

Take Initiative!

Luke 9:49-50

PW Emerson – 9/30/2018 – Ten:27 Ministries

We are in a series on Serving God. Today we're going to look at

Luke 9:49-50

"Master," said John, "we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

⁵⁰"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you."

Look at the attitudes involved

First ... the guy driving out demons

He was

- Humbly serving God
- Giving credit to Jesus
- Helping people!
- I love his servant's heart!
- He's not looking for credit

Sounds like a good thing to me!

Second ... Jesus

He

- Approves
- Someone is helping people
- The guy is doing so in the name of Christ

Jesus is thrilled.

Jesus says that we should all be doing

Lastly ... the attitude of the disciples

They are the kids on the playground who won't share their marbles.

They could have brought the guy to meet Jesus – they didn't

They told him to stop.

It reminds me of modern Christian denominations

- You have to be clergy to do this or that

Why? The bible doesn't talk about clergy and non-clergy.

It talks about believers and non-believers!

The disciples were trying to keep Jesus to themselves.

They were trying to keep the control and the power in their group.

The disciples were playing the game of exclusion.

Sadly, the game of exclusion is played in many churches under the guise that God approves or that we're doing it as part of the mission God has given us.

- That person is not entitled.
- That person hasn't done "this" yet
- That person is taking advantage of the church or of God
- He hasn't proved this
- She hasn't followed the right process

The game of exclusion started long before Jesus walked the earth.

Numbers 11:26-29

²⁶However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. ²⁷A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

²⁸Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!"

²⁹But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!"

Joshua was playing the game of exclusion but Moses clarified that if God's spirit is on them, GREAT!

The guy in our story from Luke 9 was doing something good, helping someone.

He was doing it the right way – in Jesus name.

The apostles didn't have a monopoly on Christianity or church leadership or on serving God!

We also don't have a monopoly on Christianity or church leadership or serving God!

If someone wants to help people in the name of Jesus Christ ... GREAT!

Mark 9:41

Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward.

Unlike the Marines, who want a few good men, God wants *ALL* to be in ministry!

Matthew 25:31-40

³¹“The Son of Man will come again in his great glory, with all his angels. He will be King and sit on his great throne.³²All the nations of the world will be gathered before him, and he will separate them into two groups as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³The Son of Man will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴“Then the King will say to the people on his right, ‘Come, my Father has given you his blessing. Receive the kingdom God has prepared for you since the world was made. ³⁵I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was alone and away from home, and you invited me into your house. ³⁶I was without clothes, and you gave me something to wear. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’

³⁷“Then the good people will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸When did we see you alone and away from home and invite you into our house? When did we see you without clothes and give you something to wear? ³⁹When did we see you sick or in prison and care for you?’

⁴⁰“Then the King will answer, ‘I tell you the truth, anything you did for even the least of my people here, you also did for me.’

God expects us all to be in ministry!

We are *ALL* to live out his love and serve people in need!

It's not just a job for the minister or missionary ... **IT'S FOR ALL CHRISTIANS!**

My job is to help you, each individual in the church seeking to do ministry, be as successful as possible.

The danger of a mission trip is that many people feel that we've done our duty - following God's command to serve others. Unfortunately, we need to think of mission work, not as an event, but as part of our being as a Christian, something we're always doing.

Jesus also knew that people can't use his name to cast out demons then turn around and talk trash about him.

- People using Jesus' name could turn around and degrade his reputation

In their culture, exorcists used whatever name of deities they thought would work.

Jesus' explanation for condoning the exorcist's success is practical. He argues that they cannot use his name to do mighty works AND speak ill of him at the same time.

We see lots of examples of people – disciples, apostles, etc. – using Jesus' name

- Acts 3:6 - Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.”
- Acts 3:16 - By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

- Acts 4:10 - then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.
- Acts 4:30 - Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

Even today, when I pray over someone, I do it in Jesus' name!

I don't EVER want anyone to think I've got some special power – I don't!

What I say and what I do comes from GOD!

I had a friend come to me and told me that Pastor Paul prayed over him and cured his bi-polar disorder.

I said **NO!** Pastor Paul prayed over you and **GOD** cured the bi-polar!

It's about GOD!

There's one other thing that jumps about this story in Luke:

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"Master," said John, "we saw someone driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us."

⁵⁰"Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you."

That “someone,” the man in the story, **TOOK INITIATIVE!**

He didn't wait for permission from the church elders

He didn't wait for someone else to say that they would lead project X.

HE ACTED!!

That is critically important for us today because **WAY TOO MANY** people are waiting for someone to act first.

This guy didn't wait – he acted!

One of my favorite naval heroes is a heroin named Admiral Grace Hopper – the first female admiral. She once said:

It is better to beg forgiveness, than ask permission.

She didn't want to be held back because she was waiting for someone to act.

John Wesley was known for taking initiative.

John Wesley traveled 250,000 miles on horseback, averaging twenty miles a day for forty years; preached 4,000 sermons; produced 400 books; knew ten languages. At eighty-three he was annoyed that he could not write more than fifteen hours a day without hurting his eyes, and at eighty-six he was ashamed he could not preach more than twice a day. He complained in his diary that there was an increasing tendency to lie in bed until 5:30 in the morning!

He was taking initiative.

Thinking back to our story in Luke 9, let's look at two other pieces in Luke 9 that is just before the piece we're looking atkeep in mind our piece is Luke 9:49-50

Luke 9:37-41

³⁷The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Jesus. ³⁸A man in the crowd shouted to him, "Teacher, please come and look at my son, because he is my only child. ³⁹An evil spirit seizes my son, and suddenly he screams. It causes him to lose control of himself and foam at the mouth. The evil spirit keeps on hurting him and almost never leaves him. ⁴⁰I begged your followers to force the evil spirit out, but they could not do it."

⁴¹Jesus answered, "You people have no faith, and your lives are all wrong. How long must I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."

WOW!

The disciples are telling someone else NOT to cast out demons in Jesus name, yet **they couldn't do it!!!**

Luke 9:46

Jesus' followers began to have an argument about which one of them was the greatest.

The disciples, at this point in time, were pretty clueless!

The work they were doing wasn't about them; it was about God!

Let us not fall into that trap!

CONCLUSION

Ephesians 6:7

Do your work with enthusiasm. Work as if you were serving the Lord, not as if you were serving only men and women.

Talk about taking initiative

Bits & Pieces, December, 1989, p. 22ff.

He was born in Columbus, Ohio, 1890, the third of eight children. At eleven he quit school to help with the family expenses and got his first full-time job at \$3.50 per week. At fifteen he got interested in automobiles and went to work in a garage at \$4.50 a week. He knew he would never get anywhere without more schooling, so he subscribed to a correspondence home study course on automobiles. Night after night, following long days at the garage, he worked at the kitchen table by the light of the kerosene lamp. His next step was already planned in his mind--a job with Frayer-Miller Automobile Company of Columbus.

One day when he felt ready, he walked into the plant. Lee Frayer was bent over the hood of a car. The boy waited. Finally, Frayer noticed him. "Well," he said, "what do you want?" "I just thought I'd tell you I'm coming to work here tomorrow morning," the boy replied. "Oh! Who hired you?" "Nobody yet, but I'll be on the job in the morning. If I'm not worth anything, you can fire me." Early the next morning the young man returned to the garage. Frayer was not yet there. Noticing that the floor was thick with metal shavings and accumulated dirt and grease, the boy got a broom and shovel and set to work cleaning the place.

The rest of the boy's future was predictable. He went on to a national reputation as a racing car driver and automotive expert. In World War I he was America's leading flying ace. Later he founded Eastern Airlines. His name--Eddie Rickenbacker.

“It will never rain roses: when we want to have more roses, we must plant more roses.”

— George Eliot

You want to help more people? Me too!

You want the church to grow? Me too!

You want to do something great for God? Me too!

Let's go do it!!