



World Christian Fellowship

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Greatest joy of a Disciple of Christ.

Luke 10:17-20.

Luke 10:17-20, *Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." ¹⁸And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. ²⁰Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

The high point of the disclosure of Jesus to His disciples and apostles comes in the 9th chapter.

The disciples gathered around Jesus, and He questioned them saying, "Who do the multitudes say that I am?"

Been here long enough, been healing, casting out demons, raising the dead, showing power over nature, teaching, preaching the kingdom, what's the conclusion?

Who do the multitudes say that I am?

Luke 9:18-20, *And it happened, as He was alone praying, that His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"* ¹⁹*So they answered and said, "John the Baptist, but some say Elijah; and others say that one of the old prophets has risen again."* ²⁰*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God."*

Matthew 16:16, *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

You are the Messiah,
You are God the Son.

This is the high point of His revelation.

They get it. They know who He is.

- ✓ He is the promised King, bringing the kingdom of salvation.
- ✓ He is the one who would come and be the ultimate sacrifice for sin.
- ✓ He is the promised Redeemer, the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now that they know who He is, it's time for Him to call them to discipleship in the purest and fullest sense.

Luke 9:23-25, *Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. ²⁴For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. ²⁵For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?*

Now that you know who I am, which is the first step in any process of evangelism, if you are going to call people to Christ, they need to know who He is.

Then comes the tough call to discipleship because it's against the grain of self-love. It's against the grain of personal ambition and personal desire and self-will.

- It is a call to self-denial.
- It is a call to death, taking up the cross.
- It is a call to submission, following obediently all that the Lord asks.

If you want to follow Me, it will cost you everything.

Jesus calling the people to say to abandon themselves to answer the call.

Even if it costs me your life understand that how precious salvation is to me.

Not only does Jesus ask us to give up ourselves but later asking us to forsake everything else in our world.

Luke 9:57-62, *Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ⁵⁹Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." ⁶¹And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house."⁶²But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

Jesus said no promise of any comforts.

Jesus said to another in **verse 59**, "Follow Me."

He said, "Permit me first to go and bury my father."

Jesus said to another in **verse 60** follow Me.

He said let me say bye to my people.

Jesus said no one put his hand in the plough looking back is not fit for the kingdom.

Does it matter enough for you to say, "I would give up everything?"

This is the parable of the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field of **Matthew 13:45-46**, where when the treasure was found and the pearl was found, the man sold everything for the pearl and the treasure. In other words, the value of Christ is so supreme no price is too high to pay.

That's the call to discipleship.

- It's a call to self-denial.
- It's a call to sacrifice.
- It's a call to death.
- It's a call to obedience without regard for comfort, money, or family.

It is not that the Lord will divest you of all those things necessarily, it is that you show the cry of your heart at its deepest point in the fact that salvation is so precious to you and a place in the eternal kingdom of God, and the forgiveness of sin is so valuable to you that you would hold nothing back were He to ask for it.

Not everybody was willing to do that.

John 6:66, *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.*

It is too much, too demanding, and they turned around and walked away.

Still keeps people from embracing Jesus Christ, but that's exactly what the call involves.

There were, on the other hand, some who were willing to follow on those terms. We meet seventy of them in chapter 10.

Luke 10:1-3, *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. ²Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. ³Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.*

There were several people who were willing to come to Jesus on His terms. The Lord out of the group that were genuine disciples chose seventy, split them in to two by two.

Sent them to every town and village where He was going to come to get the town ready, to be a forerunner, like John the Baptist. To declare that the Messiah, the Saviour was coming and give them the gospel of the kingdom in anticipation of Jesus.

They are going to be exposed to danger. Like lambs in the middle of wolves.

V 4, to forfeit all self-reliance, carry no purse, no bag, no shoes.

Jesus wants them to learn to depend on Him for everything.

They must be single minded about the gospel and not be concerned about establishing relationships with people who can aid you or help you, greet no one on the way.

They are going to have to accept all situations. Whatever house you enter you go there, you stay there. You don't look for better accommodations. Take what comes. It's going to be a hard life because you are going to be called to confront sinners.

Not easy being a disciple.

The cost is everything to become a disciple and you sacrifice your life. As a living sacrifice you proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, exposing yourself to danger, forfeiting self-reliance with a single-minded focus, accepting any and every condition the Lord might bring along, confronting sinners which is very hard, and being rejected.

Then having to pronounce judgment on them makes matters worse.

By the time we get down to verse 16 and we have gone through all of that in chapters 9 and 10, the whole picture of discipleship is a daunting picture.

The seventy were willing to follow whatever it may cost them. Salvation is so important to us, eternal life is so important to us, forgiveness and heaven is so important to us that whatever the price you ask of us, we gladly pay.

This is unnatural, unconventional, denying our normal lusts, desires, longings, hopes, dreams, severing the normal relationships of life.

What is the result of this?

V 17, *Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."*

They returned with Joy!

Nobody died in this effort.

They were willing. They came back and after going out in all these towns and being rejected in many places, being certainly put out of town, run off, having to give warnings, shake dust off their garments, pronounce judgment.

They also had spiritual success. There was a remnant out there that responded positively. They gave up their lives. They gave up their comfort, their money, their popularity.

What they got in return for that was joy. They returned after their first effort into these various towns and villages all over the place where Jesus was going to eventually come.

Three reasons for their joy!

1. Power over Satan.

V 17, *Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."*

This was new.

Demons, subject to them.

This is an overwhelming reality. Now any student of Scripture knows about Satan. You know that Satan was created by God along with the other angels.

They were gathered around the throne of God to worship and to glorify Him. Satan was named Lucifer and he was son of the morning, and he was a shining star.

Satan may have been well the worship leader of heaven, the anointed cherub, he is called. But he fell. Corrupted by pride, wanting to no longer submit to God but to be equal with God, he led a rebellion.

Revelation 12 says one third of all the angels fell with him and they became the demon host. They were created by God to glorify and serve God. One third of them were thrown out of heaven and cursed to eternal damnation in a lake of fire forever for that rebellion.

They are not redeemable.

They constitute the demons.

They are old.

They were created around the time of the creation of everything else, so they have been operating to thwart the purposes of God since the time of their fall around the time of creation itself.

- Lucifer is the enemy of the triune God.
- He is the enemy of Holy Scripture.
- He is the enemy of Israel.
- He is the enemy of the church.
- He is the enemy of all the souls of all men.

Satan is immensely powerful, so much so that even Michael, the archangel, didn't bring a railing accusation against him but called on God to deal with Satan.

- He is called the ruler of the darkness of this world.
- He is called the prince of the power of the air.
- He is called the god of this world.

- He is called the destroyer, the father of lies, the ultimate murderer.
- He has the power of death.
- He is called the deceiver, the slanderer and the evil one.

He is not alone in his wicked enterprise. He has ten thousand and ten thousand of demons operating with him.

They are supernaturally powerful.

They literally dominate the world.

1 John 5:19, *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.*

An eternal lake of fire has been prepared in which they will all burn without being consumed forever and ever, along with the people who are a part of their domain.

Evangelism then is the task of rescuing souls from their grip. Evangelism is the task of rescuing people out of the clutches of Satan, from the lap of the evil one.

It is breaking into the domain of darkness.

It is a rescue operation.

In order to achieve that, the powers of hell must be overthrown. The power of demons must be conquered. Evangelism is not just convincing people by a good argument of the truth of the gospel and thus they believe.

- It is not just a human operation.
- It is not just an argument about who's right.
- It is not just a rational debate.

It is a rescue operation into the supernatural realm of darkness where all the souls of the unbelievers are under the control of demons. They are in a condition of being spiritually dead and spiritually blind.

So, we are dealing with people who don't have the apparatus to respond and in order to reach them, they have to be awakened from the dead. They must be given sight. That's a supernatural operation. Then the very world of Satan must be overpowered so they can be rescued. This is not a simple operation. It is an assault on the forces of hell and they are powerful forces.

The Jews believed in Satan, and they knew that Satan had a kingdom. They knew that if Messiah was coming, He was going to overpower the kingdom of Satan and establish His kingdom in the world, therefore Messiah had to prove His power over Satan.

That is why Jesus in His own temptation demonstrated His power over Satan in rebuking and defeating Satan there on the mount where he tempted Him.

That is why Jesus repeatedly cast demons out of people.

The Jews knew that the Messiah had to have power over the devil, power over Satan. He had to be able to crush the serpent's head.

Genesis 3:15, *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

So, our Lord had to put on a display of power over the kingdom of darkness and He did. He just banished demons everywhere He went and displayed His power over them. Even in the lives of people who didn't repent and believe He still showed His power to throw the demons out of them. He delegated that power to the apostles.

Luke 9:1, *Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.*

Jesus spread that power, it was His power delegated to them, again to expand the evidence that He had the power to conquer the kingdom of darkness.

The seventy, the first batch of missionaries, they are seventy disciples, they went out and they preached, the same power was manifest through them.

The key phrase, *"in Your name."*

There was no other power that could command demons.

Acts 19:14-16, *Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. ¹⁵And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" ¹⁶Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

Believers now and through all the church's history, we still are the instruments of the Lord by which the grip of Satan is broken on souls.

We are the force.

We are the soldiers that invade the kingdom of darkness and are triumphant in the rescue of souls that are held captive by Satan and his demons.

The power of darkness is crushed by the gospel.

The seventy came back and they were literally overwhelmed by this great reality.

There are ways to make an impact and an effect in the world, you can help people along physically by providing better conditions of their life.

You can make educational contributions, or
you can make moral contributions, or
you can make cultural contributions to the world, or
you can relieve burdens and issues.

Nothing matters as much as freeing souls from the domain of Satan. The seventy realizing that they were experiencing the power of Christ delegated to them and through them and this was happening. They had a foretaste, a preview of the power that came on all believers at Pentecost and since with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:20-23, *which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. ²²And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

Christ dies, rises, goes to heaven, is exalted over all the demonic powers of the universe, becomes the head of the body and through the body flows that very same power so that we literally bear the power of Christ over the forces of hell through the proclamation of the gospel.

This is an immense truth that makes the potential of our value staggering.

1 Peter 3:22, *who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*

Through the resurrection Jesus is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him. That's what happened at the cross and the resurrection. He gave the final death blow to Satan and all the fallen angels.

So, Christ then became Lord over all of them for certain, forever. That power has been delegated to us.

Paul, giving his testimony here to King Agrippa, referring to the Damascus Road experience.

Acts 26:15-18, *So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But rise and stand on*

your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.¹⁷ I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you,¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

What an unbelievable promise?

Jesus saying to Paul that,

- ✓ I am making you a minister
- ✓ I am making you minister,
- ✓ I am making you a witness,
- ✓ I am going to use you by sending you to Jews and Gentiles,
- ✓ I am going to use your preaching of the gospel to open their eyes,
- ✓ They will turn from darkness to light,
- ✓ They will be rescued from the dominion of Satan,
- ✓ They will be placed into God's kingdom
- ✓ They will receive forgiveness of sins
- ✓ They will receive eternal inheritance that belongs to all of those who have been set apart by faith to Me.

Paul says that was my commission and I was obedient to it.

What a calling.

The same is true for us. Think of how your life really should matter. When you go out and faithfully proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, you literally invade the kingdom of darkness to rescue the souls there. Through your faithfulness to the proclamation of the message, the power of God flows to awaken the dead, give sight to the blind, and rescue the perishing as the old hymn put it, out of the kingdom of darkness.

Colossians 1:13, *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*

Transferring them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

What are you going to do with your life?

No wonder they rejoiced.

What greater joy could you have than this?

V 18, *And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*

What in the world does that mean?

What does it mean He was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning?

Some say it refers to the fact that He saw Satan fall in his original fall way back at the time of creation.

Isaiah 14:12, *“How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!”*

It has nothing to do with this.

Some people say that it refers to His temptation. Just as they had power over the demons, He had power over Satan at His temptation and vanquished him at His temptation.

Some think that Jesus was talking about is the cross.

John 12:31-32, *Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³²And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”*

Some others say that Jesus is looking at the future. He's looking at the final subjugation of Satan in the **Revelation 20th chapter**.

Jesus did see everything!

He saw it all.

He saw everything from the fall to the final incarceration of Satan at the time of the millennial kingdom and then his ultimate doom in the eternal lake of fire.

Jesus sees everything about Satan all along the way. That is true.

V 18, And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

“I was watching.”

You guys were out there, you were preaching, people were hearing, they were being delivered. I was watching. I was watching, **theōreō** in the imperfect tense.

I was a spectator continuously. It is not talking about a one-time event, the fall.

Not talking about a one-time event in the past, or future.

V 18, And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Have you ever been in a lightning storm?

Thunder and lightning then it is black.

I was watching you. Satan in a final flash and then the soul was rescued, and he was gone. Then I saw it again and again.

When you go out and present the gospel of Jesus Christ, there might be a satanic flash as the sort of last furious protest of hell and it's over. It is over and that soul is rescued.

Only what they saw and what Jesus' saw were a little different. Jesus saw Satan's kingdom being destroyed as far as its grip, one soul at a time.

They were all rejoicing.

Jesus was rejoicing.

Why were they rejoicing?

Because of power over Satan's kingdom.

2. Divine Protection over Satan.

Obviously, if you are an invader into the kingdom of darkness, they are not going to like you. Demons know who we are.

They know my name and they know me very well. They know what I do. They know what I preach. They hate me. They hate you. All of us who are Christ's, all of us who are witnesses to the gospel are the enemies of hell and they do not like us invading their dark kingdom and rescuing souls.

They do not like us being the instruments by which God does that work. They are offended by that.

They have evil intent against their enemies. They want to stop the work of God.

They don't like those who preach the truth.

They don't like those who faithfully witness.

They don't like those who are evangelists.

They don't like the troops that invade their kingdom.

We are their enemies.

We could assume that they will do anything they can to undo us or to destroy us.

That may have been in the thought of the seventy. Every time somebody was saved, there was a bolt of lightning, the last ditch effort of Satan and then that soul was delivered.

The thought might be, "we could get ourselves in trouble with the forces of hell and that might not be too good."

V 19, *Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

They might not like you and they might want to stop you but they can't. I, the sovereign divine Lord, have given you permanently as My own the power and dominance that gives you the right to tread upon serpents and scorpions.

Serpents and scorpions. Jesus is not talking about the literal animals as they are metaphorical for demons.

Satan is viewed as a serpent.

In the book of Revelation chapter 9, demons have tails like scorpions and a scorpion king over them.

In Revelation 16 demons are like slimy frogs. These deadly kinds of creatures, serpents, and scorpions are metaphors for the subtle, sneaky, deadly demons. Those are well-known symbols.

The context here is metaphoric anyway because He describes Satan as falling like lightning.

Satan himself called as snake or serpent in **Revelation 12:9**.

2 Corinthians 2:14, *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

1 John 4:4, *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

Romans 16:20, *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

Satan is literally crushed under our feet. This magnificent promise covers every fear that could ever come from the forces of hell. You have authority over all the power of the enemy. That's Satan. The serpents and scorpions are the demons, and the enemy is Satan, you have nothing to fear from any of them, any of them, nothing.

Nothing shall injure you.

Nothing shall harm you or hurt you.

They can't come and live in you.

They can't kill you.

Aren't there times when the Lord allows demons to refine us, or even Satan to do some things that refine us?

Of course, Job, Peter, Paul, thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan, but that didn't harm any of them.

It refined them. So, all they can do to us is that which God will use for our spiritual growth.

2 Thessalonians 3:3, *But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.*

The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one and we have confidence in the Lord.

Nothing to fear, just resist him and he will go away.
So, no wonder they rejoiced.

3. Divine preservation in God's Kingdom.

Divine preservation in God's kingdom.

V 20, *Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."*

"Nevertheless," as good as all this is, guys, as happy as you are, "nevertheless, do not rejoice in this."

What Jesus means by that phrase is don't limit your joy to that.

Don't limit your joy to that, that the spirits are subject to you.

I rejoice with you, and I was thrilled to see Satan going down over and over like flashes of lightning. But don't limit your joy to that, that the spirits are subject to you, that's just temporal. That's only going to happen here in this life.

V 20, *Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.*

Not only that you are going to enjoy the power of God in this life, but that you are going to enjoy the blessing of God forever.

Could you imagine how encouraging it would be if Jesus came to you personally and said, "By the way, Abraham, your name is recorded in heaven, just in case you had any doubt."

The seventy never had a doubt again.

Jesus said, "I know you are happy about the power over and the protection from Satan but let me tell you about a cause for greater joy. Your names are written in heaven. Recorded on record permanently in heaven.

Jesus is saying you are the true disciple.

You are the genuinely converted.

You came and you gave your life to embrace Me, and I am telling you, your names are written in heaven.

You rejoice in that.

That's the greatest joy.

Even the triumphs that we have over Satan are just for this life. That's not the supreme joy.

The most wondrous reality is that our names are recorded in heaven.

Whatever self-denial, whatever cross-bearing, whatever submission was required, whatever turning away from the world and what it offers, the ultimate prize is ours, to be enrolled in the Book of Life. In Jewish thinking there was a Book of life.

Exodus 32:32-33, *Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”*

³³*And the Lord said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.*

Psalms 69:28, *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous.*

Isaiah 4:3, *And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.*

Daniel 12:1, *“At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.*

Revelation 3:5, *He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

Revelation 13:8, *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

There was a Book of Life and God has written the names of His own in the book. That's the way they did it in ancient times.

In towns they had a book and all the citizens who were in good standing were in the book. God has a book and all the citizens of heaven have their name there.

Jesus says your names are there because you are My true disciples. If you are going to rejoice supremely, rejoice in that.

Nothing Satan can do to overpower the gospel witness we give in the sovereign purpose and will of God, when He so chooses, the message that we preach, the gospel we proclaim shatters the grip of Satan, frees the prisoner from the kingdom of darkness and rescues him, delivering him into the kingdom of God's Son.

Even though they hate us for this that we engage in, they can do nothing to harm us.

Conclusion:

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor in Nazi Germany. He was part of the Protestant resistance to the Nazis. He was imprisoned for his resistance and his devotion to the gospel. And finally on April 9th, 1945, he was hanged as a criminal by the Nazis. He wrote a book called *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Bonhoeffer said, "When Christ calls a man, He bids him, 'Come and die.'"

Bonhoeffer who coined the phrase, "Cheap grace."

He called the church to true discipleship that transforms peoples into followers of Christ who are self-denying and will pay whatever the cost Christ asks.

"The only man who has the right to say he is justified by grace alone is the man who has left all to follow Christ."

The seventy were like Bonhoeffer. They understood that.

We know they all returned at the end of their first venture, so nobody got killed in the first effort.

The apostles, almost all of them became martyrs. John, the exception, became an exile.

The early Christians were imprisoned and killed. Many believers through the history of the church have given their lives in death for Christ and they are still doing so today.

But Paul summed all that up.

Philippians 1:21, *"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."*

If you have a heavenly perspective, this life is negotiable, or expendable anyway.

Philippians 3:7-8, *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

There is something far more wonderful than that we are used to do here that God has prepared for us in the glory of His eternal heaven.

In the end any price is worth paying to be a follower of Jesus.