

Theme: Churches can not grow, produce fruit and multiply if they are divided by pride, walk in disunity with other believers, lack compassion for the lost, or are not willing to pay the cost to follow and serve Christ.

I. Intro – Kudzu

- A. Picture of Kudzu - covers everything down South!
- B. Original to Japan/China
- C. Used in South for shade on porches, stop soil erosion
- D. Explosive growth; taking over
- E. Destroys plants, power lines, old buildings
- F. I want to look at some kudzu that can destroy churches
- G. These things will prevent planting; kill existing churches

II. The Context - Jesus' Impending Death for Us

- A. Mentioned a couple of times in context
 - 1. Son of man betrayed - Luke 9:44
 - 2. Taken to heaven, resolutely to Jerusalem - Lk 9:51
- B. A tough time for Jesus - and the disciples are a mess!
 - 1. Facing betrayal and death - tough for anyone!
 - 2. But He will be bearing our sin - horrible prospect
 - 3. The disciples are wrong on every count
 - a. One of the worst passages on the disciples!
 - b. Problems within the group
 - c. Problems with other groups of disciples

- d. Problems with the world outside
- e. New disciples full of excuses

III. The Vines That Choke & Destroy

- A. Division within the church
 - 1. An argument - who is the greatest! (Luke 9:46)
 - 2. Jesus is on mission - and they have petty argument
 - 3. The root of this is usually pride - Luke 9:48
 - 4. This will choke a church - petty positioning
- B. Disunity with other churches and Christians
 - 1. They are not one of us - stop them (Luke 9:49)
 - 2. Don't know who is greatest - but certainly one of us!
 - 3. Jesus rebuke - call for unity (Luke 9:50)
 - 4. Some Christians constantly tear others down
 - 5. They think their gift is to critique & correct
 - 6. That is NOT a gift!
 - 7. True churches are different - we are not their judge
 - 8. This spirit can consume and choke life
- C. Lack of compassion for the world
 - 1. Samaritans reject Jesus & disciples (Lk 9:52-53)
 - 2. James & John - destroy them! (Luke 9:54)
 - 3. Jesus rebukes this lack of compassion (Lk 9:55-56)

4. A later insertion? (Luke 9:55-56 KJV)
5. Jesus came to save - not destroy (Luke 19:10)
6. This church must always look out to a lost world
7. Inward focused churches will have division, disunity
8. But looking out requires compassion!

D. Excuses to not follow and serve Christ

1. Three hard sayings! (Luke 9:57-62)
2. They are all not willing to pay the price
3. They are really making excuses
4. Spreading the Gospel/growing church is costly!
5. Does not mean no wisdom - but it WILL cost

IV. Christ's Heart for the Lost

A. A refreshing wind!

1. After all the lunacy - a clear word!
2. After the choking vines - a healthy plant!

B. A plentiful harvest - and a need for workers

1. The harvest is plentiful! (Luke 10:2)
2. But there are few workers - so pray! (Luke 10:2)
3. Big harvest, few workers - so go! (Luke 10:3)

C. This is Christ's perennial call to each local church!

V. Applying the Word

A. Which of these destructive vines cling to me?

1. Do I give in to division or disunity?
 - a. Satan will try to do this in 2011-2012
 - b. People will want to go for their own agenda in BRCC/RCC
 - c. Some will look down on other Christians? Don't!
 - d. IAm I choked by divisiveness or disunity?
2. Do I lack compassion for the world?
 - a. Christ has come to seek and save!
 - b. Are we going to the lost?
 - c. Don't look for programs - you are the program!
 - d. Pray and reach out with the Gospel (not law)!
3. Am I making excuses?
 - a. Truly following and serving Christ costs!
 - b. Am I willing to pay?
 - c. He gives grace - thanks be to God!
 - d. Look to HIm for grace, mercy, help!

B. Prayer for grace to clear away the destructive vines

Vines the Choke the Church

Luke 9:46-10:2
 Psalm 84:1-4
 May 8, 2011
 Prayer
 Psalm 67:1-3

10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 2 He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Luke 10:1-2

“Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

Luke 9:44

But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, **Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. 56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.** And they went to another village.

Luke 9:55–56 KJV

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.

Luke 19:10

Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Luke 10:3

