin)

A. The laborers are few (a low)

1. Has that ever changed?
2. Will God answer that prayer if we ask it today?
3. Always seems to be too much work and too few workers
4. Prayer is a way of enlisting God's help with the work and a way of enlisting others to help
5. Workers must be inspired by a willingness to serve
6. Evangelism or compassion fatigue can set in easily
7. The early church must have known this –
 - 1 Cor. 15:58 labor not in vain
 - Gal. 6:9, don't grow weary in doing good
 - 1 Peter 4:9, hospitality without grumbling
8. You represent me, 16

B. A second low: some won't receive the Kingdom

1. Some will not receive them
2. Don't be disillusioned or discouraged about this
3. Don't take the rejection personally
4. Rejecting you means rejecting me, 16
5. Rejecting me means rejecting the "one who sent me" (God), 16
6. We must face rejection and persecution with patience, faith, and courage

C. A third: woe to those who reject it (a bittersweet taste)

1. "Woe to you," 13
2. Two pagan cities will fare better in the judgment than Israel
3. Ninevah repented but you don't, Mt. 12:40
4. God's enemies will be destroyed
5. We have no desire to pronounce such condemnation but it is inherent in the choice that everyone has

II. The Highs and Blessings (flip the coin over)

A. The Disciples experience the power of God, 17

1. They returned with joy
2. Demons were subject to the name of Christ

3. This was “exciting” (a term I hear from pulpits today too frequently)
4. A mountaintop experience for them
5. Jesus tempers their enthusiasm: don’t rejoice at this, rejoice that your names are written in heaven, 20
6. It’s not the euphoria that matters but what the experience means that matters
7. Thrill-seeking should not be what we are after; joy goes deeper than that

B. Jesus rejoices at the victory

1. Satan fell like lightning, 18
2. 1 John 3:8 – the reason Jesus came
3. Rev. 12:7-10, 13 – Michael overcomes Satan and casts him out
4. Isaiah 14:12 refers to the story of Satan’s fall from heaven
5. Jesus draws on this image to affirm his ministry and power over evil
6. Even if they appear to win a few skirmishes, the forces of evil have lost
7. We must take to heart the words of Ps. 37:1-4

C. Jesus rejoices over God’s revelation

1. He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, 21
2. Hidden from the wise and learned
3. Revealed them to little children, the humble and poor in spirit
4. Jesus has received all things from the Father

Conclusion:

1. “Blessed are the eyes that see these things,” 23 – we see them.
2. Pray for laborers and for communities and nations.
3. Realize that the woes are a sign of God’s presence and judgment, 2 Thess. 1:5-12.
4. Find joy in Satan’s defeat and in those who believe.
5. Let our witness proceed from that joy.