

Mark 6:6b-13

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[0 : 00] So turn to Mark 6, page 1171 in your ESV Bibles. So last week, Nathan began chapter 6 and wonderful exposition of the beginning of chapter 6.

! I encourage you if you weren't here to go back and listen to that. It talks about how Jesus was rejected. He was in his own hometown as a prophet, and he was turned away by many who actually knew him, and he marveled at the people's unbelief.

So we're going to pick up after that, but just for context's sake, we'll begin reading in verse 1, chapter 6. He went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.

And on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. Saying, Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands? Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James, and Judas, and Simon?

[1 : 17] And are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor, except in his hometown, and among his relatives, and in his own household.

And he could not do, excuse me, no mighty works there, except he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief.

And so last week, Nathan taught that the only thing that holds us back from entering into Christ, into the presence of God, is our own unbelief.

And at the judgment day, it won't be, you won't have any other excuse other than, I did not come to Christ for salvation. You'll be condemned for your own sin and your own crime.

And unbelief is, he gave several different marks of unbelief. I encourage you to go back and look at those. But Jesus marveled at their unbelief.

[2 : 17] And what they didn't need was another miracle, another sign for him to prove who he was. It really was just their wicked, unrepentant hearts that held them back, not because they needed another sign.

And so picking up from there, we're going to start at the second part of verse 6. It says, He went among the villages teaching, and he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

And he charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff, no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear their sandals and not to put on two tunics.

And he said to them, Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you, and they will not listen to you when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.

So they went on out and proclaimed that the people should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

[3 : 28] So just pray with me for a minute. Lord, we confess that we need you this morning.

I need you desperately. Lord, this isn't a time just to talk about you and to act as if we know a lot about you.

But Lord, you have brought us here this morning to hear your word. And I pray that it would have its desired effect, that hearts would be broken, that people would be convicted, and also that people would be greatly encouraged, greatly emboldened to go out and declare the message of the gospel. So we just ask that, humbly Lord, in Christ's name. Amen. So, that's where we're finding ourselves today.

And so this is just chapter 6, and the disciples have walked with Jesus for not too long of a time at this point, but they've been following Him and observing how He does things.

[4 : 35] And like any good teacher, disciple-maker, Jesus is not just teaching them with His words, but His actions. And He is the embodiment of what He teaches.

He is the message that He preaches, that Ryan didn't expect it to. So, He is the very embodiment of that message. He doesn't just have so-called Bible studies with His disciples and talks about Torah, talks about poetry, and talks about the prophets, and, all right, great, and then they don't do anything else.

He says, guys, like, this is what the Scriptures mean. How does this work in our hearts? Now let's go and live this out.

And He was like any good teacher or disciple-maker. He didn't just teach with His mouth, but He demonstrated. He demonstrated with His life what He expected them to learn.

So, you know, with prayer, He was like, guys, this is what prayer is. Now let's do it. You know, it wasn't just a theory about prayer. They observed Him practice praying, communing with the Father.

[5 : 43] And thankfully, we actually get a glimpse into that in John 17, and to see what that was like, to see Jesus commune with the Father. But He talks about the Scriptures.

At least 66 times the Old Testament is referenced just in Jesus' conversation with His disciples. So He constantly was teaching them, this is what this meant. And I really try to endeavor with the men I've discipled over the years, not always successfully, as most of them will tell you.

I think five of them are here right now. Of course, they'd be like, yeah, He doesn't always do that.

But I try to demonstrate with my life like what I expect them to learn and show them with my actions.

And this is biblical. And I'll just read you a couple of examples from Paul. It was a vital part of discipleship. He would say things like this, Be imitators of me as I imitate Christ.

1 Corinthians 11.1 And in Philippians 4, he says, Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

[6 : 53] And then later on, in chapter 3, he says, What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

So he was living this out. Demonstrating what he expected them to learn. And now up until this point in Mark, he's been teaching, he's been healing, he's been proclaiming the kingdom of God, casting out demons.

They've seen him do this, drive away evil spirits, and help many people. Raise a young girl from the dead even. And they were engaged.

They were seeing this. They saw him share with the masses. And they watched him. A book that I recommend, that I read at least once a year, that a man introduced me to a long time ago, it's called The Master's Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman.

And I really try, again, I try to follow this example of what discipleship was. But he has a chapter called Demonstration, and it's basically how any good disciple maker will demonstrate what he expects his disciples to learn.

[8 : 07] And this is just a quote out of that on the Demonstration chapter. He said, What all the disciples had to teach them was a teacher who practiced with them what he expected them to learn.

Evangelism was lived out before them in spirit and in technique. Watching him, they learned what it was all about. He led them to recognize the inerrant need in all classes of people, and the best methods of approaching them.

They observed how he drew people to himself, and how he won their confidence and inspired their faith. How he opened to them the way of salvation, and called them to decision.

In all types of situations, and among all kinds of people, rich, poor, healthy, and sick, friend and foe alike, the disciples watched. The master soul winner at work. It wasn't outlined on a blackboard.

This is when blackboards were still around. It wasn't outlined on a blackboard of a stuffy classroom, nor written in a do-it-yourself manual. His method was so real and practical that it just came naturally.

[9 : 13] Okay, so, I've had several conversations with some people this last semester, and one of them asked me, you know, like, why do you think that, like, it's one of the reasons, at least, it's so hard for people to share their faith.

Why is it? Why is it just, like, so weird? And I'll use the term of our generation awkward today. Like, why is it, why is it like that? And I think the only answer is, is because we've divorced evangelism from our actual lives.

It's not a part of who we are anymore. It's something that we, like, we do, we live this way, and then now we, like, oh, now I've got to evangelize. It's like a, it's an event that we take place in, but it's not coming out of who we are on a daily basis around the people that we're around.

So we've divorced it from our actual lives, and that's why it's weird for a lot of us. So, if you look at verse 7 in our text here, it says, He called the twelve, and began to send them out, two by two, this is just introduction, two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

So, also, in this book I refer to you, he has a chapter called Delegation. So, demonstration, delegation.

[10:35] And, and this is another part of real discipleship that our, our Lord uses, delegation. So from day one, Jesus was preparing his disciples to take over his mission one day.

He saw, like, that's where I need to take them. And he began, like, slowly taking them there. That would have been quite a work, knowing what we know about the disciples. And he gradually assigned work, duties, responsibilities, and they were faithful to that.

It's kind of like, okay, boys, you've watched me do it. You see, you've observed me. Now it's, now it's your turn. Go out and do this. And that's real discipleship.

And in this context, in Mark today, we see him delegating for the first time, preaching, and evangelism, and soul winning, accompanied by acts of compassion.

So it says, like, he began to send them out. He commissioned each pair to go out as his representatives. And we see that he gave them authority. So, that's important. He didn't like just sending them out to fend for themselves, and their own wit, because really they weren't that way, or their own knowledge and skill, which they lacked greatly.

[11:47] He gave them his authority to go out, or his power to go out. And that term here, it could be used as authority or power. It means like inerrant power, an idea of someone possessing the right to do something, and actually having, like, the capacity to do it.

And that's the kind of power that he gave them to go out. And so, they didn't just go out on their own. And he gave them his power to go out and do as he had been doing.

So, which is interesting. In a parallel text in Matthew, it says that after he sent them out, he himself went out and continued teaching and doing this.

It wasn't like, I'm going to sit back at the house and drink some lemonade while y'all go out. You know, he was doing this himself as the example for them. And so, in another sense, he granted them authority.

He was saying, in a literal sense almost, that he was an extension. They were an extension of him as they ministered to others. And up until now, Jesus had been the one teaching, preaching, healing, casting out demons.

[12:55] But he sent his power to go out. And then we see that he sent them out two by two. So, why twos? I was able to kind of think of like, six different reasons, but really quickly, how important was it fulfilled the requirements of the law to, for every testimony to have, to be established by two or more witnesses.

That's out of Deuteronomy 17, six. And then it also followed the ancient wisdom of Solomon and the Old Testament, two are better than one. It's the idea that if you fall, you have someone to pick you up.

So that's another one, is provided the men with the companionship, encouragement, and someone to pray for them. I've been so thankful for that over the years, to have those kind of situations.

It was the method used by John the Baptist and his followers. He sent them out by twos. And then you also see it was the method of the early church. A lot in the book of Acts, you'll read that.

Paul often has somebody else with him, Barnabas or Silas, and they would, they would go. Or he would say, I'm going to send to you Timothy and another guy. Like it was always by twos.

[14:07] And it really still is the best method today. I remember earlier on, in my walk with the Lord, I was 18, 19, and I was just really burdened to like share the gospel with all my crazy lost friends that I went to high school with.

And the Lord paired me up with another buddy of mine who was probably the craziest, craziest dude in our grade, seriously, before the Lord saved him. And we just started hunting people down. You know, we would call somebody up and say, hey, what are you doing this day? Let's hang out. And we would genuinely just hang out with him. And then we'd be like, so, you know, have some good conversations.

We, we didn't really know what we were doing, to be honest. We were just trying to love people and pointing to Jesus, kind of a bull in a china closet kind of stuff. I remember we actually ran out of friends.

Like we were like, who are we? And we actually pulled the yearbook out and started like going down through the yearbook. I remember one time we were praying, like Lord, we're running out of people to talk to.

[15:11] And like two minutes later, he dug up something out of his closet and it was like this, he started laughing. It was like a list of all the people he used to call to party on the weekends. Like, we're going after them.

So it was like, it was, it was that. So, and today, I try to take the men I disciple on the Appalachian Trail and to share with guys who were coming by.

The last time I took Kittrell, Matt Kittrell with me, I made him carry the cooler. It was great. But we just took little bottles of water, some Powerade, and yes, I'll explain this later.

I took a few beers too. Number one, I went in vodka. And number one, we didn't give them more than one. So, but, I've had people say, do you have any, do you have any beer?

And I was like, no, I just got water, man. Well, that's okay. And just keep walking. And so, we actually had a couple people that stopped and had a beer and we talked about Jesus and that was kind of a conundrum for them.

[16:12] So, Daniel Swanson, he's done this too. He's taken people down to the mall and in pairs and shared with people down there. Definitely, like, I was convicted a few years ago in my discipleship that I was, I was telling the guys that I am sharing my faith and they knew I was sharing my faith.

But, really, just a personal part of it, I needed to be able to show them how to do it. They need to see me, like, have terrible conversations with people. They need to see me, like, get burned and rejected and as well as just have good conversations so that, at the end of the day, they'll know that this is not about how much you know or how clever you are.

It's about, like, God's power in you. That's all it is. It doesn't matter. So, yeah, the by twos thing, a great way to do it.

So, three things from our text today, if you'll look at the beginning of verse 11. Excuse me.

Number one is, faithful messengers proclaim salvation. Faithful messengers proclaim salvation.

[17:31] You look at verse 11 and 12. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them so that when they went out and proclaimed that people should repent.

So, this is the first one. If you would, there's just a couple of places for you to turn today outside of Mark 6. Hold your place in Mark 6, but just go back to chapter 1 of Mark.

So, what was the message that they were proclaiming? And, more than likely, it was the same message that Jesus was proclaiming here at the beginning of Mark.

If you look at verse 14, it says this, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent and believe the gospel. So, the message that he was proclaiming was the good news that the kingdom of God is here, that God was establishing his rule over the hearts of Adam's fallen race.

[18:50] It was being established. and in response to this, people should repent and believe the gospel. So, let's just break this down. The kingdom of God, without getting to all the craziness of the kingdom of God, it can really be simply understood in three ways.

The first is the spiritual kingdom or the invisible kingdom that exists in the hearts of those who believe. It's like the church invisible, like, it's the rule of Christ that is established in the hearts of those who have put their faith in him.

And then also, you could be referring to the future millennial kingdom and the new heaven, the new earth, Revelation 20, fulfilling the Old Testament promises about the Messiah, which will come shortly before the end, and then, and then the eternal kingdom that follows that in the new heaven. So God's kingdom, if you look at this text, it's interesting. If you look at the text, it says that God's kingdom is here, and that it is coming.

There's places, you know, where Jesus is teaching his disciples, pray, your kingdom come, right? And, but here he says, the kingdom of God is here. So, like, how is that to be understood?

[20 : 09] And many of you have heard me say this, but it's only the best analogy I can come up with. Actually, I don't think I came up with it either. But it's, it's a picture of, like, there being darkness and no light, but suddenly, like, the sun begins to come up.

I'm an outdoorsman, and I like to fish, and I like to hunt, and usually you're out there at dark, and then, like, the sun comes up, and you get to watch that a lot. It's that idea of, like, the sun coming up, piercing the darkness, but it's not fully daylight yet.

And that's a picture of, kind of, where we live right now. So the kingdom is here, and it is coming. He said, the time is fulfilled, Jesus says. And that's the Greek word, keros, not kromos, which is like a clock time.

It has more to do, like, an epochal time, the error, a fixed point in history for an event to happen. And like in Galatians 4, it says, in the fullness of time, is that idea.

And so the most significant error in human history was the arrival of Christ on the scene and Him beginning to bring in the kingdom of God, paying the penalty for sin and resurrecting from the dead.

[21 : 20] So, so that's the kingdom. So, how do you actually get into the kingdom? Right? So, if you look back, just in Mark 1, it says, repent and believe the gospel.

And this is the message that they were proclaiming, saying that they should go out and teach and declare that men should repent of their sin. So, a great, I'm trying to, so much to learn about repentance.

And then those who actually mentor and disciple me here always tell me, you have a lot to learn about repentance. And I'm like, man, I do. Because I, I don't, I don't handle it so well sometimes. But really, literally, repenting, it means to change one's mind for the better. heartily to a man with abhorrence one's past sins. It's a changing of the mind that leads to change of action.

It's a turning away of sin, hating it, and resolving only by God's power to overcome it, even as you turn in faith to Him. So, a little helpful thing, being repentant is not just feeling guilty and feeling bad for things you've done.

[22 : 30] unbelievers do that. So, what's the difference? And the difference is that genuine repentance arises from a heart of sorrow for the crimes it has committed against God.

It's called a godly sorrow that leads to repentance. 2 Corinthians 7, 10. A godly sorrow that produces a desire to change one's ways and change the way a repentant sinner lives.

As David said when he committed adultery, murder, and scandal, he told God in Psalm 51, you alone have I sinned against and done what is evil in your sight.

So, he could have said I sinned against a lot of people, but he knew that all sin, all of it, is first and foremost against God. And that's why he said that you and you alone have I sinned against.

It's a grief that's produced. So, all the sin, you know, calls us to reckon with God and to turn away from our sin.

[23 : 34] And by the way, another thing, like, when we say repent, when the scripture says repent, when Jesus said it right here, it's not an invitation.

It's not, he's not simply inviting people to come and follow him. It's used as a command like repent and believe. It's not a imitation.

And, as if, like, you see your child doing something crazy that could harm them and you command them like, turn now, come back. Because, because really, Jesus knows that he is the only hope they have.

So, he's not saying like, please, like, he's not a, it's not that, it's just repent and believe. Because he knows that he is the only thing that can save them. So, it's not an invitation.

So, we have to come back to this idea of repentance. It's left out a lot. Y'all won't believe me, but it's left out even on the college campus. It's left out.

[24 : 36] Several years ago, I had a conversation with a so-called atheist and he told me, like, I used to be a Christian and so I asked him to like explain what he meant and he said, well, about a year ago, I was going through a really rough time and some Christians came to me and they just said, man, I'm sorry, you're having a hard time.

What you really need is Jesus in your life and he'll make you joyful, he'll bring you peace and so I was like, man, I want that. So, he came and he, you know, came to the church and, you know, did the whole deal and then, and then in that conversation he said, and it was cool for a while but then, this happened.

I broke up with my girlfriend. I lost my job and, and I just had to tell him, like, man, like, I'm very sorry that like, all that's happened to you but I'm even more sorry that these Christians that probably meant well, they didn't tell you what the gospel really was.

Like, the truth is, yes, Christ does give you joy, he does give you satisfaction, he does give you peace but that comes by way of repenting of your sin and following Christ and they forgot that. They forgot to tell him to turn away from his sin and believe the gospel. So, don't, it's a, it's an overflow, it's an outcome of knowing Christ that it is not the gospel and you keep that in mind and how we actually teach to people.

[26 : 11] So, he says, repent and believe. So, this isn't just a mere acknowledgement, it's to believe means to be persuaded, to be strongly convicted by something, to throw yourself completely in trust, right?

So, it's a belief that produces action, it's not just a mental ascent. You believe it so much that it changes how you live. And then the gospel is just, we talk about it all the time, it's the glad tidings, the good news that Christ came here to save sinners, all right?

Turn to Acts 3 really quick. Acts 3. So, after Jesus had ascended back, after he had ascended back to heaven, the apostles, the apostles continued this message of repentance.

It wasn't just come to Jesus and get happy. Acts 3, verse 17, it said, And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers, but what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.

Repent, therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all things about which God spoke by the mouth of all his holy prophets so long ago.

[27 : 50] That resembles what's said in Isaiah about God saying, Turn back to me, repent, that a time of healing and refreshing will come, that your sins will be blotted away.

Christ was the fulfillment of that, and we never forgot that. Repent and turn again to the Lord, that your sins will be blotted out. And it says that genuine repentance does bring refreshing.

Those of you who have believed the gospel know that. It's a refreshing, cooling presence to your seared conscience that sin has brought. So, back in, if you look back in Mark 6, you see that he says, if you're rejected, shake off the dust from your sandals.

Alright? Shake off the dust from your sandals. So, if the message rejected, this is what Jews did when they returned from a foreign land or from a pagan land when they returned from a journey. So, before they actually crossed back into Israel, they would shake the dust, shake the dust off their sandals, off their clothes, and it was just symbolic. It represented like total disassociation.

[29 : 00] from the pagans in their polluted land. Luke 10, 8 is an example of that. In this case, Jesus was telling his men to do this as a sign of those who rejected the gospel and rejected him and that they would face God's judgment one day.

And so, it also, it made, it was symbolic of the messengers freeing themselves of the responsibility of sharing. Now, some of you may not like to hear this, but, like, if you, if you just write this down, like Ezekiel 33 is the, the picture of the, or the vision of the watchman that God gives Ezekiel.

And he says, I've appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel. And so, a watchman would be up on a high place in the city, a guard tower or whatever. It is his job to watch for danger that might be coming.

And his job also was to blow a trumpet if he did see danger. And, and then the people would either listen to him or they would ignore it. But, God says, it is your responsibility, I hold you personally accountable to blow the trumpet.

All right? To warn the people of impending danger. And, if they ignore it, the blood is on their own heads. And you are free of your responsibility.

[30 : 22] But, but if you don't blow it, he says, I will hold you accountable. All right? And that's true. It's true. Acts 18, verse 6, Paul had just been rejected and this is what he says.

And when they opposed and reviled Paul, he shook off his garments. There it is. See, he shook off his garments. And he said to them, your blood be on your own heads.

I am innocent. All right? Yes, this was the man who wrote Romans 9. He knew about the sovereignty of God. He knew that God was the one who ultimately worked in the hearts of men, but he never took that as an excuse to just lay back.

He knew that preaching the gospel was the means God uses to save sinners. And he said, I'm innocent. I'm free of my responsibility. I've told you the message, and I'm walking away.

So it was symbolic of moving on. So that's number one. Faithful messengers proclaim salvation. Number two, in our text back in Mark, faithful messengers manifest compassion.

[31 : 35] Faithful messengers manifest compassion. So nothing is more distasteful to a lost world than Bible thumpers hurling stuff at them and then not caring for them at all.

Alright? Good deeds, good works, as one of the old confessions says, good deeds, good works adorn the gospel. They make the gospel look beautiful.

And the compassion of Christ is seen all over the place. But if you look back in our text, it's to follow here, faithful messengers! Manifest compassion.

Verse 7, He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and He gave them authority over unclean spirits. In verse 13, And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

Alright? So our Lord, He was the embodiment of compassion. He was the greatest incarnation of the compassion of God ever. He never did things selfishly or begrudgingly.

[32 : 38] He didn't have a secret agenda. I mean, He didn't like, I pity these sinners. That wasn't His attitude at all.

Jesus served people from a deep and sincere compassion. And the word that's kind of used for compassion in many places in the New Testament means like from the bowels.

It means like the place of tender affections for another. a aching heart which mercy resides for those who are lowly and weak. Alright?

So it was more like that, not like, oh, I need to go help these people. Like, he felt it. It was deep inside of him. And God's compassion was spoken of so many times in the Old Testament.

It reveals like this astounding, tender-hearted God toward those who are weak and lowly. Psalm 79 verse 8 says this, Do not remember against us our former iniquities.

[33 : 43] Let your compassion come speedily to meet us for we are brought low. There's that idea. Help us, O God, of our salvation for the glory of your name.

Deliver us and atone our sins for your name's sake. So now, Jesus is here. The gospel is here. And so all the teaching, all the miracles were acts of compassion to those who dwelt in darkness and in the bondage of sin.

Okay? He was the incarnation of the Father's compassion. What we just read was fulfilled in Christ, atoned for our sins. And a little later on in Mark, this same chapter, if you just look at Mark 6 34, it says, He went ashore and he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd and he began to teach them many things.

So, now the disciples are going out as an extension of Christ to the world to deliver and to heal, to preach the kingdom, to cast out demons and to heal the sick.

Alright? Now, as we've said, God uses miracles to confirm or to validate his claims. Okay? Like, there was miracles done in the Old Testament.

[35 : 00] Jesus was not the first one to work miracles or to raise somebody from the dead. I mean, even Elijah did that. So, I do believe, because I've seen, I've heard and I've experienced, I do believe that God still does use miracles as something to show his power, to show his compassion to people.

But I also will say that I know it's not the norm. Okay? Years ago, when I was in the hospital, people were praying that I would like be healed from my cystic fibrosis, that I wouldn't need a transplant. I had more oil dumped on me than McDonald's french fries. But I had a lot of prayer on that. And, but really, the greatest miracle that is performed today is like the transformation, the regeneration of the dead human soul.

By his wombs, they will be healed. That was speaking of a spiritual healing. And Christ brought that when he came. You can't be fickle by miracles. Did y'all know that in the last days, like false teachers will be able to do miracles?

So what are you going to do? Are you going to believe it? Or say, like, where is that coming from? It's not, it can't be it. It's got to be something more than that. So for Christ to take a lost, hell-bound sinner, a rebel, and transform them into, like a lover of the king, is the greatest miracle, really.

[36 : 28] And that comes by the gospel. It comes by us sharing the word of God with people. So that's number three, or number two. Faithful messengers manifest compassion. Number three,

faithful messengers live dependent on God.

Okay? Verse eight, he charged them to take nothing for their journey, except the staff, no bread, no bag, no money, in their belts, but to wear their sandals, and to not put on two tunics.

And he said to them, whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. So like, what's all that about? Well, you know, the traveling bag, which he doesn't ask them to take, it was used to carry money or to carry food.

For a long time, like you can just use Exodus 12 as an example of this, things that were listed here in these two verses, they were signs to the Jewish people of their helplessness, their need to trust in God, and also urgency.

Like, when you're in a hurry, you don't have time to pack three or four bags of all your junk. Like, go. That's kind of like the picture here.

[37 : 42] Guys, you don't have time to let up the hair dryer and the makeup. You just go. Like, that's, it's not, it's kind of like that. But bread and bags and money and their belts and two tunics were symbolic of like all the things that make life secure.

Like, what makes your life feel secure right now? Probably your money, probably the roof over your head, the clothes on your back. And so, Jesus was somewhat asking them to mimic the prophets of old, like Elijah and Elisha, who were fed and sheltered by those they ministered to, and to accept the hospitality of the local people that accepted their message.

Right? It's like, don't, don't seek out better accommodations, more comfortable places. Don't stay at super crazy nice hotels, you know?

Just be content. Take what you're given and be content. And so, Jesus didn't want his, or the people that encountered his disciples to think that they had some kind of secret agenda to get money, to grow, to grow wealthy.

And so, they just went that way. Preachers in England during the 18th and 19th centuries were renowned for considering their own personal pleasures and comforts above the needs of the people in their church.

[39 : 00] They could talk to you more about their hunting dogs and their wine sellers than they could about the gospel and the word of God. It's the same thing today, really, just prosperity preaching, tell evangelists, send me money.

It's the same kind of stuff. And like, we've had enough of that in our generation. We need to be able to preach the true gospel. So, he says, he desires them to just travel light, to take only what's needed, to leave everything else behind.

And the staff that he did tell them to take was used for walking, also for protection, and the sandals were just the ordinary footwear. And he says, take one tunic, which are just the standard dress, because in this culture, two tunics can symbolize wealth.

And like, look at me, I've got two tunics. So he's like, just take one. Associate with the commoners, the lowly, and think about this. Don't come across as high and mighty and holier than thou, but associate with these people.

So, are we supposed to do that today? Maybe, but I don't think necessarily. The idea here is that he wants them to learn to trust him, that go without making special preparations for your travels, undertake this assignment, trusting in me, to provide for all your needs.

[40 : 30] Can you do that? He was teaching them reliance and dependence, that no matter what, no matter what context, ultimately, all provision comes from God. That's even true for us.

He was just specifically showing them, just so you'll know, a little lesson for you guys and your little internship here, that everything comes from me. I'm going to go show you, so go out, don't take all this stuff with you.

And so, to walk in complete dependence on God and his power to supply their needs. I've seen the Lord do it many times in my own life. so that's the third point, to be dependent on God, to not want anything other than to minister the gospel to people, and then trust in the Lord for your provision.

So in conclusion, if you know Christ, and you just need to know that you don't need a bunch of brains or a theology degree to talk about Jesus with people, the disciples were ordinary guys, super ordinary guys, like extra ordinary guys.

They were fishermen, tax collectors, often actually like kids and fought with each other. I mean, it would have been just to see Jesus and go, man, just so many times of these guys. They weren't anything special.

[41 : 46] But if you look at Acts 4 real quick, I just want to show you one thing. Acts 4 verse 13. This is Peter and John as they were preaching.

Acts 4 verse 13. It says, Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished, and they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

That's the key. It's not about how many books you've read. I don't care if you can quote the greatest theologians in history, like to know Jesus, to encounter Jesus, and to be taught and fed by Jesus is all you need.

And if you're around him, you become like him. If you love him, you talk more about him. We've got to get rid of this idea that evangelism is some awkward event that we take part in every now and then.

It's to be embodied in who we are, and how we talk, how we live, and whoever we encounter. And if you're holding back a fear of failure, let go of those fears today.

[43 : 03] Be done with it. There's a lot of work that needs to be done. There's a lot of dead, lost souls out there that need the gospel. Fear God more than you fear men. All right?

So, come before the Lord. Some of you need to pray that God makes you like this. I'm a hero that I've always had, but the last two months I began reading more of his stuff, and it brought me to tears on several occasions.

This is Jim Elliott. And in his college years, this is something that he wrote. He said, Father, make me a crisis man. Bring those I come in contact to decision.

Let me not be a mile post on a single road. Make me a fork that men must turn one way or another on facing Christ in me.

Like, let those who encounter Christ in me go one way or another. Like, don't let them turn away or let them come to Christ. that was on July 7th in 1948.

[44 : 08] So, we need to pray that. We need to pray that. I need to pray that. We need to be people who, when others meet us, they encounter Christ. And if you don't know Christ today, you've heard the message that was spoken.

Repent. Turn away from your sin and throw yourself at the cross on the mercy of Jesus. He is alive today. Like, we're about to come up on Easter.

Like, what are you going to do with that? Like, he's alive. He's got this dead dude from the past. He's somebody that's here right now that you have to reckon with. And he's more than willing to receive you with compassion and open arms.

So, face him now as your friend or resist him as his enemy. Turn in faith. You can come and talk to me or Nathan or Wes or one of the elders here.

But don't pass that up. So, let's just close in prayer together as we continue our worship today. Amen.