



**CHAPTER 9: 1-62**

The Gospel of  
**Luke**

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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.*

Luke's gospel is a compilation of various interviews with eye-witnesses and close followers of Jesus (Luke 1:1-4). The author, Luke, probably did not become a Christian until several years after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He is first mentioned (implicitly) in Acts 16:10 (Acts is another book of the New Testament which Luke wrote). He did not, therefore, meet Jesus in the flesh and he himself was not an eye-witness.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

## **Luke 9: 1-62**

Douay Rheims Version

*Christ sends forth his apostles, feeds five thousand with five loaves, is transfigured and casts out a devil.*

1. Then calling together the twelve apostles, he gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases.
2. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.
3. And he said to them: Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor scrip, nor bread, nor money; neither have two coats.
4. And whatsoever house you shall enter into, abide there and depart not from thence.
5. And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off even the dust of your feet, for a testimony against them.

Christ in this very remarkable verse points out the way of perfection, and endeavours to withdraw the man from his own anxiety for his friends and possessions, in order that he might give himself up wholly to God. Especially as there was danger lest, delayed in the disposal of his property, or impressed with the value of his possessions, he might change his purpose, and like many others, lose the hope of his calling. And again, there was no need of his presence, for his brethren and kinsfolk could divide his property without him.

Thus James and John, when they were called, left their father and their nets, and straightway followed Christ, S. Matt. iv. 20. But on the other hand Elisha (1 Kings xix. 20) was permitted to bid farewell to his father and mother, apparently because there was in his case little danger of his being forgetful of his call. Hence S. Basil saith (*serm. 1 De Baptism*): He looks back who delays, however briefly, that obedience which is to be rendered at once and promptly to the call of God.

Hence of the cherubim we read (Ezek. i. 12), "They went every one straight forward: they turned not when they went." Whereon S. Gregory says the winged creatures, *i.e.* holy preachers, turn not as they go, because they are passing through earthly things to heavenly; and therefore no more return to these things which they have left behind. For to seek in heart and mind after better things is, as it were, to advance or go along a certain road. Hence S. Paul, Phil. iii. 13, 14: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." And to the bride it is said, "Forget thine own people and thy father's house," Ps. xlv. 10.

Hence also S. Augustine (*serm. 7 De verbis Domini*) says, "The east calleth thee, and thou turnest to the west."

*Figuratively*, says Bede, he putteth his hand to the plough, who by the Cross of Christ, as if by an instrument of remorse, wears away the hardness of his heart, and opens it to bear the fruit of good works. But he must not look back like Lot's wife to the things which he has left, and if the follower of the Lord, who wishes to bid farewell to them which are at home, is worthy of reproach, what will become of them, who for no sufficient reason visit the houses of those whom they have left in the world? For the frequent looking back on the things which we have forsaken, by force of habit draws us again to our past way of life. For practice, by which habits are formed, is very powerful; and habits become a second nature, which it is difficult to do away with or change. For it rapidly returns to itself.

See also the copious explanation of Suarez, *De voto, lib. 1. cap. ii.*

Ver. 56.—*For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* Act, therefore, saith Bede, according, to the spirit ye are of. Following the example of Christ, bear patiently as becometh saints. Titus.

*And they went to another village,* where they might meet with a better reception. By this He teaches His Apostles that hereafter, when they went throughout the world to preach the Gospel, if they were cast out of one city, they were patiently to go on to another. Hence He allowed Himself to be rejected by the Samaritans, that by His rebuke of James and John, He might teach the Apostles a life-long lesson. For, as saith S. Ambrose, mercy promoteth in thee patience, in the offender correction. Thus we find that these Samaritans who were spared punishment the sooner became believers. S. John iv.; Acts viii.

Perfect virtue desireth not vengeance, nor can anger exist where love aboundeth. The infirmities of our fellow men are to be borne with and remedied, not to be rejected as incapable of cure. Titus.

Ver. 61.—*And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.* This verse has been variously explained.

1. Suffer me to give notice to my parents and to consult with them; for he was doubtful what he should do. But Christ would not grant his request, because parents very often do not approve of the higher life, and sometimes dissuade their children from adopting it. Titus.

2. Suffer me to tell my parents of my intention, that knowing what is become of me, they may neither be anxious about me, nor come to seek me. S. Augustin (serm. vii. *De verbis Domini*) and, Toletus.

3. S. Basil (*Constit. cap. xxi.*) thinks that the man, like the one who preceded him, was a disciple, and that he only sought permission to say farewell to his friends, as about to return to them no more. The Syriac favours this interpretation, and translates, "Let me go to salute, *i.e.* to bid farewell to my family at home, and I will come again."

4. The best rendering is that of the Vulgate, which for "them" substitutes "those things." Let me go bid "those things" farewell. Give me time to dispose of my property at home, and divide it amongst my brethren and kinsmen; for this is the trite meaning of the Greek word *ἀποτάξασθαι*. Hence the Arabic has, "Suffer me to make division amongst my friends at home." So also S. Augustin, Maldonatus, and others.

Ver. 62.—*And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God,* or, to carry on the metaphor, is fit to work in the vineyard of God. For as the ploughman who seeks to make his furrows straight ought to look forward and never back, so he who has determined to consecrate himself to God's service, is unworthy to be Christ's disciple and to be an heir of the heavenly kingdom, if he still has regard for the perishable possessions of this world which he has renounced and given up; and so Euthymius says, "He who follows Christ ought forthwith to give up all things, lest by averting his eyes from his leader and guide, he might again be entangled by the sight of those things which he has left." So also Titus, Jansenius, Toletus, and others.

6. And going out, they went about through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing every where.

7. Now Herod, the tetrarch, heard of all things that were done by him. And he was in a doubt, because it was said

8. By some that John was risen from the dead: but by other some, that Elias had appeared: and by others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9. And Herod said: John I have beheaded. But who is this of whom I hear such things? And he sought to see him.

10. And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all they had done. And taking them, he went aside into a desert place, apart, which belongeth to Bethsaida.

11. Which when the people knew, they followed him: and he received them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and healed them who had need of healing.

12. Now the day began to decline. And the twelve came and said to him: Send away the multitude, that, going into the towns and villages round about, they may lodge and get victuals; for we are here in a desert place.

13. But he said to them: Give you them to eat. And they said: We have no more than five loaves and two fishes; unless perhaps, we should go and buy food for all this multitude.

14. Now there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples: Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15. And they did so and made them all sit down.

16. And taking the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven and blessed them: and he broke and distributed to his disciples, to set before the multitude.

17. And they did all eat and were filled. And there were taken up of fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets.

18. And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples also were with him: and he asked them, saying: Whom do the people say that I am?

19. But they answered and said: John the Baptist; but some say Elias: and others say that one of the former prophets is risen again.

20. And he said to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answering, said: The Christ of God.

21. But he strictly charging them, commanded they should tell this to no man.

22. Saying: The Son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the ancients and chief priests and scribes and be killed and the third day rise again.

23. And he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: for he that shall lose his life for my sake shall save it.

25. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world and lose himself and cast away himself?

26. For he that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of man shall be ashamed, when he shall come in his majesty and that of his Father and of the holy angels.

27. But I tell you of a truth: There are some standing here that shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God.

28. And it came to pass, about eight days after these words, that he took Peter and James and John and went up into a mountain to pray.

29. And whilst he prayed, the shape of his countenance was altered and his raiment became white and glittering.

30. And behold two men were talking with him. And they were Moses and Elias,

31. Appearing in majesty. And they spoke of his decease that he should accomplish in Jerusalem.

32. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. And waking, they saw his glory and the two men that stood with him.

33. And it came to pass that, as they were departing from him, Peter saith to Jesus: Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses; and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

34. And as he spoke these things, there came a cloud and overshadowed them. And they were afraid when they entered into the cloud.

35. And a voice came out of the cloud; saying: This is my beloved son. Hear him.

36. And whilst the voice was uttered Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace and told no man in those days any of these things which they had seen.

37. And it came to pass the day following, when they came down from the mountain, there met him a great multitude.

38. And behold a man among the crowd cried out, saying: Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son, because he is my only one.

39. And lo, a spirit seizeth him, and he suddenly crieth out, and he throweth him down and teareth him, so that he foameth; and bruising him, he hardly departeth from him.

40. And I desired thy disciples to cast him out: and they could not.

41. And Jesus, answering:, said: O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you? Bring hither thy son.

42. And as he was coming to him, the devil threw him down and tore him.

43. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and cured the boy and restored him to his father.

44. And all were astonished at the mighty power of God. But while all wondered at all the things he did, he said to his disciples: Lay you up in your hearts these words, for it shall come to pass that the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45. But they understood not this word: and it was hid from them, so that they perceived it not. And they were afraid to ask him concerning this word.

46. And there entered a thought into them, which of them should be greater.

47. But Jesus seeing the thoughts of their hearts, took a child and set him by him,

48. And said to them: Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me. For he that is the lesser among you all, he is the greater.

49. And John, answering, said: Master, we saw a certain man casting out devils in thy name: and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

Ver. 53.—*And they (the Samaritans) did not receive Him, because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem.* Because He appeared to be going up to Jerusalem (Syriac), for it was plain, from the bearing of Jesus and His messengers, that they were on their way to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, S. John vii. 2. The Samaritans, contrary to the Law, had erected a temple on Mount Gerizim for the worship of God, and therefore there was on this account a constant enmity between the Jews and them. S. John iv, 20, and Josephus. Hence they rejected Jesus, as despising their form of worship and favouring that of their enemies, the Jews.

“His face was as though,” a Hebraism for *כְּפָנָיו*. *πρόσωπον*, or face, is often used for the person himself.

Ver. 54.—*And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?* They show themselves to be indeed Boanerges, or sons of thunder, for with excess of zeal they would destroy these Samaritans, because of their inhospitality and refusal to receive Christ. They remembered how Elijah had destroyed those who had been sent by Ahaziah to apprehend him (2 Kings i. 10), and they knew that Jesus was mightier than that prophet; and if fire was sent from heaven to protect Elijah from harm, and to consume the Jews, who had come to take him, how much more deserving of punishment were these Samaritans, who had refused to receive the Son of God.

*Wilt Thou that we command?* For as S. Jerome goes on to say (*Epist.* 151), “The command of the Apostles can effect nothing, unless by the permission and will of God.” They therefore seek from Christ, as from a judge, justice, and the punishment of the wicked, according to their deserts.

Ver. 55.—*But He turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.* By spirit we must understand “disposition of mind,” whether for virtue or vice. Ye know not what spirit worketh in you. Ye think ye are led by the spirit of God, when ye are prompted by impatience and the spirit of vengeance. Ye know not to what spirit ye are called. Ye know not that ye should be meek and lowly, as I your Lord and Master am. Ye would imitate the zeal of Elijah, and demand “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” Exod. xxi. 24. But this is not my spirit, nor is it the teaching of the new and Gospel Law, for I say unto you “Love your enemies, and do good unto those that hate you.” S. Matt. v. 44. Have ye not heard and learned this from Me, or are ye so soon forgetful of my doctrine and teaching? He who had come, not for judgment but to show mercy, not in power but in humility, not in the glory of His Father but in lowly fashion as a man, rebuked them because they were forgetful both of His teaching and of the merciful precepts of His Gospel. S. Jerome.

mind. Bede. Christ turned not aside, as timid and hesitating people are wont to do, but went direct to Jerusalem, eager for the dread encounter. Titus, Theophylact, and others.

“For,” says Jerome, “He who of His own will was hastening to His passion, needed both fortitude and firmness.”

Thus it behoves us also to nerve our hearts, after the example of the martyrs, to endure hardship, like the lions described by Pliny, who tells us that, “when a lioness fights for her young, she keeps her eyes fixed on the ground, that she may not be terrified by the sight of the hunters.”

S. Mark adds, x. 32, “and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed;” because they saw Him cheerfully and with a good courage going up to suffer and to die, and “as they followed, they were afraid” lest they might be called upon to die with Him. It seems clear, as I have said in my chronological table, that this journey of Christ from Galilee to Judæa, is the same as that mentioned by S. Matt. xix. i; by S. Mark x. 32; and S. Jolin vii. 2 and 14.

From the latter Evangelist it is apparent that the journey was undertaken at the time of the feast of tabernacles, which falls in the September of our year, and since Christ suffered in the following March, it follows that the events here recorded happened about six months before the crucifixion. It is also evident, from what is recorded by S. Luke in the subsequent chapters, that during this period Christ often went to Jerusalem, and returned thence through Judæa, preaching and working miracles, as He had before done in Galilee; but we must bear in mind that S. Luke at times interrupts his narrative to recapitulate certain things which had happened before our Lord had come to Judæa. Jansenius, Francis Lucas, and others.

On the other hand, Maldonatus places this journey a year before the death of our Lord, and is of opinion that Christ returned again to Galilee, and only went up to Jerusalem to suffer and to die. But this explanation does not agree with the words of the fifty-first verse, “when the time was come that He should be received up”—words which would not have been written if the time had been a year distant.

Ver. 52.—*And sent messengers before His face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for Him, to prepare food and lodging for Him and His companions, the twelve Apostles and the holy women who had followed Him out of Galilee.* See chap. viii. 2, xxiii. 49.

Christ sent them in order that they might become accustomed to act independently of Him, and to be despised of men. Theophylact, Euthymius, and Maldonatus are of opinion that these messengers were James and John. Maldonatus also thinks that by the Greek *κώμην*, we are to understand city, possibly Samaria itself; but other commentators agree that the disciples were sent to some small town or village of the Samaritans which lay on the road to Jerusalem.

50. And Jesus said to him: Forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you.

51. And it came to pass, when the days of his assumption were accomplishing, that he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

52. And he sent messengers before his face: and going, they entered into a city of the Samaritans, to prepare for him.

53. And they received him not, because his face was of one going to Jerusalem.

54. And when his disciples, James and John, had seen this, they said: Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?

55. And turning, he rebuked them, saying: you know not of what spirit you are.

56. The Son of man came not to destroy souls, but to save. And they went into another town.

57. And it came to pass, as they walked in the way, that a certain man said to him: I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58. Jesus said to him: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests: but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

59. But he said to another: Follow me. And he said: Lord, suffer me first to go and to bury my father.

60. And Jesus said to him: Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61. And another said: I will follow thee, Lord; but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house.

62. Jesus said to him: No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

Ver. 1-8. No commentary given.

Ver. 8.—*One of the old prophets was risen again.* As Enoch and Elias will rise again before the end of all things, to resist Antichrist. In like manner as Peter, Bishop and Martyr, the son of Urijah the prophet (Jer. xxvi. 20), was recalled to life by S. James the Apostle, and ordained first Bishop of Braga, six hundred years after his decease. S. Athanasius and others, cited by Bivarius.

Ver. 14.—*Make them sit down by fifties in a company, κλισίας, i.e.* in companies, in ranks or rows. Syriac.

Ver. 26.—*For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels, i.e.* at the day of judgment, when he shall sit as judge in the valley of Jehoshaphat, and in the presence of all, both men and angels, reward the just, and punish the evildoers.

*Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me.* Whosoever, from false shame or from fear of others, shall deny his faith in Me or refuse to obey My commandments, or fear the reproach of the Cross and a crucified Saviour, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, *i.e.* him will Christ pass over, and make of no account when He comes in that glory which He has acquired by the humiliation of His passion. For the Cross of Christ seemed to many a shame and a reproach, for Christ crucified was “unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness,” 1 Cor. i. 23. Many, therefore, from shame or fear, did not dare to profess their belief in the Cross, much less to preach Christ crucified. In opposition to whom S. Paul boldly declares, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek,” Rom. i. i6.

So the monk Martyrius took Christ, who appeared to Him as a wearied leper, upon his shoulders, and carried Him to the monastery, but felt not the weight of his burden, for the burden he was carrying supported him. There Christ assumed His own proper form, and ascending to heaven said, “As thou, Martyrius, wast not ashamed of Me on earth, I will not be ashamed of thee in heaven.”

S. Gregory (*hom.* 39), also, explaining this passage of S. Luke, writes, “Each one should ask himself, in order to test the reality of his confession of Christ, not whether he is ashamed of the name of the Redeemer, but rather whether by strength of purpose he has subdued all false feelings of earthly shame. In time of persecution believers might have had cause for shame at the treatment to which they were subjected; but now that persecutions are past, there is another aspect of the matter to which we should give heed. We shrink often from being lightly esteemed, and from being evilly spoken of by our fellow men, and in case of a dispute with our neighbour, we are ashamed to be the first to make amends. Because the carnal heart, seeking this world’s glory, refuses the grace of humility;” and further on he gives the remedy for this false shame. “Let human pride be confounded, and let every man be ashamed, if he be not the first to seek to make amends to his neighbour; since, after we have done amiss, God by His ministers beseeches us to be reconciled to Him, whom we have offended.”

Ver. 29.—*Glistering, ἐξαστῆπτων, i.e.* like lightning glittering and emitting flashes of light, for the raiment of Christ shone from the glory of His altered countenance.

Ver. 31.—*And spake of his decease, ἐξοδον, departure, i.e.* death.

1. They spake of His death, that He should die upon the Cross.

2. But the words may signify the victory which Christ was to win over death and sin and Satan. Allusion is made to the deliverance, the exodus of Israel from Egypt, and the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, which is a type of the deliverance effected by Christ for His people. Cyril thinks that by exodus we must understand “His passion” and the Arabic version interprets the word by “eventum,” “outcome:” “They spake of the outcome and the events connected with the sufferings and triumph which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

3. Some take the word to mean the excess of love and all virtues. For on the Cross was exhibited the excess and perfection of love, obedience, humility, patience, and every Christian virtue, inasmuch as Christ by the offering of Himself far exceeded the utmost limits of human virtue. This “*excessus*” then was an ecstasy of love, wherein Christ went as it were out of Himself to show the immensity of His love for God and men.

Ver. 32.—*But Peter and they that were with Him were heavy with sleep.* S. Chrysostom takes sleep to mean amazement. But we may rather accept the words simply as describing the natural sleep which had fallen on the Apostles after the fatigue of their journey and watchings, from which they were awakened by the brightness of the transfiguration. See S. Matt. xvii. i.

Ver. 49.—*And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting, out devils in Thy name; and we forbad him, because he followed not with us, i.e.* because he was not Thy disciple. For he thought that only the Apostles, to whom that power was given, were permitted to do this. Cyril and S. Ambrose remark, “He thinks that he who does not render obedience, should not enjoy the benefit arising therefrom.” S. John asks the question, because from his love he was the more zealous for his Master’s honour.

Ver. 50.—*And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.* They were taught that no one was to be hindered from the exercise of such powers of doing good as he possessed, but rather to be encouraged to seek to increase them. Gloss. God rewards the strong, but does not reject the weak. S. Ambrose. For, saith Theophylact, the grace of God operates even by means of the unworthy who are not disciples of Christ: like as men are made holy by priests who are not holy themselves. Hence Bede remarks, In the case of heretics, it is not their sacraments which they hold in common with us, but their divisions, so contrary to the truth and peace, which we ought to detest and strive to amend. See S. Mark ix. 37.

Ver. 51.—*And it came to pass when the time was come (i.e. was drawing nigh) that He should be received up.* The time when, after having fulfilled His earthly ministry, He was to return again to the Father. The day foreordained of God when He was to be taken up into heaven. Euthymius. Up to this time Christ had, for two years and a half, been preaching the Gospel everywhere, but chiefly in the towns and villages of Galilee. There yet remained to Him six months of life. He therefore now set forth to preach more particularly to the inhabitants of the holy city and Judæa, in order to prepare for His passion in Jerusalem and resurrection from the dead. S. Luke therefore implies that hitherto he had written of those things which Christ had done in Galilee, but was henceforward about to tell of what was done in Judæa.

*He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.* With a firm and undismayed