

➤ **Read Luke 9:1-17.**

➤ **Reread Luke 9:1-6.**

Up to this point the disciples have been traveling with Jesus and learning from him as he did his work; now he sends them to do this work without him.

1. What are they sent to do? (vv. 1-2; * Mt. 10:7-8)

What does he give them that enables them to do these things? (v. 1)

Similarly, what are we given today that enables us to share the gospel? (Mt. 28:18-20; Jn. 14:25-26)

“Power is the ability to accomplish a task, and *authority* is the right to do it, and Jesus gave both to His Apostles.”¹

2. List all the things the disciples are not allowed to take. (v. 3; Mt. 10:8-10)

What, then, will they need to rely on?

A “bag” (v. 3) is similar to a wallet which begging preachers would use to collect alms or money.²

3. How are the disciples to decide who they will stay with? (Mt. 10:11)

What are they to do if a town welcomes them?
(v. 4; Mt. 10:12–13)

What are they to do if they are not welcomed?
(v. 5; Mt. 10:14–15;  Lk. 10:16)

“The disciples will... encounter those who refuse them a welcome. As a solemn symbol of judgment, the disciples are to shake the dust of an unresponsive town off their feet, just as Jewish travelers might do on returning from pagan territory.”³

► **Read Luke 9:6–9.**

4. Everywhere in the area that Herod ruled, people are being healed and the good news is being proclaimed, and so great is the people’s excitement that it reaches Herod’s ears. Who do the people think Jesus is? (vv. 7–8)

5. Herod asks the question “Who, then, is this I hear such things about?” (v. 9) – a question which echoes the disciples’ question back in 8:25 and which will be repeated in future chapters. Why is Herod “perplexed” (v. 7) by what he hears? (vv. 7–9;  Mt. 14:2; Mk. 6:16)

6. Herod wants to see Jesus, and about a year later he will.
a. Why does he want to see him? (Lk. 23:8–9a)

b. How does that meeting go? (Lk. 23:9b–11)

Elijah

Elijah was the most prominent and powerful Old Testament prophet. When he had finished his ministry, he was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kgs. 2:11). Jews believed that he would return one day (Mal. 4:5).

“Who then is this?”

“The list of popular beliefs... about Jesus includes that he is (1) **the revived John the Baptist**, (2) **the expected Elijah** (from Mal. 4:5), or (3) **one of the prophets**. The first belief... is clearly false. The second opinion reflects the widespread expectation in Judaism (Mal. 3:1–2; 4:4–5) that Elijah, who was caught up to heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11), would return at the end of time... The third proposal—“a prophet, like one of the prophets of old”—might have arisen from Deut. 18:15, 18. Jesus was far greater than any of these theories...”⁴

7. Thus far in Luke, we have seen Jesus provide for the complete physical and spiritual needs of the people by driving out demons, curing diseases, healing the sick, and always pointing them to the source of true life and the coming of the kingdom of God. Prayerfully consider Herod's question - "Who, then, is this...?" (v. 9) - and write down what comes to mind.

► **Read Luke 9:10-17.**

8. Having just heard of John's death (Mt. 14:12-13) and wanting rest for the disciples after all their work (Mk. 6:31), Jesus and his disciples withdraw to a solitary place, but the crowds follow them. Despite his sadness and fatigue, how does Jesus respond to the crowds? (v. 11; Mk. 6:34)
9. In a very real way, Jesus' response to these people is a picture of his Father's heart (📖 Jn. 5:19-20a). Read through Psalm 116:5-9 and write down some descriptions of God.
10. How do you think the disciples feel about Jesus' command that they feed the crowds? (vv. 12-14; Jn. 6:7-9)
11. Jesus takes the five loaves and two fish of a boy's lunch, gives thanks, and multiplies it so it is enough to feed more than 5,000. Everyone eats and is satisfied. What bigger truth does this miracle point to? (Jn. 6:35-37, 46-51; 📖 For more about manna in the desert, read Exodus 16:1-18.)

12. In this week's passage we have seen Jesus teaching his disciples to minister out of an assurance that the Lord is able to take the little we have and make it sufficient because he is sufficient. Consider a problem that you have been pushing away and engage it the way the disciples did, offering to God the little you have and asking him to make it sufficient, even abundant.

“It is vain for us to attempt by ourselves to give real food to needy mankind with our five little loaves and two fishes--the insignificant gifts and powers possessed by us. But when we place at His disposal, in faith and obedience, everything we have received from Him, He will, in spite of our own insignificance and poverty, use us nevertheless to feed souls with the bread of eternal life. He sanctifies, blesses and increases our talents and powers, everything consecrated by us to His service.”⁵

*📖 For further study

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe. *An Exposition on the New Testament Comprising the Entire "BE" Series: The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton: SP Publications, Inc., 1989), 205.

² Frank E. Gaebelin, Gen. Ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 8 (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 918.

³ *Ibid.* 919.

⁴ Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1904-1905, note on Mark 6:14b-15.

⁵ Norvel Geldenhuys. *The Gospel of Luke: The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 270-271.