



Gospel of Mark Bible Study

Session #7 October 27th – Nov. 1st Mark 6:6-52

Tuesday 6am @LW – Tuesday 5:15pm @AV

Wednesday 10am & 6:15pm @LW

Sunday 10:30am @AV

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve - Mark 6:7-13 Life Application Notes

6:7 The disciples were sent out in pairs. Individually they could have reached more areas of the country, but this was not Christ's plan. One advantage in going out by twos was that they could strengthen and encourage each other, especially when they faced rejection. Our strength comes from God, but he meets many of our needs through our teamwork with others. As you serve Christ, don't try to go it alone.

6:8-9 Mark records that the disciples were instructed to take nothing with them *except* staffs, while in the Matthew and Luke accounts Jesus told them *not* to take staffs. One explanation is that Matthew and Luke were referring to a club used for protection, whereas Mark was talking about a shepherd's crook. In any case, the point in all three accounts is the same—the disciples were to leave at once, without extensive preparation, trusting in God's care rather than in their own resources.

6:11 Pious Jews shook the dust from their feet after passing through Gentile cities or territory to show their separation from Gentile influences and practices. When the disciples shook the dust from their feet after leaving a *Jewish* town, it was a vivid sign that they wished to remain separate from people who had rejected Jesus and his message. Jesus made it clear that the listeners were responsible for what they did with the gospel. The disciples were not to blame if the message was rejected, as long as they had faithfully and carefully presented it. We are not responsible when others reject Christ's message of salvation, but we do have the responsibility to share the gospel clearly and faithfully.

Study Questions:

1. In what ways have you ever had to depend on others for some of your needs?
2. What task did Jesus give the disciples? (6:7)
3. How did Jesus equip the disciples for their job? (6:7-11)
4. How has God equipped you for serving Him?

John the Baptist Beheaded - Mark 6:14-29 Life Application Notes

6:14-15 Herod, along with many others, wondered who Jesus really was. Unable to accept Jesus' claim to be God's Son, many people made up their own explanations for his power and authority. Herod thought that Jesus was John the Baptist come back to life, while those who were familiar with the Old Testament thought he was Elijah (Malachi 4:5). Still others believed that Jesus was a teaching prophet in the tradition of Moses, Isaiah, or Jeremiah. Today people still have to make up their minds about Jesus. Some think that if they can name what he is—prophet, teacher, good man—they can weaken the power of his claim on their lives. But what they *think* does not change who Jesus *is*.

6:17-19 Palestine was divided into four territories, each with a different ruler. Herod Antipas, called Herod in the Gospels, was ruler over Galilee; his brother Philip ruled over Traconitis and Idumea. Philip's wife was Herodias, but she left him to marry Herod Antipas. When John confronted the two for committing adultery, Herodias formulated a plot to kill him. Instead of trying to get rid of her sin, Herodias tried to get rid of the one who brought it to public attention. This is exactly what the religious leaders were trying to do to Jesus.

6:20 Herod arrested John the Baptist under pressure from his wife and advisers. Though Herod respected John's integrity, in the end Herod had John killed because of pressure from his peers and family. What you do under pressure often shows what you are really like.

6:22-23 As a ruler under Roman authority, Herod had no kingdom to give. The offer of half his kingdom was Herod's way to say that he would give Herodias's daughter almost anything she wanted. When Herodias asked for John's head, Herod would have been greatly embarrassed in front of his guests if he had denied her request. Words are powerful. Because they can lead to great sin, we should use them with great care.

Study Questions:

1. What do Herod's actions throughout this episode say about the way sin operates in a person's life? (6:14-29)
2. Why had Herod arrested and imprisoned John the Baptist? (6:17-18)
3. What happened at the party described in this passage? (6:21-28)

4. What can we learn from Herod's negative example about preventing sin from "snowballing" or getting out of control?

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand - Mark 6:30-44 Life Application Notes

6:30 Mark uses the word *apostles* here and in Mark 3:14. *Apostle* means "one sent" as messenger, authorized agent, or missionary. The word became an official title for Jesus' 12 disciples after his death and resurrection (Acts 1:25-26; Ephes. 2:20).

6:31 When the disciples had returned from their mission, Jesus took them away to rest. Doing God's work is very important, but Jesus recognized that to do it effectively we need periodic rest and renewal. Jesus and his disciples, however, did not always find it easy to get the rest they needed!

6:34 This crowd was as pitiful as a flock of sheep without a shepherd. Sheep are easily scattered; without a shepherd they are in grave danger. Jesus was the Shepherd who could teach them what they needed to know and keep them from straying from God. See Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11; and Ezekiel 34:5ff for descriptions of the Good Shepherd.

6:37 In this chapter different people have examined Jesus' life and ministry: his neighbors and family, Herod the king, and the disciples. Yet none of these appreciated Jesus for who he was. The disciples were still pondering, still confused, still unbelieving. They did not realize that Jesus could provide for them. They were so preoccupied with the immensity of the task that they could not see what was possible with God. Do you let what seems impossible about Christianity keep you from believing?

6:37-42 When Jesus asked the disciples to provide food for over 5,000 people, they asked in astonishment if they should go and spend eight months' wages on bread. How do you react when you are given an impossible task? A situation that seems impossible with human resources is simply an opportunity for God. The disciples did everything they could by gathering the available food and organizing the people into groups. Then, in answer to prayer, God did the impossible. When facing a seemingly impossible task, do what you can and ask God to do the rest. He may see fit to make the impossible happen.

Study Questions:

1. What did Jesus think of the disciples' suggestion? (6:37)
2. What did the disciples think of Jesus' solution? (6:37)
3. What do you think Jesus wanted to teach His disciples through this miracle?
4. What can you do this week to increase your confidence in God?

Jesus Walks on the Water - Mark 6:45-56 Life Application Notes

6:49 The disciples were surprised to see Jesus walking beside them on the water. But they should have realized that Jesus would help them when they were in trouble. Though they had lost sight of Jesus, he had not lost sight of them. His concern for them overcame their lack of faith. The next time you are in "deep water," remember that Christ knows your struggle and cares for you.

6:49-50 The disciples were afraid, but Jesus' presence calmed their fears. We all experience fear. Do we try to deal with it ourselves, or do we let Jesus deal with it? In times of fear and uncertainty, it is calming to know that Christ is always with us (Matthew 28:20). To recognize Christ's presence is the antidote for fear.

6:52 The disciples didn't want to believe, perhaps because (1) they couldn't accept the fact that this human named Jesus was really the Son of God; (2) they dared not believe that the Messiah would choose them as his followers-it was too good to be true; (3) they still did not understand the real purpose for Jesus' coming to earth. Their disbelief took the form of misunderstanding.

Even after watching Jesus miraculously feed 5,000 people, they still could not take the final step of faith and believe that he was God's Son. If they had, they would not have been amazed that Jesus could walk on water. The disciples did not transfer the truth they already knew about Jesus to their own lives. We read that Jesus walked on the water, and yet we often marvel that he is able to work in our lives. We must not only believe that these miracles really occurred; we must also transfer the truth to our own life situations.

6:53 Gennesaret was a small fertile plain located on the west side of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum, Jesus' home, sat at the northern edge of this plain.

Study Questions:

1. What is one lesson you had to learn the hard way?
2. When did the disciples cry out? Why? (6:49-50)
3. What had the disciples failed to understand? (6:52)
4. What did the disciples have to learn the hard way?

Bible Memory Verse: They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. Mark 6:12