

October 5, 2003
AM Service
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

“What Makes Jesus Happy?”
Luke 10:17-24

17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. 20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

21 At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

22 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

23 Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. 24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

What makes Jesus happy?

(Luke 10:1-3) The Lord chose seventy-two (other) disciples and sent them out in pairs to go ahead of Him into all the towns and villages He planned to visit. He gave them some instructions but the first was to pray: "The harvest is so great, but the workers are so few. Pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest, and ask him to send out more workers for his fields." (After giving some other instructions...)

(Luke 10:8-10) He gave them authority to heal the sick. But told them that as they healed they should let people know that, "The Kingdom of God had come near them now."

(Luke 10:13-14) For the miracles were meant to bring deep repentance of sin preparing them for Jesus so they could be "harvested" into His Kingdom.

(Luke 10:16 NLT) Then He said to the disciples, "Anyone who accepts your message is also accepting me. And anyone who rejects you is rejecting me. And anyone who rejects me is rejecting God who sent me."

The seventy-two disciples completed their mission and returned with joy. They did not come back complaining about their journey, or about their fatigue, or opposition or any discouragement they may have experienced, but they had such great success and such blessed experiences that they returned with joy. They had seen some tremendous results as they ministered in Jesus' name with His authority and they reported these results to Jesus. They said, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!" Evidently, they were able to not only heal people of their diseases but were able to cast demons out of people. And they gave Christ the glory for they said we did it in your name – we had success when we used your name.

Jesus shared their enthusiasm; it makes Jesus happy that we minister in His name, giving glory to Him for our successful ministry as we serve others. It makes Jesus happy that we are blessed and enthusiastic about serving. But, at the same time, Jesus helped them to get their priorities right. The most important thing was not that spiritual force obeyed them when they ministered in Jesus name (as exciting as that was); The most important thing was not their mission and what they accomplished. What was most important was that their names were written in heaven. This was more important than any of their accomplishments. It is great to see God work through us – what a wonder that is, but let's not lose sight of the greatest wonder of all... our citizenship in Heaven. It is an honor to do miracles; it is an honor to have gifts; it is an honor to be used by God; but the greatest joy is being numbered among those who know God for that is everlasting life. Jesus was happy about their ministry but His real joy was that they were in His Kingdom for He loved them and knew what it meant for them to have their names written in heaven.

(V18) Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. [I believed Jesus had a vision of this as His disciples minister in His name]

(V19) Jesus says, "I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you." [I believe snakes, scorpions and the enemy are all the same thing – evil spirits as mentioned in v20 "However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you"]. In v20 He is warning them not to rejoice over their power that can lead to pride, "but," He says, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Rejoice in being a servant of God, yes, but rejoice even more that being a servant of God is an indication that you have become a citizen of heaven, for the proof of that is a desire that others will join the Kingdom and have their name written in heaven as well.

(This idea of names written in heaven may be taken from) the ancient custom of writing the names of all the citizens in a public register, that the several families might be known, and the inheritances properly preserved. This custom is still observed even in these kingdoms, though not particularly noticed. Every child that is born in the land is ordered to be registered, with the names of its parents, and the time when born, baptized, or registered; and this register is generally kept in the parish church, or in some public place of safety. Such a register as this is called in Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5, etc., the book of life, i.e. the book or register where the persons were enrolled as they came into life. It appears

also probable, that when any person died, or behaved improperly, his name was sought out and erased from the book, to prevent any confusion that might happen in consequence of improper persons laying claim to an estate, and to cut off the unworthy from the rights and privileges of the peaceable, upright citizens. To this custom of blotting the names of deceased and disorderly persons out of the public registers, there appear to be allusions, Ex 32:32, where see the note; and Rev 3:5; Deut 9:14; 25:19; 29:20; 2 Kings 14:27; Ps 69:28; 109:13, and in other places.

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A name written in heaven meant that someone was a citizen of heaven, and would inherit Eternal Life. Do not rejoice only or mostly because of your works for God, but rejoice that your name is written in the Book of Life, that you are an adopted child of God, and have inherited everlasting life.

Jesus rejoiced with the 72 disciples. He was happy for them because they had successful ministry. But His real joy was that their names were written in heaven. This brought more joy to Jesus than the things they had done in His name. The ministry in His name did not guarantee their citizenship in heaven. Knowing God was the guarantee of heaven – successful ministry was the result of knowing God. Doing great works in Jesus' name was proof that they knew God and since they knew God they were, therefore, citizens of heaven. But they were not citizens because of the works. They were citizens because they knew God and knowing God resulted in good works. And so Jesus shared their enthusiasm for the results of their ministry but what really makes Jesus happy is for us to know God because that means we are citizens of heaven having Eternal Life. And it saddens Him when someone's name is not written in the Book of Life.

How do we know God so that our names can be written in heaven – so that we can become citizens of the Kingdom of heaven?

In v22 Jesus tells us: "All things have been committed to *me* by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, *and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*"

Jesus has a special and unique relationship with God the Father. It is so close that Jesus can say: "All things have been committed to me by my Father." And so close that He can say: "No one knows who the Son is except the Father." And so close that He can say: "No one knows who the Father is except the Son." And so close that He alone can reveal God to whom He chooses. We can only know God and have Eternal Life through Jesus Christ. We must trust Him to reveal God to us.

(V21) So Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, bursts out in a prayer of thanks and said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

The thanks here by Jesus is not for the hiding but for the revealing. God has chosen to hide the truth of Himself and the Life He gives through Jesus from those who refuse and reject it, and instead reveals it to those who may not seem wise and learned but have trusting hearts (like little children). We are talking about simple trust. We are talking about faith. Faith is what pleases God; faith is what makes Jesus happy. Good works are a result of that faith and Jesus rejoices with you when you successfully minister good works in His name... because it is evidence of your faith. Jesus chooses to reveal God to all who have (faith) trusting hearts. Nothing rejoices the heart of Christ more than to see Satan defeated and the gospel progressing by faith – simple trust in the Name of Jesus.