

Overview of Christ's Second Tour of Galilee

Luke 8:1-3

In these three verses, we get a glimpse into Jesus' second tour of Galilee. We find His general destinations, message, and travel arrangements. All three parts are an example to us today!

“And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing (Gk - proclaiming) the glad tidings (Lit. - good news) of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, ²And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, ³And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered (Lit. - provided) unto him of their substance (Lit. - possessions; resources).” Luke 8:1-3 This is one sentence!

It seems that after the intense time of teaching, healing, and rebuking, as seen in Matthew 11 and Luke 7, Jesus and His followers prepared to and left the cities along the Sea of Galilee, for a tour “throughout every city and village” to preach and declare the kingdom of God!

I. Tour Basics

Time – “afterward” – after what? It seems this tour took place after the events of preaching, rebuking, and Simon's dinner around the cities in Capernaum. Let's review the general ministry and movement of Jesus up to this point: Baptism and Temptation; Ministry in Judea, calls first disciples; first miracle; first cleansing of the temple; Nicodemus; woman at the well; Rejection of Nazareth, Capernaum becomes home base; First tour of Galilee (Matt. 4:23-25 – “**fame**” spreads) throughout Choosing of the twelve; Sermon on the Mount; Healings and preaching

Destinations – I am amazed when I read “**every city and village**.” It seems Jesus left the populated areas along the Sea of Galilee and moved into the countryside. He did a **systematic tour** of every little village and town. No municipality was left without hearing the “glad tidings” of great joy! You must believe the Scriptures when it says “every city and village” was visited, no place was left without the message of the kingdom! Jesus went to the people! What mercy! No excuses! They all heard, and everyone was given a chance to view, hear, and respond to Jesus as the Christ, the Savior of the world!

Message – “glad tidings of the kingdom of God” - This has been Jesus' message all along! (First tour of Galilee – Matt. 4:23-25) John the Baptist said it was coming, Jesus said it was here and that is very glad tidings! Jesus was presenting Himself to Israel as their king, their Messiah! His Kingdom was a spiritual one as seen in the Beatitudes of Matthew 5. They were to believe and accept Him by faith, but instead, Israel will reject their Christ, and later we will find Jesus extending the Kingdom to those who would believe – Matthew 21:42-44.

II. Tour Participants

1. “the twelve” – We certainly are not surprised that Jesus' chosen twelve disciples were with Him on this tour. Not only would they participate in giving the good news, but even more importantly they were observing, listening, and their faith should have been building! We also see evidence of their responsibilities throughout events given in the Gospels; handling crowds, mingling, and taking care of errands.

2. “certain women” – It’s a bit strange that in this general overview, Luke will get very specific by giving the names of three women. Each of these ladies had a common description, “which had been healed of evil spirits (demons) and infirmities (sicknesses).”

“Mary called Magdalene” – This is the first time we hear of Mary Magdalene. Magdalene was not her last name! She was actually from the city of Magdala, about ¾ mile from Tiberius on the Sea of Galilee. This tag helps to distinguish her from at least two other Marys within the Gospels – Jesus' mother and the sister of Martha. Magdala was a wealthy area. They were famous for beautiful dyes and fine woolen textiles. Mary Magdalene became one of Jesus’ most well-known woman followers. She is found twelve times throughout the Gospel record. Luke will give us exactly her healing background, “out of whom went seven devils.” It seems she traveled with the band of Jesus’ followers for about 1 ½ years; she stood faithfully at the cross, observed where Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea placed Jesus’ body, and was at the sepulcher early on resurrection morning. But even with all the time and involvement she had with the twelve disciples, they would not believe her when she announced she had seen Jesus alive! Don’t forget, she was the first to speak to the risen Savior! She was a faithful, thankful, and brave follower of Jesus!

“Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward” – Luke is the only Gospel writer who mentions Joanna. We hear of her also in Luke 24:10 when she was with Mary Magdalene at the sepulcher on resurrection morning and found the gravestone rolled away! Joanna’s husband Chuza served in the court of Herod, the one who imprisoned John and later tried Jesus in Jerusalem. Some scholars mentioned she may have given Luke the details of John the Baptist’s time in prison and death. It is also thought it could have been her son healed in John 4:46, the story of the nobleman’s son. These are speculation, but we do know she was a follower of Jesus.

“Susanna” – This is the only Biblical record for Susanna. She had been healed by Jesus and now was a faithful servant to Him and Luke knew of her.

Why name these three women? Perhaps, the important part they played during this time of Jesus’ ministry and beyond. Perhaps, they were part of those Luke interviewed and they told of the wonderful events we read of in his Gospel. Perhaps, they were still known in about 60 AD when Luke wrote his book. We are not sure why these three names are included here, but we do know they were not the only ladies on this tour, there were also

“many others” – More than just three women traveled with Jesus and the disciples at this time. Many others had been affected by Jesus’ power of healing and were full of gratitude, following and facilitating the work of Christ and the twelve. They are unnamed here in Scripture, but they are known in heaven!

“ministered unto him of their substance.” – I guess I always thought these ladies just stood over big pots of mutton stew stirring the main meal for Jesus and His disciples. But according to this phrase, these women were much more involved in the ministry than just in food prep! The word “ministered” means provided and it’s in a tense showing a continual provision – they continually provided for Jesus’ tour and they did it with their “substance,” meaning their possessions and resources! These women financed the needs of Jesus and the twelve disciples. They were women of means who were blessed by the ministry of Jesus, were believers, and were willing and able to dedicate themselves to the itinerate ministry. They left their homes, spent their money, endured inconveniences, engaged their talents and strengths, and provided for Jesus! Wow! Their sacrifices allowed Jesus and the disciples to work wholly in the ministry of the multitudes. They were vital to the ministry

but were willing to serve behind the scenes. These women owed a great debt to Jesus and were willing to support Him with all they had.

3. **Jesus** – Of course, Jesus was there, but I want to point out some wonderful facts about our Savior and how He included women in His ministry. God’s mind is so different from the mindset of sinful men!

1. **Women are valued by God.** Within religious and social cultures, women often are oppressed and seen as unequal to men. This is a sad truth of history. It’s only after the message of God’s salvation is accepted by a culture that equality is given to all of mankind. At the time of Christ, women were not allowed to study under a Rabbi, and they certainly would not travel as a disciple with one. Rabbis wouldn’t even speak to women publicly, but Jesus never shied away from women. We don’t realize it in the 21st century, but Jesus must have raised eyebrows! 1) His message of peace, love, forgiveness, and rest was so different from the normal message of rules and regulations. 2) We read how he was a friend of sinners and ate with them. But we also read how He 3) reached out to both women and 4) later children. This was not normal! Both men and women believed in Him, and they were both accepted by Christ! We see these attitudes throughout the Gospels. Matt. 27:55-56; Luke 23:49, 55; John 4:27; Luke 10:38-42 Women were invited to hear and learn with men, and they became fellow eyewitnesses to the glories of Christ!

2. **Women’s abilities are valued by God.** God desires to use willing workers regardless of whether they are men or women. These ladies had the resources and the abilities to invest in Jesus’ ministry and He accepted it. Just as Jesus welcomed the worship of the woman at Simon’s dinner, He accepted these ladies' work and help on this tour of Galilee. Yes, they probably did stir mutton stew, and probably bought the ingredients too! But we can be sure they did much more to promote the kingdom of God.

- Their very presence would have been a testimony of Jesus’ heart for women.
- Their words relating their stories of deliverance from illness and demons would have supported the truth of Jesus as the Christ. Unlike any of the twelve, they had experienced the healing power of Christ firsthand in their lives. This would have been a powerful testimony to the masses during this tour.
- Also, their working alongside the twelve would have been a learning tool for the disciples on the value of women within the kingdom work. This lesson will be valuable to the early church! Rom. 16:1-4; 6-7, 13, 15

Believers Application:

1. Jesus is our example of how to get out His word. Jesus’ ministry while on earth can be an example to us on how to spread the truth of the Gospel today. Just before ascending back to His Father, Jesus will commission His disciples to go out into all the world and preach. But notice, they had already had some smaller-scale practice during their time with Jesus! Let’s point out a few of Jesus’ tactics we can also use within His established tool, the church.

- **It’s a systematic, planned work as well as a work of opportunity** – Jesus had a systemic plan to cover “every city and village” of the Galilean countryside. What a great example for us! We too should have a plan and goal to get out the Gospel! But also, Jesus often was delayed or had to spend long hours with the “unplanned.” Of course, as God, He knew it was coming and cared for the disruptions of a special need; a blind man calling out, a desperate father running to him for the life of a child, a group of lepers in the path. We need to follow His example and also fulfill both a plan and those opportunities given to us from the hand of God to give out the Gospel and make disciples!

- **It's a message of glad tidings.** Are you confident with the message of the Gospel? Can you communicate Biblical truth both concisely and in a more in-depth Bible study setting? This is something we should practice and be doing regularly. This is our purpose. Look for opportunities to share the Gospel, start with your testimony of God's saving work in you, and invite someone to study the Bible with you. **We are not sharing religion or even a church** – we are sharing Christ, the Savior of the world! Jesus is still glad tidings!
- **It's a purposeful team effort** – The work is done one-on-one, but we all do it! The whole church, using their various gifts minister the Gospel. Eph. 4:4-13 Jesus and His followers went to the masses within the villages and cities but then focused on the physical and spiritual needs of individuals. We see this over and over again as we study Jesus, and we are called to do the same.

Are we faithful followers of Jesus in our fulfillment of the Great Commission? Let's remember our purpose here on earth! Matthew 28:18-20

2. Christ had wonderful women following and ministering to Him, how about you? Jesus had raised these women from illness, degradation, and demonic slavery into fellowship and service, and He still does today! Are we busy ministering to the Lord? But you might say – I'm too busy, too inexperienced, too young, too old, but in reality, you just have **too many excuses and too little faith!**

Commit today to be a faithful follower of Jesus and to provide with your possessions and resources for the ministry of Christ. Perhaps with the resource of time, you can visit shut-ins, make a meal for a needy family, give a call to an aged relative, send a card to a widow, or invite a lonely neighbor for supper. All of these even a busy mom can do! Perhaps with our resource of time, you can pray through a list of missionaries, address invitations to a church event, help organize Sunday School materials, or give a call to a new mom. All of these even a senior woman can do. You might not have many financial resources, but you can be thoughtful, kind, patient, and encouraging.

Susanna, Joanna, and Mary Magdalene, along with "many others" traveled with Jesus as facilitators of the ministry, but more than that they were faithful followers of their Messiah! Any of us, regardless of our age, our life situation, our financial resources, or our abilities can obediently go, give, and support the Gospel message! We might feel inadequate but with the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom, we can fulfill the mission Christ has for each of us. 1 Cor. 1:23-2:5