

An Unstoppable Force **A Vision of the Big “C” Church**

I. Introduction

- A. “One of our great allies in this is the Church itself. Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean the Church as we see her - - spread out throughout all time and space - - and rooted in eternity - - terrible as an army with banners. That, I confess, is a spectacle which makes our boldest tempters uneasy. But fortunately, it is quite invisible to these human beings. When your patient goes to his pew and looks around him, he sees just that selection of his neighbors he has hitherto avoided. You want to lean pretty heavily on those neighbors. Makes his mind flit to and fro between an expression like ‘the body of Christ’ and the actual faces in the next pew. It matters very little what kind of people that pew really contains. You know one of them to be a great warrior on the Enemy’s side. No matter! Your patient, thanks to Our Father Below, is a fool. Provided that any of those neighbors sing out of tune, or have shoes that squeak, or double-chins, or odd clothes, the patient will quite easily believe that their religion must therefore be somehow ridiculous.” (*The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis)
- B. Luke 9:1-6 (NLT) ¹One day Jesus called together his twelve disciples and gave them power and authority to cast out demons and to heal all diseases. ²Then he sent them out to tell everyone about the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ³“Take nothing for your journey,” he instructed them. “Don’t take a walking stick, a traveler’s bag, food, money, or even a change of clothes. ⁴Wherever you go, stay in the same house until you leave town. ⁵And if a town refuses to welcome you, shake its dust from your feet as you leave to show that you have abandoned those people to their fate.” ⁶So they began their circuit of the villages, preaching the Good News and healing the sick.
- C. Luke 9:10a (NLT) When the apostles returned, they told Jesus everything they had done.
- D. Luke 10:1-4 (NLT) ¹The Lord now chose seventy-two other disciples and sent them ahead in pairs to all the towns and places he planned to visit. ²These were his instructions to them: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields. ³Now go, and remember that I am sending you out as lambs among wolves. ⁴Don’t take any money with you, nor a traveler’s bag, nor an extra pair of sandals. And don’t stop to greet anyone on the road.”
- E. Matthew 9:36 (NAS) Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.
- F. Matthew 9:37-38 (NAS) ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. ³⁸Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest.”
- G. Luke 10:4c (NLT) “And don’t stop to greet anyone on the road.”

- H. Luke 10:8-12 (NLT) ⁸"If you enter a town and it welcomes you, eat whatever is set before you. ⁹Heal the sick, and tell them, 'The Kingdom of God is near you now.' ¹⁰But if a town refuses to welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ¹¹'We wipe even the dust of your town from our feet to show that we have abandoned you to your fate. And know this—the Kingdom of God is near!' ¹²I assure you, even wicked Sodom will be better off than such a town on judgment day."
- I. Luke 10:3 (NLT) "Now go, and remember that I am sending you out as lambs among wolves."
- J. Luke 9:7-9 (NLT) ⁷When Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, heard about everything Jesus was doing, he was puzzled. Some were saying that John the Baptist had been raised from the dead. ⁸Others thought Jesus was Elijah or one of the other prophets risen from the dead. ⁹"I beheaded John," Herod said, "so who is this man about whom I hear such stories?" And he kept trying to see him.
- K. Luke 10:17 (NLT) When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, "Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!"
- L. Luke 10:18 (NLT) "Yes," he told them, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning!"
- M. Luke 10:21 (NLT) At that same time Jesus was filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, and he said, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike. Yes, Father, it pleased you to do it this way."
- N. Luke 10:23 (NLT) Then when they were alone, he turned to the disciples and said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you have seen."
- O. The church is not something you mostly go to. The church is something you go from!

II. Conclusion

Upcoming Messages:

1/19-20/2013 – "A Vision for VCNP" (An Unstoppable Force Series)

1/26-27/2013 – "The Ownership Issue" (Living Generously Series)

2/2-3/2013 – "What Jesus Says About 'Treasure'"