

Go and Take Nothing but Jesus

4.22.18

Mark Series

Message 25

Mark 6:6–13 (NIV)

⁶Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. ⁷ Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

⁸ These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. ⁹ Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. ¹⁰ Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. ¹¹ And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

¹² They went out and preached that people should repent. ¹³ They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

1. Faith is a requirement for a Christian life.

A. Hebrews tells us that it is impossible to please God without faith.

1. We must believe in God,
2. And we must believe that He rewards and provides for those who seek Him.

B. Because faith is a foundational part of the Christian life, we should not curse the seasons when faith is demanded and called for.

1. This is where we are at as a church.
2. Last week I shared with this body the season of faith we are in.

a. In order for us to be able to use our new sanctuary to its utmost, we need to make some serious upgrades to the HVAC to the tune of \$46,000.

b. I wish that it wasn't this way.

c. Life is much easier when you can write a check for all of your problems, but that isn't the season God has us in.

d. He has us in a season of faith and dependency and we cannot curse the season He has put us in.

3. As I studied and prepared for today, I couldn't help but see similarities between what God had called the disciples to and what He is calling us to.

a. The great thing about this is that God wants us to see the connection between what He asked His disciples to do 2,000 years ago and what He is asking us to do today.

b. To change the world with the Gospel we must step out in faith.

c. There will be times when God asks to you do things, go places, or say words that on your own don't make sense.

d. But with the Lord's power become possible.

2. The Kingdom of God is Outward Focused

A. **Jesus sent His disciples outward, not inward.**

1. The focus of the Kingdom of God is outward.

a. Jesus did not remain in heaven but came to Earth to restore us back to himself.

b. Jesus demonstrated this outward focus by sending the disciples out to those you needed salvation and healing.

2. In Jesus' Kingdom, there is always room for one more.

a. There is always room for someone to be saved.

b. There is always power available for another healing.

c. There is always compassion left for an oppressed person to be set free.

B. The Disciples needed to be reminded that Jesus did not exist solely for their benefit.

1. Can you imagine the unprecedented access that these 12 men had?

a. They wake up, Jesus was there.

b. They go to bed, Jesus is there.

c. They shared boats with him, journeys with him, and heard teaching that others didn't.

2. The purpose of this unprecedented access was to build these disciples up so they could go and invite others to be with Jesus.

a. We don't want people to be on the outside looking in when Jesus comes back.

b. The presence and power of the Kingdom is for everyone.

C. The Church today must keep in mind that we do not exist for ourselves.

1. We exist to display the glory of God.

2. We exist to share God's love with the lost, the hurting, and the broken.

3. We exist to proclaim God's Good News to those who haven't yet heard.

4. This day, Jesus was sending 12 of his disciples to do these very things.

D. If we ever lose this outward focus we forfeit our reason to exist.

1. We maintain this outward focus by staying connected to the heart of God.

2. Notice that before Jesus sent them out, He first called them to himself.

3. They were to go in power, authority, and compassion.
 - a. But they couldn't do this on our own.
 - b. We don't have the power, authority, or the compassion to change the world by ourselves.
 - c. We must stay connected to Jesus and stay close to Him.
 - d. It is through our personal and corporate relationship with Jesus that we are empowered to take the Kingdom to our communities and neighborhoods.

3. Jesus called them to the lost, the broken, and the oppressed.

A. Jesus' mission revolved around 3 groups of people.

1. The lost are those who are far from God and don't have a saving relationship with Him.
2. The broken are those who are in need of physical or emotional healing.
3. The oppressed are those who are enslaved by spiritual attacks or by addictions which can't be broken by themselves.
4. Jesus' ministry focused on these groups of people.

B. The power and authority the disciples had were for the lost, the broken, and the oppressed.

1. The disciples were to preach a message of repentance.
 - a. Without repentance, there is no healing.
 - b. Without repentance, we cannot enter the Kingdom of God.
 - c. Some of you here today are seeking healing or freedom.
 - d. But have you repented?
 - e. The healing you need and the freedom you seek after won't happen if you have unrepented sin.
2. The disciples were also to cast out demons.

- a. This was extremely common for Jesus and his team.
- b. The demonic frequently showed its ugly head as it was confronted by the power of God.
- c. We can expect spiritual confrontation to happen as we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.
- d. The absence of spiritual confrontation can be attributed to the absence of spiritual authority.
- e. The enemy won't show off unless Jesus shows up.

3. The disciples were told to heal the sick.

- a. The method the disciples used to heal the sick is different than what Jesus did.

- 1. For the first time, we see ministers anointing the sick with oil.

- 2. Best I can tell, Jesus didn't do this but his disciples did.

- 3. Perhaps this is what James had in mind when he wrote, "Call for the elders of the church and anoint them with oil".

- b. The oil symbolized the presence of the Holy Spirit.

- 1. The oil reminded the disciples that it was not their power or presence that healed the sick but the power and presence of Jesus.

- 2. The oil supports what we are talking about today: That without the power and presence of Jesus, we can do nothing. But with Him, we can do everything He calls us to do.

C. We know what Jesus sent the disciples out to do.

- 1. They were to minister to the lost, the broken, and the oppressed.

2. What is interesting is Jesus' specific instructions.
3. He told them what to do but at first it seems they don't have the tools to do it.
 - a. They were to take nothing extra on their journey.
 - b. They were to be, in respect, empty-handed.
 - c. But from these empty hands, Jesus expected them to supernaturally meet the needs of the people.
 - d. What was Jesus up to and what does it mean for us?

4. Jesus instructed the Disciples to take nothing with them.

Mark 6:8–11 (NIV)

⁸ These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. ⁹ Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. ¹⁰ Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. ¹¹ And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

A. Jesus prepared the disciples for success in ministry by telling them to take nothing with them.

1. That seems backward.
2. Logic says that the better prepared and equipped you are the more likely you are to succeed.
3. This is generally true.
4. This time, Jesus wanted them to take nothing extra:
 - a. No bread.
 - b. No bag (which was used for begging)
 - c. No extra money or extra clothes.
5. For their first ministry trip, Jesus wanted them to depend upon His provision and the generosity of the people.

Let's talk about the generosity of people for a moment.

B. God's plan involves blessing His people through people.

1. Vs. 10 told the disciples to stay in whatever house they come in and not to move from place to place.

a. In other words, if a family is generous enough to let you in their home and provide for you while you are there, don't insult them by leaving them for a better house or a richer family.

b. In this instance, it wasn't only about the disciples being blessed but also the family that hosted the disciples.

c. When people are obedient to what the Lord asks them to do, there is a blessing.

d. The disciples were not to rob a household of God's blessing merely because they were offered something better or nicer from someone else.

e. *Most of us here are more comfortable being a blessing than receiving a blessing.*

f. Both are part of God's plan and purpose.

2. Jesus could tell His disciples to take nothing with them because He knew that He had people along the way that would be obedient to be a blessing to His people.

a. Years ago, I was preaching at my wife's home church.

b. After the service, the old preacher went to hand me a check and I told him that I didn't need it.

c. At that moment, the preacher looked me in the face and told me it wasn't about me being blessed but about him being obedient to what God had told him. Then he said, "Don't you rob me and this church of a blessing."

1. The selfish in me said, "I don't need your help or blessing."

2. But that moment wasn't about me.
 3. I don't preach to get paid, I preach because the Lord has called me.
 4. That gentleman didn't give me money to reimburse me for my time, he did it because the Lord told Him to.
3. We are all called to be conduits of God's blessings.
- a. Conduit carries something from one place to another.
 1. Conduit protects what is placed in it and takes it from one place to another easily and safely.
 2. We are to carry God's blessings from God to others safely and freely.
 - b. The disciples were to carry Jesus' saving, healing, and transforming power to the villages.
 1. There were people in the villages who were called to share God's provision with the disciples freely and safely.
 2. As conduits of God's blessings, we freely give and freely receive.
 - c. The disciples were to take nothing extra with them.
 1. What they had been given was enough.
 2. What they had was:
 - a. Jesus' power and authority.
 - b. And a staff.

5. What is so special about a staff?

A. A staff was a common tool.

1. Shepherds use them to protect their flocks by striking enemies or hooking their sheep.

2. A common citizen would carry a staff:

- a. As a walking stick.
- b. To defend against robbers.

3. A staff was an ordinary tool, much like a pocket knife is for many of us here.

4. There was also a historical and cultural significance connected to a staff.

B. When God called Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt into the promised land, He was a shepherd.

1. He had gone from significance in the household of Pharaoh to insignificant shepherd.

2. When God called Moses to go and overwhelm Pharaoh and set the captives free, guess what He had with him?

- a. Exodus 4 says he had a staff in his hand.
- b. An ordinary tool that God used to do mighty things.

C. Here are a few things the Lord did through Moses and that ordinary staff:

1. He laid it down and it became a snake.

2. He turned the Nile into a river of blood.

3. He called forth plagues.

4. He parted the Red Sea.

5. He struck a rock and water poured out.

6. He lifted it above his head and helped Israel win their battle.

D. There was nothing special about that staff and that is precisely the point.

1. It wasn't that Moses or the Disciples were anything special.

2. When God tells you to go and do, even ordinary things become extraordinary.
3. Many might have thought the disciples were empty-handed.
4. And by the world's standards, they were.
5. But Jesus' power in you is greater than anything that can fit in your hand.

E. Jesus wanted His disciples to experience the supernatural power and provision that only He could provide.

1. If you have never been totally dependent upon God for an outcome, you are missing something.
2. You are missing the thrill and expectation of a not-yet miracle.
3. You miss out on the trust that builds and grows when you have been seeking the Lord for a solution only He can give.
4. Some of the greatest growth you will experience as a Christian and as a person will happen when you have nothing but ordinary in your hand.

6. When you can handle nothing, then God will give you something.

A. At the beginning, Jesus sent His disciples out with nothing.

1. Nothing extra.
2. They were to learn to trust Jesus for everything.
3. At the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, he does something interesting.

[Luk 22:35-36] 35 Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered. 36 He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.

B. Jesus' lesson of supernatural power and provision began with Jesus letting them take nothing with them.

1. During this time they learned that in the NAME of Jesus, they had everything they needed.

2. They could:

a. Heal the sick.

b. Lead the lost to repentance.

c. Cast out demons.

3. Jesus took away all of their earthly security and told them to trust Him alone.

C. At the end of Jesus' ministry, He told them to take what they had formerly gotten rid of.

1. What was Jesus doing?

2. Jesus was teaching them: **If you can trust Jesus with nothing you can trust him with something.**

3. We often get this backward.

a. Jesus if you will give me this, then I will...

b. But the place to start in ministry is not with all of the stuff but with Jesus.

c. **If all you have is Jesus, then you have more than enough.**

7. This applies to me more than any time before.

A. The Lord has given us big dreams:

1. Dreams that are larger than this building.

2. Dreams to see an Increasingly Redeemed Licking.

3. Dreams to see lost saved, broken bodies and relationships healed, and dead dreams and hopes come alive.

B. And when I look in my hand, I only see ordinary.

1. I don't have the ability to write a check large enough to finish this building.
2. I don't have the words or human power to save this community.
3. I don't have a lot of things.
4. BUT, I have a calling from God and His authority and that is enough.

C. When I look at my hand I see:

1. My need for Jesus.
2. The hand Jesus told me to heal with.
3. The hand Jesus told me He would use to set captives free.
4. The hand that Jesus told me would be used for a Redeemed Licking, MO, and surrounding area.
5. When I look at my hand I am reminded that Jesus called me and He has equipped me to do his work.

Close: Maybe you are discouraged this morning.

A. You are discouraged because you can't do it all and fix it all.

1. Today, I am here to remind us that when Jesus calls you, you have more than enough to finish the job at hand.
2. **Your hand may be empty, but His is full.**

B. This morning, I want us to pray for two things:

1. First, I want us to pray that we will be obedient to do what Jesus has told us to do.
2. Heal the sick, lead sinners to repentance, and bring hope and freedom to the oppressed.
3. Second, I want us to pray together as a church:
 1. Pray that the Lord continues to provide all we need to finish this building.

2. And when this is finished, that it will be like a staff in our hands to bring about God's plan and work in our community.

3. May we look upon this building and say, "It's not fancy but it is powerful".