



- Please open your Bibles to Luke chapter 9.
  
- Introduction – Sportsman’s Banquet Food
  - How are we ever going to get enough wild game to feed 250 people?
  - My Goofy Suggestions
    - Don’t swerve!
    - Road kill scavenger hunt
    - Stray cat soup
  - As it turned out, all we needed was to seek God’s help through prayer, and, because He provided through all of you, we had more than enough in the end.
  - That thought leads us to our **Big Idea** this morning, which is this...
  
- **For all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that’s more than enough.**
  
- Read Luke 9:1-17
- Pray
- (This message will be continued next week.)

You will notice that there are three separate parts to that statement: (1) For all that God asks,”... (2) “He gives all that Christ is,” (3) “and that’s more than enough.” I point that out because, as we travel through our text for this morning, we are going to look at it from the perspective of each of these three components

one at a time. First, then, let us get a picture from our verses of the first part of that statement...

### **1.) For all that God asks...**

To begin, look with me at verses 1-6, and as we read these verses together again, consider the seemingly outrageous task that Jesus demands of these disciples here.

*When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them." So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the gospel and healing people everywhere.*

Alright, imagine today that this is not just a passage of Scripture that we are going to read. Instead, imagine it as a real opportunity for each one of us here today. And in this intensive evangelism project, we would have to adhere strictly to all of Christ's instructions in the letter. Truly, in that case, how many of us would sign up for this journey?

First of all, it involves door-to-door evangelism. We have done that here many times, and, frankly, most of us have not shown up. And many of us have probably not signed up for this type of evangelism because it requires knocking on the unfamiliar doors of unfamiliar houses filled with unfamiliar faces. It means humbly yet boldly informing the people there that they are sinners in desperate need of a Savior. It means testifying to complete strangers about the goodness of God's grace and the absolute necessity of faith in Jesus Christ. It can be a daunting prospect.

However, that is only the beginning. First of all, Jesus says, "No staff," which, for us, would mean no help with transportation. No planes. No cars. No motorcycles. You don't even get a bicycle like the Mormons. But that's not all.

Jesus also says, “No bag,” which means we are allowed no goodies or accessories for the trip. This means no GPS. No cell phones. No MP3 players. We can’t even take along an old walkie-talkie. Worse yet, at the end of the verse, Jesus says not to even take along an extra tunic. So not only are we allowed not technology, but we aren’t even allowed a change of clothing! Therefore, on this trip, we are commanded to take nothing at all—nothing except the clothes on our backs.

But the challenge still does not end there. Next, Jesus goes so far as to say, “No bread.” That means no food. No ready-made meals or snack bags or candy bars. We don’t even get to take Lifesavers or a roll of breath mints... No food! And I think know what you are thinking at this point: “Alright already! Stop it! That’s enough!” But Jesus is not done yet. No, not by a long shot. Next, He has the temerity to say, “Take no money.” Take no money?! Wait a minute. We are supposed to travel the country without transportation, without helpful accessories, without extra clothes, without food... and we are supposed to do it all without any money?! What could Jesus be thinking? How are we even supposed to survive, let alone have an effective mission?

Well, what about you? Are you ready to sign up? But... wait... don’t decide just yet, because there is more difficulty still. In verse 7-9, we read this:

*Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was going on. And he was perplexed, because some were saying that John had been raised from the dead, others that Elijah had appeared, and still others that one of the prophets of long ago had come back to life. But Herod said, “I beheaded John. Who, then, is this I hear such things about?” And he tried to see him.*

You see, not only were the disciples told to take a dangerous journey, but on that journey they were called to proclaim a dangerous message. Not only did Jesus send them off with no worldly aid, but He was also sending them out amid the watchful eye and murderous hand of a perplexed ruler in Herod. Surely, at least some of the disciples were thinking something like, “If Herod could kill even John the Baptist because he was preaching about the kingdom of God, what will He do if He catches little ol’ me?”

Therefore, as we consider the first part of our statement, “For all that God asks...” we must confess that God sometimes asks a whole lot! In this case, He commanded the disciples to leave behind every basic necessity of life in order to preach a dangerous message to a ruthless world. And that thought leads us to the provision described in the second portion of our statement, which, you will recall, is this: For all that God asks...

## **2.) He gives all that Christ is...**

In response to all that God asks in the first part, a couple of obvious questions spring to mind. First, why did Christ place such rigorous restrictions on what the disciples could take for this journey? And, second, why did He call them to a mission that perplexed a murderous and jealous King Herod?

Some have suggested that Jesus did this because these restrictions would allow the disciples to travel faster and more efficiently. Maybe. But how could taking along no staff help anyone travel more effectively? And how would taking no money make travel more efficient? No, this thought seems to miss the main point. Others say that these strict requirements are an affirmation that all ministers of Christ Jesus ought to completely reject every modicum of affection for the world. Well, that is true enough, but, in this case, the things that Christ told them not to take were not extravagant indulgences at all. On the contrary, they were basic necessities, such as basic food and simple clothing. Once again, this explanation seems to miss the main point.

As we can see, the main point here is not about missionary logistics, nor is it specifically focused upon personal possessions either. Rather—and please hear this—the main message Christ is imparting in these instructions is the complete sufficiency of Himself for all that He asks. The chief emphasis here is walking by faith and trusting in God. The central theme of this journey is the fact that all real power for true Christian ministry comes from Jesus Christ alone, and not from us. Every spiritual victory belongs to the Savior, and not to His servants. The main

point here is that all meaningful power and everlasting glory belong to the Lord, Jesus Christ, and to Him alone. It reminds us that *for all that God asks, He gives all that He is.*

To that point, it is helpful to remember the location of this passage in the overall Gospel of Luke. Recall that these verses come directly after three consecutive passages that work all together to emphasize the absolute authority of Christ over everything. First, in Luke 8:22-25, in which Jesus stills the storm at sea, we witness Christ's complete power over all things natural. In the next passage—Luke 8:26-39—Jesus drives out a legion of demons from the Gerasene demoniac, and in that miracle we see His absolute authority over all things supernatural.

Finally, last week we studied Luke 8:40-56. In those verses, Jesus both heals a terminally ill woman and even raises a young girl from the dead. And in those verses, we rejoiced in the truth that Jesus Christ has power even to reverse the curse of death itself. Truly, as Ephesians 1:21 boldly declares, “[Jesus Christ] is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in this world or in the world to come.” In those three passages, we are given a glimpse of all that Christ is, and all that He is, is amazing indeed!

Furthermore, let us now take special notice of the words that open our passage for this morning. In verses 1 and 2, we read, “*When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*” Notice: This same Jesus Christ in whom the disciples had seen all power and complete authority is the one who is now empowering them for their mission.

Thus, the disciples could have complete confidence on these difficult journeys, because the perfect power they had seen in Jesus was the very source of the power that they themselves were given. Not only that, but it was by His absolute authority that they had been authorized to go out. Although Christ seems to have asked a lot of them, He had also equipped them with all the power and authority they needed for the task.

With that in mind, look with me again in verse 3. In this light, we can now see why the disciples were not supposed to take along a staff. They took no staff because Jesus wanted them to walk solely by His power... In the same way, they were commanded not to take along a bag so that they might rely solely upon the gracious provision of God. They took no bread to remind them to call upon the Bread of Life. They took no money so that they might learn how faithfully God provides for every need. And they were allowed no extra tunic because God wanted them to take refuge solely in Him. Christ placed such stringent restrictions upon their evangelistic journey because He was stressing the essential truth that *for all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is.*

But not only that. Indeed, Jesus was stressing the full force of our main statement for today, and He was using this journey to teach us that *for all that God asks, He not only gives all that Christ is, but...*

### **3.) That's more than enough.**

All that Christ is more than enough for all that we need to please God.

I mean, truly, when compared to the power of Christ, what is a walking stick? When evaluated against the grace of God at work within them, what is a bag filled with stuff? When weighed against the Gospel of our gracious Lord, what worldly power could ever suffice? While some things of the world are certainly necessary in this life, none of them will ever drive away evil... or heal the hurting... or save sinners. The power of Christ at work within us, however, is ever and always more than enough to fulfill all that God asks. The Apostle Paul puts it this way in Ephesians 3:20: *“Now glory be to God! By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope.”*

Thus, even as these disciples travelled through barren lands, not only was the power of Christ with them, but His power was more than enough... Even as they wondered if anyone would ever allow them in and give them shelter, Christ's authority was not only present, but His authority was more than sufficient... Even as they questioned where they might find their next meal, the provision of Christ was not only available, but His provision was more than adequate... Even though their preaching and teaching flew in the face of a jealous ruler who had already

beheaded John the Baptist, the message of Christ was not only with them, but His message was perfect in its potency... And even though their message would be frequently rejected on this journey, the Gospel was not only true, it truly was humanity's only hope...

Even though they walked in apparent weakness, the power of Christ gave them supernatural strength. As Jesus says to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9, "*My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.*" For this journey of a lifetime, Christ gave these disciples His authority and power, and all that He gave was more than enough.

And, in verses 7-11, we see that Christ's authority and power really were more than enough for the disciples' mission, because in those verses we are given several indications of their great evangelistic success. First, the disciples' success is apparent from verse 7, where we read that news of their journeys had made it all the way to the lofty ears of Herod. Indeed, not only had Herod heard about the work of these no-name disciples, but he was so amazed and perplexed by the reports that He tried to see Jesus personally.

Second, we see the success of these journeys in the response of the people. Notice that, in verses 10-11, as Jesus and His disciples are seeking a private place, they cannot find one because they are overwhelmed with the company of thousands and thousands of people who are simply too excited about their mission to leave them alone. Clearly, these missionary journeys—the same journeys that had nothing to count upon other than the power and authority of Christ alone—clearly these journeys were enormously successful. Without a doubt, people had been healed and the Gospel had been effectively preached. Clearly, for all that He asked, Christ gave all that He is, and all that He is was far more than enough.

To close this morning, we are beyond blessed to consider **history's supreme example of this principle**, for as is the case with nearly every essential element of authentic Christian living, the ultimate example of this principle is seen in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is, more than anywhere else, we see the pinnacle of this quintessential truth in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Thus, as we consider what we mean when we say, “For all that God asks,” we must remember verses like Leviticus 19:2, where God says, “*Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy,*” and Matthew 5:48, where Jesus demands, “*Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*” And we see just as serious God is about these commandments when, in Revelation 21:27, Scripture gives this testimony about God’s kingdom: “*Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful.*”

But that is us. We are impure. As Romans 3:23 declares, “*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*” We need only look at our own lives and histories to see that we are those who have done what is shameful, and we practiced in deceit. Therefore, in and of ourselves, we are those who will not enter heaven. That is, we will not enter it on our own.

But remember, for all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is. You see, because we cannot be holy, Christ became holiness for us. Because we have no hope of being perfect, Christ became our perfection. Because our sins demand punishment, Christ took our punishment upon Himself. And because our sins had shut us out of the kingdom of God, Christ became the door by which we might enter. As Paul so powerfully relates in 2 Corinthians 5:21, “*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*”

***You see, for all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough.*** Oh, what glory is ours in the Good News of our gracious Lord, for His grace is more than enough. In Christ, not only are we made new, but we are “*predestined to be conformed to the likeness of [God’s] Son*” (Romans 8:29). Not only are we forgiven, but “*there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 8:1). Not only are we spared eternal punishment for our many sins, but “*we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ*” (Romans 8:17). Not only will we escape the curse of sin and live, but we will bask forever in the eternal love and unfading glory of the one true God of all. Not only does Christ offer us all that He is, but all that He is, is infinitely more than enough.

Oh brothers and sisters, will not our hearts rejoice in the manifold glory of God today? Will we not cry out in humble praise to Him who is infinitely and

magnificently worthy of all glory and majesty and honor? Is there any way in which we could fail to exalt the glorious name of Jesus Christ in our fellowship this morning? Could it be any clearer that *for all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough.*

- I want you to repeat it with me this morning. Are you ready?
- Repeat aloud with the congregation until it sounds excited about this truth.

Let us sing it from the hillsides! Let us proclaim it with all joy! Let us remember it in the many trials and travails of life! As the world joins Chicken Little and cries, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" let us remember and recite this marvelous mantra.

As the world around us moans and as the economists growl, "There is no hope!" let us respond, "*For all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough!*" ... As Satan incessantly needles us, saying, "You are worthless, and pathetic, and no good for anything, let our response resound all the louder, "*For all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough.*"

As we wonder how the vast assortments of people and preferences represented in this church can all be brought together into sweet unity in Christ, let us shout out the creed, "*For all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough!*" ... And as we reach out to a fallen world that seems so lost in its ways and so dead in its sins, let us wholeheartedly embrace this timeless truth: "*For all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough.*"

What is God calling you to do today? Whatever it is, if it is truly the will of God, then you can rest assured that He will equip you for the task through Jesus Christ our Lord, because *for all that God asks, He gives all that Christ is, and that is more than enough.*