

“The Sending of the Twelve”  
Mark 6:7-13; 30-31  
(Preached at Trinity, November 17, 2010)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we’ve seen Jesus left Capernaum which was the place of His headquarters and returned to Nazareth which Mark refers to as His “hometown.”  
On the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and began to teach. Once again the people were amazed at Christ:  
"Where did this man *get* these things, and what is *this* wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands?"
2. This was our Lord’s hometown. They knew Him. They knew of His former profession as a carpenter. They knew His parents; His brothers and sisters. Perhaps some played with Him as a child.  
**Mark 6:3** – "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?"
3. They knew Him. The text tells us because of this they took offense of Him. How could this hometown boy speak to them with such authority? How could they bow before this one they knew so well?
4. Their familiarity with Christ caused them to harden their hearts towards Him. In unbelief they denied that He was the Christ. They knew the Scriptures. They had heard Him teach. He declared Himself plainly to them.  
**Luke 4:17-21** – "And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup> "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, <sup>19</sup> TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." <sup>20</sup> And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. <sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."
5. But they continued in unbelief.  
Mark records: "And He wondered at their unbelief."
6. What did Jesus do? He was rejected by His own town, by His own friends and neighbors. Surely this must have wounded Him deeply. In His grief did He give way to depression, despondency? No, He proceeded to move on to more fertile fields.  
Mark records: (V.6) - "And He was going around the villages teaching."
7. Jesus sent forth His disciples to preach and prepare His way.  
**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. Tonight I want to set before you the first missionary journey of the twelve apostles. Matthew’s Gospel provides much greater detail – **Matthew 10:5-16**

9. In this carefully laid out discourse Jesus will clearly tell His Apostles:
  - The manner and authority by which they went
  - What they were to do and what they were to proclaim
  - In what condition they are to set out on their mission and with whom they must lodge
  - He tells them what response they are to expect – Most will reject, some will accept
10. Some of this applied only to them. Some is applied to us all
  - I. The manner and authority by which they went
    - A. They were sent out two by two
      1. This is the Biblical model – Christ sent His disciples out in pairs
        - a. We can also see this in the Gospel of Luke as the 70 were sent out  
**Luke 10:1** - “Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come.”
        - b. We see it often in the Book of Acts  
In **Acts 3** we find Peter and John preaching together at the Temple  
In **Acts 13** we find Paul and Barnabas together in missionary work  
In **Acts 15** we find Paul teaming up with Silas
      2. There is great wisdom in us going forth in pairs
        - a. First, because it is the way our Lord designed our work
        - b. It provides security
        - c. It provides encouragement as we face our labors together. We are not meant to be alone.  
**Acts 16:23-25** – “When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; <sup>24</sup> and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. <sup>25</sup> But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God”
        - d. One can help prevent distractions while the other speaks
        - e. Thoughts flow better from the minds of two.
    - B. The apostles were endowed with authority – **Verse 7**
      1. ἐξουσία - the ability or strength with which one is endowed, which he either possesses or exercises
      2. As the ambassadors of Christ they were truly representing their Master
      3. They were being granted the particular authority which accompanied their office – we call this Apostolic authority  
The church was founded upon the apostles and prophets – it was a unique office.
      4. This authority was particular to the Apostles  
Nothing in Scripture indicates that these things which occurred during the Apostolic age would continue throughout the existence of the church
      5. Signs and miracles validated the Apostles during this revelatory period  
**2 Corinthians 12:12** – “The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.”  
This statement would have little meaning if signs and wonders were done by every Christian

6. Even the early church marveled at the deeds of the Apostles
- C. While there was authority unique to the apostolic office there is a sense in which every believer goes forth with authority
1. The Great Commission has universal application – we go in the authority of Christ  
**Matthew 28:18-19** - "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations"
  2. Although not all possess the authority of a church office there is authority in the Word of God. We are speaking God's Words
- II. What they were to do and what they were to proclaim
- A. They were "sent"
1. ἀποστέλλω – This is the verbal form of the word for apostle. This is the nature of the apostolic office – they are sent by Christ
  2. The apostles were sent forth as Christ's ambassadors  
**John 17:18** - "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."  
**John 20:21** - So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."  
**2 Corinthians 5:20** – "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."
- B. They were sent forth to preach the message of the Gospel  
**Mark 6:12** – "And they went out and preached that *men* should repent."  
**Matthew 10:7** - "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"
1. "Preach" - κηρύσσω - to proclaim after the manner of a herald 1b) always with the suggestion of formality, gravity and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed
    - a. As we've seen before, this is the official and particular preaching that is particular to those who are sent in an official sense – those called to preach.  
NAS **Romans 10:15** – "And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!"
    - b. But it is also true that every Christian is to boldly carry the Gospel to the lost  
There is another word used to describe this universal work of the church – εὐαγγελίζω – "to announce good news"  
**Acts 8:1** – "Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."  
**Acts 8:4** – "Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word."

**1 Peter 3:15** – “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;”

2. Putting Mark and Matthew’s Gospels together: Matthew wrote they were to preach the Kingdom and Mark records they were to preach repentance. What do we mean by this kingdom?
    - a. It speaks of the sovereign dominion of Christ as He rules in the lives and hearts of men.
    - b. That there would be great blessings in store for all of those who by sovereign grace, would confess and forsake their sins.
    - c. The kingdom will find its fullness in a new redeemed universe – a new heaven and new earth - Matt. 25:34 – “inherit the kingdom”
  3. What does it mean to preach this kingdom
    - a. That Jesus Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings and all men must submit to His reign  
True preaching places the demands of Christ before men  
It demands that all men bow before Him
    - b. Sin must be judged - There will be great punishment for those who despise the kingdom
    - c. All men must repent of their sin  
Mark focuses upon this repentance – repentance is at the heart of the Gospel.  
This was John the Baptist’s message  
**Matthew 3:2** – “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” 664-4810
    - d. The two gospels are in complete agreement. Preaching the Kingdom IS preaching repentance.
- C. There were also extraordinary signs that accompanied the work of the apostles  
**Mark 6:13** – “And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.”
1. These signs validated the ministry of Christ, validated the Apostles, and validated the Gospel
  2. Jesus was in essence saying, “Go and continue to do what I have been doing”
- III. In what condition they are to set out on their mission and with whom they must lodge
- A. They were to bring along the barest necessities  
**Mark 6:8-9** – “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; <sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals; and *He added*, “Do not put on two tunics.”
    1. They were not to bring money
    2. They were to carry no bag to carry supplies such as food and clothing
    3. One tunic or coat would suffice – in other words, only what they wore  
And don’t pack an extra pair of sandals
  - B. Why these restrictions?
    1. Because God would provide
    2. While we attend to God and our duty we can trust that God will provide

- C. “Because the laborer is worthy of his wages”  
**Luke 10:7** – “Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.”  
**1 Timothy 5:17-18** – “The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. <sup>18</sup> For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”
1. “double honor” - “double” = two-fold, “honor” = price  
 It refers to the wages due.  
 Those who give themselves to the ministry of the Word are worthy of double wages.
  2. They were not to go from house to house like vagabonds or beggars. They were worthy of their provision
  3. God provides for His laborers by means of His people
  4. While the Apostles were not to be guilty of greed, this in no way relieves the obligation of those receiving the Gospel to provide for them – This is the consistent teaching of Scripture
  5. This presupposes that ministers will be laborers  
 “especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching”  
 “work hard” = weary themselves to exhaustion, hard toil.  
 Literally – “work hard in the Word and teaching”
- D. The response to their ministry would determine where they would stay
1. This points to the character of Christian conversion – They would rejoice in the opportunity of housing God’s messengers
  2. They would see the value of God’s word and the value of God’s messengers  
NAS **Galatians 6:6** – “And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches.”
- IV. He tells them what response they are to expect – Most will reject, some will accept
- A. It was customary for a Jew that after he passed through a heathen territory to shake the dust off of his feet before entering the Holy Land
1. All who do not receive the Gospel are left unclean
  2. Paul and Barnabas practiced this against the Jews  
**Acts 13:50-51** – “But the Jews incited the devout women of prominence and the leading men of the city, and instigated a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district. <sup>51</sup> But they shook off the dust of their feet *in protest* against them and went to Iconium.”
- B. The consequences of refusing the Gospel are horrific
1. Matthew adds a dreadful consequence  
**Matthew 10:14-15** - “Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. <sup>15</sup> “Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for *the* land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.”

- a. This points to degrees of punishment in that day
  - b. All who refused the gospel will be called upon to give account for it but those who are hostile towards the ministers of the Gospel shall have a sorer punishment  
Remember, Sodom treated the angels of God with disdain and refused to hearken to their words
2. The indication is that rejection of the Gospel would be inevitable – but woe to those who reject the Gospel.

**Conclusion:**

This is the work of all of us. We are to carry the Gospel to the lost. Some will receive it and some will not. But we press on. We shake the dust off our feet and we press on.