It is easy to get priorities mixed up. In our text – Jesus makes clear that harvesting souls in his name is his priority for you

The mission of the 72 disciples is unique to Luke. Bible translations report both 70 and 72 disciples – both numbers tip Luke’s hand

* Out-Reach is not limited to the pastoral office
* Jesus calls everyone – the priesthood of believers - to share the Gospel

The mention of evangelism makes us uncomfortable

* Hence Jesus comment: *The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few*
* You can hear the wringing of hands
* Pareto Law
* ***Pray therefore that the Lord may send out laborers into his harvest***

The book: Autopsy of a Deceased Church identifies two prominent characteristics of a healthy church

* Outward focus such that the church looks like the community
* Urgent focus on the future

The harvest of souls is a matter of divine urgency

There are modern day equivalents that reinforce the urgency for evangelism

* The greatest disaster of life is the rejection of Jesus

Jesus is directive about mission

Disciples are sent with an agenda - *In that very house remain, eating and drinking, for worthy is the worker of his wages*.

*Do not move from house to house*

Stay on message: *Heal the sick – saying the kingdom is near to you*

But if rejected: *go out into the streets and wipe the dust of the city against your detractors*

Jesus is unyielding in judgment on those who reject Him

The disciples return with joy: *even the demons are subject to us in your name.*

* Saint Michael the archangel
* Satan is defeated by the blood of Christ shed on the cross
* His work of redemption is only received by hearing and trusting the Gospel by faith

Jesus cautions even though *I give you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and authority over Satan* make eternal salvation your first and last hope

* The snake handler misses these verses entirely
* The caution of Jesus: avoid pride.
* Instead - *REJOICE your names are written in the Book of Life beside Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*
* Urgency for harvest in II Timothy 4:2 *preach the word; be ready in season and out of season*
* Rather than wince at the word evangelism – follow Jesus – he is Lord of the harvest and joy