

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on July 3, 2022:**

**"Lord of the Harvest
(Luke 10:1-11, 16-20)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman, at church in the Y, shows us through Jesus' teaching what we are to do as we're sent out into His harvest to share the kingdom of God with others.]

Introduction:

- How many of you heard the term “show boating”?
- Do we know any show boaters?
- Generally speaking, do we like show boaters?

- In his mid to late 20's on the Ambassador Campus, as a married student, Pastor Craig was kind of known as a show boater.
- Now, this was probably a function of 3 things:
- First, his wife, Nan told him that as a result of his parents, making him the center of their world, because he was an only child, and showered so much love on him, that his self-confidence is like an impenetrable fortress.
- To be successful on campus, as a student, and to be a show boater, you needed to have Hollywood looks and thirdly, you need to have an above average ability to speak among pretty good speakers.

- First, Pastor Craig had this looks thing – wowing many of the single ladies before they knew he was already married and secondly he was selected, in his freshman year, to give an add-color speech at Lady's Night at an Ambassador Club.
- To give an add-color speech was challenging enough, but what was even more challenging was the theme for the add-color speech, which was the Founding Fathers.
- So, that night after speaking, Pastor Craig took home “The Most Effective Speech Cup” and “The Most Improved Speech Cup.”

- And then, at the end of his freshman year, Pastor Craig was invited to speak to the entire student body and he got everyone to laugh and engage as his purpose was for them to attend clothing counting inventory thing.
- And afterwards, Kevin Riley, the student body president, came to him and said, “You hotdog!”

- Now today, we're going to see some disciples who were show boaters and we'll also see what Jesus' response was to them at that time.
- And, more importantly, what we should really focus on, rather than show boating in our ministry, we need to see its effects, which we can truly find joy in.

Luke 10:1 (NASB), Now after this the Lord appointed seventy-two others,

- So, what is the context of “after this”? “This” was Jesus' Galilean ministry and now He was headed to go to Jerusalem to ultimately be crucified.

- Now, interestingly, Jesus chose the path to go to Jerusalem through Samaria, which was not a very friendly land to the Jews.
- Now, other passages say that Jesus appointed 70 others.
- Does anyone know the significance of the number 70?
- Moses had appointed 70 elders of Israel.
- And it was understood, at that time, that 70 different countries existed in this area.
- Luke wrote his gospel and the book of acts, mainly for the Gentile Christians, 20, 30 to 40 years after Christ died.
- So, we have this audience of gentile Christians, who are starting to be concerned that perhaps Christ left them, too, just as He had left the Jews, by opening up the gospel to the Gentiles.
- And, so maybe Christ wasn't coming back at all, because there was this thinking that the Messiah was going to return quickly, and when that didn't happen, some were feeling some discomfort.
- So, Luke is addressing these concerns, in some fashion.

1b) and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. 2) And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

- So, the 35 pairs went ahead of Jesus to 35 different cities.
- Now, first of all, who or what is the harvest? People are the harvest.
- Now, notice, Jesus is telling them that "the harvest is plentiful., but the laborers are few."
- Is Jesus saying we need more laborers or is He saying laborers or workers need to be sent out?
- Is the harvest in this room? It's the harvest that's been pretty well harvested.
- But, what Jesus is telling us is that harvest isn't here – it's out there, it's in the field.

3) Go;

- What does "go" remind us of? "Go" is part of the great commission – "Go into all the world" (Matthew 28:19).

3b) behold, I am sending you out like lambs in the midst of wolves.

- When you picture a lamb, what comes to mind? Answers: "innocence, vulnerable, cuddy, gentleness."
- And so, as lambs, that kind of gives us a clue, as perhaps, our persona.
- Now, when you think of a lamb, do you think of someone boastful or taking the lead or hold someone down to preach the gospel to?
- Not necessarily, even though there are times for that.
- So, were sent out "like lambs in the midst of wolves." So, what does that imply?
- It implies danger, because it's a scary world out there.

- Even though we may be fearful, at times, we'll see by the end of this passage that there's nothing to be afraid of, because Jesus has already done away with those sources of fear.

4) Carry no money belt, no bag, no (additional) sandals, and greet no one along the way.

- What does this imply? It implies travel light, because they were taking Jesus with them, spiritually, and people responding to Jesus, responded to their needs.

5) And whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' 6) And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you.

- It was known back then, that a person of peace was known as a person of hospitality.
- If the person offered them hospitality, then that was the place for them to stay.
- Pastor Craig first met with Stephanie, who was the director here at the Monrovia Y to see if he could become a board member like he had been in Ohio with strategic planning experience.
- She later told him that she remembered her first meeting with him and how she was filled with such inspiration and hope.
- And then she introduced Pastor Craig to Eric, who was another person of peace, who had this vision of wanting to put the "C" back into YMCA.
- So, here we are at the Y getting involved in more projects with them to show the light and love of Jesus.
- Now, our denomination has placed a great emphasis upon getting to know your neighborhood in that 1 mile radius within where we attend church.
- Now, before, Pastor Craig and others have gone on prayer walks and hanging door-hangers about our church in this area.
- This might work in the Mid-West, but here in southern California, people are less reluctant to open their front door to strangers.
- So, working here at the Y is a good start in meeting with neighborhood people.

7) Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they provide; for the laborer is deserving of his wages. Do not move from house to house. 8) Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is served to you; 9) and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

- Now, interestingly, these groups of 2 were going into towns of Samaria, where the people were not a pork-free diet.
- And Jesus is telling them not to make an issue of that by eating whatever they put in front of you.
- And so, as we're sharing in our neighborhood the light and love of Jesus, we're showing and extending the kingdom of God to them.
- Now, within these past few weeks, we've been doing this simply with pizza.
- This past Friday, many parents have been thanking us for doing this – so, it's not necessarily about having to overtly preach the gospel, at first, but to be there and to let

our love and light shine by letting them know that the pizza and drinks are being provided by Grace Communion.

- So, Pastor Craig feels that our neighborhood is here at the Y – meeting with the people who work here, the people who attend here, and those who participate in the Y programs.
- This is so much better than trying to go door to door in the local neighborhood here.

10) But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11) ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’

- So, when you find that there’s not a reception, does that mean you just give up?
- No, we continue to pray and we continue to seek opportunities to let our love and light shine and then other things will come about.
- This pizza party was no grand plan of Pastor Craig.
- At the Y board meeting where this plan for having summer camps for children was being discussed, a little voice in the back of Pastor Craig’s head said, “Why don’t you just a pizza party for all those little campers?”
- So, when things we do just don’t work out, we don’t give up because Jesus calls us to be sent out to reach to His harvest.
- So, it’s through the Spirit that we find ways to participate in sharing the love and light of Jesus – and that’s what we’re doing.
- And when we do that, the kingdom of God has come near to them.

16) “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; but the one who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

- So, if we are rejected, there shouldn’t have any fear or any angst, because it’s not us who has been really rejected, it’s been Jesus.

17) Now the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name!

- This is where the messengers were show boating themselves to Jesus.

18) And He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19) Behold, I have given you authority to walk on snakes and scorpions, and authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.

- What Jesus is telling them is in metaphoric language, imagery about Satan, which means we don’t have to take them literally for them not to be real.
- These messengers were caught up in their ability to cast out demons, when others hadn’t.
- But, Jesus is redirecting their thoughts to something far more important.

20) Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.”

- Jesus is telling them that the real deal here is that they had received salvation.
- So, let's discuss for a few minutes the phrase, "your names are recorded in heaven."
- First of all, "recorded in heaven" is tied to being recorded to a book – the book of life.
- Now, this goes back to the book of Exodus, whose names were written in the book of life and then all the way through to Revelation.
- So, these, written in the book of life, are not just saved, baptized members, as many Christians think.
- Now, Jesus hadn't yet died on the cross or had yet ascended to heaven, so what does this say about the disciples that they are recorded in heaven?
- Pastor Craig believes this means that the names written in the book of life, is everyone from the beginning of time to the time when humanity takes its change to glory, and it will include even those who haven't yet lived.
- Now, every name that's written in the book of life, which is metaphorical, originally was all of humanity.
- They can choose to leave their name there or they can choose to disbelieve in Jesus.
- And that's OK, because God doesn't force anyone, but entering into the book of life, there's no magic in that – it's granted to us, because of God's love and God's mercy.
- This fits our Incarnational Trinitarian inclusive theology.
- Now, other churches may not see it this way.
- Here's what's most important – this metaphor or imagery means that Jesus, the Father, the Holy Spirit knows us by name.
- So, humanity still has a choice and that's why Pastor Craig likes to call them "not-yet-believers", because even though they don't believe today, they still have an opportunity to believe.
- And if their name is taken off the book of life, it's by their choice not God's.

Concluding comments:

- So, as we go and have the opportunity to bring the kingdom near to others here at the YMCA, let's remember that was Jesus' original mission to all his disciples.
- It's not just about our barn right here; it's about the harvest out there.
- And, as we have opportunities, as new things come up, we need to realize that it's directed by the Holy Spirit, because it's His ministry.
- So, let's keep all of this in mind as we take communion

Communion by Pastor Craig:

- So, by taking communion, we will celebrate to bring the kingdom near to others.

Luke 22:19 (NIV), And (Jesus) took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them (His disciples), saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

- So, as we participate in the Lord's Supper, we are remembering what Jesus has done for us and for those who didn't have a relationship with Him yet, as he reached out to them.

20) In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.”

- Again, this is a reminder of what Jesus did for us – we have been saved by Jesus.
- And we should let that joy spread as we share it with others.

1 Cor. 10:16 (ASV), The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

- So, here we are today, as Grace Communion of Monrovia, being able to participate in that supper and to take the wine and to take the bread and what it reflects.
- So, let’s all do that together.
- The wine and the grape juice represent the blood of Jesus, which He shed for all of us.
- Let us all take that.
- The bread, which represents Jesus’ body – let us take that together.

Prayer over the Lord’s Supper:

Eternal loving Father, Son and Spirit, we love You so much. We thank You for the opportunity we have to participate in what’s known as Your supper.

And we also thank you for having the opportunity to participate in being sent out. And let us always remember that even though we love each other as family so much and that we’re here to help to minister to our members in a meaningful familial way, which was Your original purpose because You are a God of abundance and not scarcity.

And out of that abundance, You tell us to go and to look out beyond our barn to a harvest that is plentiful. And You ask us not just to pray for workers, but for workers to be sent out and to participate. And as we participate, You watch over us, You protect us as lambs among what can seem like wolves. But, there’s no fear, there’s no shame, there’s no guilt, and there’s no doubt when we go with You.

We thank you for that and pray that in Jesus’ name. Amen.