

Mark 6:7; 30-32
The Twelve Sent Out

Have you ever done door to door evangelism or any sort of public outreach? Or been on a missions trip? If so, my guess is that you did it in pairs or with a team.

EX HAVE YOU EVER FELT THAT God WAS CALLING YOU TO SOMETHING THAT STRETCHED YOU OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE? That is where we grow!!

Ex: Promo for Josh McDowell at UGA – the sandwich sign incident.

Mark 6

7 And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; 8 and He instructed them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, except a mere staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belt— 9 but to wear sandals; and He added, “Do not put on two tunics.”

10 And He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. 11 Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them.”

12 They went out and preached that *men* should repent. 13 And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.

30 The apostles *gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He *said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while.” (For there were many *people* coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.

The kingdom power was displayed through healing, casting out demons, and preaching ...AS IT WAS WITH Jesus. These signs authenticated them as having been sent by Jesus.

Jesus has set the pattern for his disciples to follow as they go out to expand the scope of His work.

The pattern set while Jesus was alive set the pace for believers as they follow the Great Commission.

One practical response to the person and work of Christ is to tell others.

EX: think of a time when you had such good news that you were just looking for people to tell and celebrate with....You passed that hard test, you got the job you wanted, you got engaged, you found out you are expecting a baby, you sold your house, your offer got accepted, the medical test came back with good news, The Braves won the World Series, etc.

What is the best GOOD NEWS that you’ve ever had to tell? The FREE gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

It’s hard to top that, but as we saw last week, people may not want to hear it.

The message of repentance unto life is met with spiritual opposition- indifference, skepticism, mocking, and at times open hostility.

1786 – gathering of pastors in England. A young pastor was called on to propose a question for the group. He asked whether there was an abiding obligation resting on the church in his generation to teach all nations the Gospel.

Here at Highlands we would say, “Of course that is the calling and obligation of the church today. We support it, we pray for it as a local body and as a denomination.” The answer seems obvious, right?

It wasn’t obvious to all at the time of that meeting.

An older man named Dr. Ryland Sr. bristled at the very suggestion involved in the question. And he replied to his younger colleague rather indignantly. He said, “Young man, sit down! When God is pleased to convert the heathen, he will do it without your help or mine!”

EX: *Sit down o man of God, there’s nothing you can do. The elect are saved, the rest depraved, what Calvin said was true* - a very unfair parody of the teaching of Calvin and the Reformed pastors.

The young man in question was of course William Carey who became the father of the modern missionary movement, and eventually moved to India to preach the Gospel.

There may have been those at the time of Christ who thought that God would send his Messiah and save His people without involving us as participants. But from the promise of a 'seed' in Gen 3 to the call to Abraham, his son, grandson, etc, Moses, the Judges, Kings, prophets etc, God has used people to proclaim the kingdom of God. In Christ, God became flesh to be the Living Word and call, equip, and save a people to take the gospel to the nations. God has always been a missionary God.

In the passage today we see how Jesus sends out the twelve as 'interns' for a temporary mission. We might ask, "Was this instruction designed to shape all mission endeavors or was this particular to these disciples at that time?"

GOOD AND FAIR QUESTION

This was a unique moment in the ministry of Jesus and the disciples and thus for the church. This was a training mission for those with Christ at that time.

Yet, there are things that we can learn from this for our lives today.

NOTE: The training mission that begins in v 7-13 is capped off in v 30-32. In the middle is the insertion of another narrative in the midst of the disciples' preaching mission. The other narrative is that of the fate of John the Baptizer. This combined narrative shows the disciples carrying on what John and Jesus were doing – preaching the kingdom. We also see the cost of discipleship – John paid the price for being faithful to God and his calling, and we know of the martyrdom that awaited most of these twelve disciples. At this point in the gospel story, they are being prepared for their mission by Jesus himself.

The Greek word for 'sent out' is where we get the word 'apostle' i.e. someone who is sent with the authority of another. This was unique for Jesus. Other rabbis did not send their student out on teaching missions. A 'disciple' is a student or follower. An apostle is one who is sent out, to whom the Master designates his own authority.

Given all that has happened and how often the disciples didn't seem to understand who Jesus was or what he was up to, we might think it odd that he would find them ready to be sent out. This is the only place in Mark where they are doing solo ministry, i.e. apart from Jesus.

EX: Christmas conference 1974 – witnessing at the Airport a simple prayer..."God help me" and I got to talk with a service worker from Ethiopia

** APPLICATION Principle

PARTNERSHIP

This reminds us of the OT principle where something is established by the testimony of two witnesses. So they go out to proclaim and heal. One proclaims and the other verifies.

Jesus called the disciples to be fishers of men but until this point, they were mainly observers. Now, the training wheels come off and they are doing the ministry themselves – IN PAIRS.

Going in pairs provides spiritual support and encouragement.

With whom were they to do ministry? One another. Christian ministry is to be shared with others. Ministry is not a one person show. Some things are done one-on-one, but perhaps we should seek to find ways to include others, when possible, even, or especially, in the planning process.

Ex: small groups are so helpful in the scope of discipleship because others have wisdom and experience that I or any one person won't have.

We tend to think that if we do things by ourselves, we can cover more ground. Perhaps. But if we do things in pairs, we tend to have greater longevity because it is more sustainable.

AUTHORITY

Jesus gave them authority - he empowered them. It is His authority that makes them Apostles.
The authority to heal and cast out demons was to authenticate these men as the Apostles of Jesus – those sent by Him.

INSTRUCTIONS

The mission was urgent and temporary so there was no need to carry a bunch of stuff with them. This was a fast-paced missions' trip.

They would depend on the provision that God would give. Dr. Sproul notes that the “no bag” is referring to a beggar’s bag, not a suitcase. They were not to go begging, but were to trust God to provide for their needs through the hospitality of those who would receive them.

This is not a one size fits all formula for mission work. If these were universal mandates for all mission trips, Linda Summer would be shut down. There’s no way to do her ministry with no bags.

God is giving them the call to trust him for their needs. That was true then and it is true today, but it will look different in different situations.

Part of trusting God meant that they were to appreciate the hospitality extended to them. They were to stay at the home of the one who receives them, no matter how meager the accommodations.

Hospitality was a cultural expectation and as a good missionary you eat what is offered.

“Where he leads I will follow; what he gives I will swallow.”

2 Jn 9-11 If not teaching truth, then don’t receive them

3 Jn 5 Receive and welcome those teaching the truth. To do so will help further the ministry of the kingdom.

If not received, then shake the dust off the soles of their feet.

Rayburn Jews traveling outside Palestine were required to shake themselves free of dust before they returned so as not to pollute the holy land. By using this form of words, the Lord means that a Jewish town in Galilee that refused to receive the good news about him is equivalent to a heathen village. [Str.-B, i, 571] He says similar things elsewhere, when, for example he compares some Galilean towns unfavorably to Sodom and Gomorrah.

This was a sign of judgement against those who refused the message of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

While this is not a classic fire and brimstone passage, it does indicate that there is a judgement to come.

Jesus was not shy in talking about the realities of the wrath of God and warning people of the judgement to come.

The question, “Are you saved?” doesn’t really mean much if there’s nothing to be saved from. Scripture makes it clear that we need to be saved from the wrath that is to come.

Ex: “But preacher, people don’t believe that these days. That’s not what people want or need to hear.”

People have NEVER WANTED TO HEAR that message. That’s why Jesus and the apostles were not universally received. That’s why they persecuted the early believers and why believers are persecuted today.

The cultural storyline is that believers are persecuted because they are offensive.

The biblical storyline from Jesus is, “They hated me so they will hate you.”

The reference to anointing with oil is interesting. There is no indication that Jesus ever used oil in his healing ministry, so it is likely that oil was an emblem of healing and a pointer to the “oil of gladness” that was a symbol of the kingdom of God. Ps 45:7

PROCLAMATION

The common phrase used today for evangelism is “sharing the gospel.”

That is a positive sounding behavior, right. It is good to share. We teach our children to share with each other and with their friends, etc.

The idea behind sharing something is that the other person wants it so we share it with them.

Ex: among siblings or a married couple – food to share. It is seen as an act of kindness to share what you have.

Now, what if the person doesn't want it?

That is the predicament for the apostles. Not everyone will want what they are called to share.

So, they are called to proclaim or preach that men should repent.

They aren't just sharing. They are proclaiming, as heralds.

They are proclaiming with authority given to them by Jesus.

*** A principle from this passage that is applicable for us is that we are called to Gospel proclamation with accompanying good works that adorn the message of the kingdom.

David Strain - FPCJ

This lands differently with us. Those who are extroverts are prone to perhaps be a bit too assertive or aggressive. You, we, need to remember that the truth is not OURS, it is the truth of and about Jesus. We are His servants who have been given a message, so we should go forward with humility and patience.

Others are introverts who might excuse their timidity or lack of evangelism by telling themselves that they should only speak up for Jesus when it is clear that the person wants to hear what they have to say. You need to remember that you really have been given a mission by Christ so you can speak with the confidence and authority of Christ. (Matt 28:18-20)

So, the disciples went out, and they preached that people should repent, the same message John the Baptist preached, and that Jesus preached—a message nobody wants to preach today—that people must repent to enter the kingdom of God. They cast out many demons. They anointed with oil many who were sick, and they healed them. This text introduces the scope of the first Apostolic mission.

Then v 30-32 shows the after-action report

v. 30 The apostles *gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. 31 And He *said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) 32 They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.

The ministry of Jesus was extended through the works of his apostles.

We are not apostles, per se, but we have been given a commission to make disciples, as we are going. And, like the early believers, we are to take the message to the area around us and to the remotest part of the earth.

--	--

Discussion Questions

In what way has God moved you out of your comfort zone?

Is the Good News something you are eager to share? Why or Why not?

Is it something you feel equipped to share?

Are there times that you have experienced resistance or even hostility to the Gospel?

What is the difference between 'sharing' and 'proclaiming'?

What is the hardest part of bearing witness to Christ?