

THE RADICAL PRAYER - PART 6

Experiencing Radical Joy

Dr. Derek Morris

- Preaching passage: Luke 10:17-20
- Subject: What is our source of joy as we serve the Lord of the harvest in His harvest
- Complement: not only that God is working through us but also that our names are written in heaven.
- Exegetical idea: When we see the Lord of the harvest working through us, we not only rejoice in what He has done through us but also that our names are written in heaven.
- Homiletical idea: **You will experience radical joy as you join the Lord of the harvest in His harvest field.**
- Purpose: To motivate my hearers to allow the Lord of the harvest to throw them out into His harvest, that they might know the joy of joining Him as a laborer in His harvest.

Introduction

We've been on an amazing journey over the past six weeks! The words of Jesus, recorded in Luke 10 have come alive! We began with the words of Jesus recorded in Luke 10:2. "....." We have seen a radical perspective, that the harvest truly is great. We have also learned of a radical problem—there are too few laboring laborers. And we have heard the appeal of Jesus to pray a radical prayer. Our artist, Ginny Miller, has helped us to see the big picture of what it means to pray the radical prayer! We have learned that we will face radical challenges, and need to radically depend on the Lord of the harvest.

Today, in the last message in this series, we are going to talk about radical joy! Can you imagine how the disciples felt when they returned from their missionary tour? They had given the Lord of the harvest permission to throw them out into His harvest. Even though they felt like lambs among wolves, they had learned to radically depend on the Lord of the Harvest. And they had experienced that He is Jehovah-Jireh, the LORD will provide! The sick had been healed in Jesus' name. Those in bondage had been set free. The good news about Jesus had been boldly

proclaimed. Luke records that “the seventy returned with joy...” (Luke 10:17) Radical joy!

That will be your experience when you give the LORD of the harvest permission to throw you out into His harvest! You will experience joy! Radical joy! Rachel experienced radical joy as she gave the Lord of the harvest permission to throw her out into His harvest. Immediately after college, Rachel ended up in Monteverde, Costa Rica, serving as a volunteer teacher in a small Christian school. But before she even left for Costa Rica, Rachel began to encounter radical challenges. The friend who was supposed to serve with her in Monteverde had a family crisis and couldn't go. Rachel wondered whether she should just stay home too, but she sensed the Lord of the harvest speaking to her heart: “Go. Trust me and go.” Rachel obeyed the Lord of the harvest, allowing Him to throw her out into His harvest field.

When she arrived in Costa Rica, she faced more challenges. First, she waited more than an hour and a half at the airport and no one came to meet her. Then she realized that she didn't even know the address of her final destination, and she had no contact phone numbers at the school. This was either a time to become hysterical or a time for radical dependence on the Lord of the harvest.

Finally, Rachel connected with a young man who transported her to the mission school. But when she arrived at the school, she encountered more challenges. There was no director to talk to and no real program in place for volunteers. Someone sat her down, and with the help of a translator, said, “We don't have an English program at all! So we want you to develop one, right now!”

Rachel was completely overwhelmed! She had been told that there was a complete English program in place and so she had not brought any resources with her. She had one week

to plan an entire English language program and she didn't even know where to begin.

In spite of many radical challenges, the Lord of the harvest provided for Rachel. He is YHWH Yireh, Jehovah-Jireh! After several months of struggling, Rachel connected with a wonderful Christian teacher named Lindy, who lived in a nearby town. Lindy was an amazing woman of God who had served as a teacher since she was 14 years old. Lindy stepped in and helped Rachel to design a very creative curriculum. It was obvious to Rachel that her students were actually beginning to enjoy their lessons!

When Rachel came home for a break halfway through her mission assignment, she diligently gathered extra teaching supplies that she could take back with her. The English program at the mission school was flourishing but she was determined to make it even better! However, when she returned to Monteverde after her break, she discovered that other workers at the school had burned many of the books that she had been using. They weren't trying to be malicious. They just didn't think she needed them! That's when Rachel decided that the school needed a designated space especially for the English language program.

There was an unfinished building on campus that had been started by a high school mission team. Rachel determined that, in addition to her teaching responsibilities, she was going to supervise the completion of that building so that the English language program could have a home of its own! She wrote to her family, and they, along with members from her local church, assured her that they would raise the \$2,000 needed to complete that classroom as an English language lab!

But before any funds had arrived from back home, Rachel had to move forward in complete dependence on the Lord. She found an honest local builder who put his other projects

on hold and began to complete the project! She paid the builder with funds from her own bank account. These were the funds that she had saved from the past summer that were supposed to last for the whole year. Rachel remembers the day when she completely emptied her bank account in order to pay the builder for his work. The promised funds still hadn't arrived from back home. She can still remember the tightness in her chest. She had no money now. No resources. All that she could do was completely depend on the Lord of the harvest.

Before Rachel left Costa Rica, she was able to see that classroom completed! It was not only well built. It was beautiful! One whole wall was covered with shelving to store the new English language curriculum, along with all the books and supplies. There was even a lock on the door so no one could come in and burn the books! Rachel rejoices that the Lord of the harvest provided in miraculous ways during her time in Costa Rica and she is filled with joy. Radical joy.

I know that Rachel's testimony is true, because Rachel is here with us today! She is continuing to give the Lord of the harvest permission to throw her out into His harvest! She is singing today as part of this service because she is continuing, day by day, to give the Lord of the harvest permission to throw her out into His harvest. And as she does that, she is experiencing joy—radical joy!

Wintley has also experienced radical joy as he has given the Lord of the harvest permission to throw him out into His harvest field. As a teenager, Wintley dreamed of being a famous singer—but he was trusting in his own ability, his own talent. Finally, he came to the place of complete surrender—the place of radical dependence. One day, when he was a 16 year old boarding student at a Christian school in Ontario, Canada, he prayed, “God, whatever you

want me to do, I'll do it. If you want me to be a garbage man, and the only music I'll ever know is whistling hymns on the back of a garbage truck, that's fine with me." Wintley didn't realize it, but, in his own words, he was praying the radical prayer!

The following day, two men walked up to Wintley and said, "Are you Wintley Phipps? We are from a singing group called the Heritage Family. We would like you to travel and do singing evangelism with us!" Wintley was dumbfounded. Speechless. He had never seen a prayer answered like that before. Wintley was about to be thrown out in the harvest. God would use Wintley's music ministry to impact thousands of people around the world for the Kingdom of heaven.

On one occasion, Wintley was singing in Baltimore, Maryland. When he came down off the platform, a young lady was waiting for him. She said, "Sir, I just heard you sing, and I'm really discouraged." She was about to be fired from her job. She said to Wintley, "I feel like I can talk to you. Do you have time?" Wintley said, "Sure." That young lady started coming to Wintley's home, and they would pray together. After praying with her one day, Wintley said to her, "Before you go today, God has impressed me to tell you that He's going to bless you. He is going to give you the opportunity to speak to millions of people." She said, "Do you think that God would do that for me?" The history of her life demonstrates that the answer to her question was "Yes!" She went on to become an internationally known communicator. Through the years, God has given Wintley the opportunity to have a friendship with one of the most influential individuals of our generation. That young lady who met with Wintley was Oprah Winfrey.

There have been other instances where God has given Wintley the opportunity to provide counsel. One such opportunity presented itself during the Monica Lewinsky scandal. Wintley

has sung at the White House on several occasions, and was personally acquainted with President Bill Clinton. The Lord impressed Wintley to send President Clinton a message. Wintley wrote, "Mr President, Read Psalm 69." You might want to read Psalm 69 today. It's a psalm of repentance. Some time later, Wintley was at another function at the White House, and one of President Clinton's cabinet members called him aside and said, "You don't know what happened, do you? The President read that psalm. He called a few of his closest cabinet members together and shared with us from Psalm 69. Then President Clinton went to his room and wrote out the first speech that he gave to the American people, admitting that he had sinned." Wintley was asked to be in the audience at the White House when President Clinton gave that speech.

Wintley's life and work continue to be abundantly blessed by God. His life has been filled with radical joy as he continues to allow the Lord of the harvest to throw him out into His harvest field.

I want to share one last testimony with you that is very close to home. My wife Bodil has prayed the radical prayer, giving the Lord of the harvest permission to throw her out into His harvest field. As a young mother of two small boys, Bodil noticed the way that young minds soak up and retain words and tunes. She observed that she still remembered nursery rhymes from her own childhood even though she didn't consider herself to have a particularly good memory. That's when she made the commitment to begin composing Scripture songs so that she could "hide God's Word" in her own heart and in the hearts of her two young sons, Christopher and Jonathan.

In order to be obedient to that conviction, Bodil had to overcome some radical

challenges. She felt poorly prepared and inadequate for the task. Bodil had taken music lessons as a child but felt frustrated by her inability to sight read notes quickly. “God has used my weaknesses,” she testifies. God did not leave her to face those challenges alone. Shortly after she began composing Scripture songs, Bodil met a gifted young Christian vocalist named Ashley Hold. They began to sing God’s Word together, and the ministry of Trilogy Scripture Songs was born! In the past 20 years, Bodil has composed more than 100 Scripture songs, and Trilogy Scripture Songs has produced 6 CDs. Bodil’s Scripture songs are now heard on more than 200 Christian radio stations across North America. Her ministry website, www.trilogyscripturesongs.com, has also enabled her to provide Scripture songs to countless families around the world.

Whenever Bodil hears testimonies from those whose lives have been transformed by the Word of God, her heart is filled with joy. Radical joy! Bodil recognizes that such a powerful ministry could not have been accomplished alone. She refers to Trilogy Scripture Songs as a “living example of the body of Christ working together for His glory.” She continues to experience radical joy as she allows the Lord of the harvest to throw her out into His harvest field.

Luke tells us in chapter 10:17 of his gospel record that “the seventy returned with joy!” Luke 10:21 tells us that Jesus also “rejoiced in the Spirit.” Literally, Jesus leapt for joy! He was so filled with joy that He was jumping up and down! But He reminded His followers, and He also reminds us, that the source of our joy is not just that we see Him working in us and through us in remarkable ways as we give the Lord of the harvest permission to throw us out into the harvest. The source of our joy is a personal relationship with Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

Listen to the words of Jesus, recorded in Luke 10:18-20. “.....”

What is Jesus saying here? Is it wrong to rejoice when we see the Lord of the harvest working through us in wonderful ways? Of course not! Jesus is using a hyperbole here. An exaggeration for effect. Jesus is saying, “Your greatest joy is found in Me, and your relationship with me. And because you are in relationship with Me as your personal Savior and Lord, your name is written in heaven.” And it’s that personal experience that gives power to our testimony. We are not speaking in second-hand language. We have tasted and seen that the Lord is good. And now we are giving the Lord of the harvest to throw us out into His harvest so that we can tell others the good news!

As we conclude this radical prayer series, I have asked Bodil to sing one of those Scripture songs that God has used to bless so many lives. The words are taken from the Scripture passage that we have been studying together. Luke 10:2 and John 4:35 from the NKJV. Lisa and Rachel will be singing with her. Yes, the same Rachel whose story I told just a few minutes ago! She is still giving the Lord of the harvest permission to throw her out into His harvest! If you know the song, I invite you to sing with them!

The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few, the laborers are few
The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.
Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers
Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers
into His harvest, into His harvest.
The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.
Do you not say, “There are still four months and then comes the harvest?”
Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes and look at the fields,
for they are already white for the harvest.
The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few, the laborers are few
The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few.
Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers
Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers
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Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers

Have you begun to pray the radical prayer? If you will courageously pray the radical prayer, you can be assured that you too will eventually have a testimony of radical joy! So, why not respond to the appeal of Jesus right now? Pray the radical prayer:

“Lord of the harvest, I earnestly beg You to throw out laborers into Your harvest, and You have my permission to begin with *me*.”