

2025-10-26

Tell the Good News

Mark 6:7-13

Why do we learn? Why did you learn to speak a language? We learned to speak a language so that we can communicate with more detail and meaning. We learned to write that language so that we can record information and share with more people, some we may never meet or talk with. I am always surprised at how many people watch or read these sermons. When we learn to speak a language, we must also learn to listen. Because you are here you have learned the benefit of worshipping God and listening to His voice. I am glad you have learned to listen. I have learned that **listening and hearing can be two different things**. What would be the benefit of speaking a language if people did not listen? I pray more people will learn to listen to what God is trying to communicate to them. James gave us the Biblical priority. He wrote that people should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry (James 1:19). The world's way is just the opposite. Everyone wants to be the first to speak and get angry and they are generally very slow to listen if they really listen at all. What if we learned to communicate but never spoke or wrote a word. What would the world be like? What if we communicated like a lot of the animals? Our horses make very little sounds. They communicate more with body language. Watch their ears. Listen to how they are breathing. Sense their emotions. They sense ours. They communicate by pushing each other around. Human society becomes more like the animal world when we stop talking and listening and start bullying each other. In our lifetime, we have learned lots of things. Why did we all learn to drive a car? I know, just so that we could come here and worship God together.

Mark 6:7 *“And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.”* One of the first things Jesus did as He began His ministry was to call people to follow Him. At this point in Mark, we are still early in the ministry of Jesus. Over these first several months Jesus taught His disciples. Why did Jesus teach them? Why did they learn? Jesus taught them so that they could take the information they learned and share it with others. At this point the disciples do not know anything about Jesus' coming arrest, suffering, crucifixion and resurrection. They first learn of these teachings in Mark 9:31-33. What have the disciples been learning? Look over the first 6 chapters of this Gospel. The disciples have been learning that Jesus is God and has authority over all of creation. The only part of God's creation that is given a choice to obey Him is people. The disciples are learning that all people have sinned against God and all need to repent (1:15, 38). The disciples are learning the importance of forgiveness (2:5-12). They are learning how the word of God works in people's lives (4:13-20). They are

learning about unity and trusting God (3:24-29). They are learning about the compassion that God has for people (5:21-41). They are also learning about rejection and how to deal with it (6:1-6). There were lots of people following Jesus at this time. Jesus had been focusing on teaching the twelve. These twelve, including Judas Iscariot, He called to Himself, separating them from all the other disciples. These twelve He taught that they would be sent out to preach the message of God and cast out demons (3:14-15). Jesus is sending them out two by two because of the Biblical teaching, “*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion*” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). When Jesus sent these twelve out, He gave them authority to cast out demons. He gave them His authority to influence the lives of people who would listen and believe, repent and follow these new teachings, and this new way of life. What the Jews had been taught by their leaders was to keep the law and tradition.

Verses 8-9 “*He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.*” This first time Jesus sends out the twelve disciples they will be close to home. They will not be in foreign lands dealing with totally different cultures. These are the towns in Galilee; some Jesus may have already gone to. The most important thing **the disciples needed to learn was to trust God**, that He would provide for them through generous people and to learn to be content with the circumstances around them. They were not to take anything extra on this journey, just a staff and good walking sandals. The bag mentioned here is a beggar’s bag. Jesus did not want these apostles begging for help. We usually do not travel this way. We like our stuff.

Verse 10 “*Also He said to them, ‘In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.’*” This works the same today in many cultures. I have been on several mission trips to Tanzania, Kenya, Burkina Faso, India, Australia, Brazil, and China. Some villages and homes we were welcomed into and some we were not. Many times, when we showed up and were welcomed in, we would be left in the home alone waiting while the person or persons went out into the surrounding homes and fields inviting people to come to their house to hear me speak. Sometimes we waited for hours. There was no planned time to start or planned time to end. I took my cues from my translator who knew the culture. Whatever they gave me to drink, I drank. Whatever they gave me to eat, I ate. I drank and ate some interesting things. I learned not to ask what it was. It was better that I did not know. Almost every time, even when the people did not believe or accept the teachings of Jesus, they were kind and gracious to me and my translator. I would leave a Bible with as many people who would take one. God always poured out His grace.

Verse 11 *“And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”* When the disciples were not welcome in a home or village, they were to shake the dust off of their sandals and leave. The Jews did this when they left a Gentile village as a sign they were leaving all their defilement behind in the town. For the disciples of Jesus, this was a simple sign that the town refused to believe the teachings of Jesus. They had refused the compassion and truth of God so they could remain faithful to their false belief system. The times we were not welcomed, we prayed that God would open the hearts of the people, especially their leaders to receive the message of God’s salvation from a Christian who would come after us. **Jesus did not try to force anyone to believe** and neither did we. **Jesus did not change His message** so that it would be acceptable and neither did we. We did encourage them to believe in the one true God and turn to Jesus for salvation. All people need to hear God’s truth in love. What God said was true two thousand years ago is still true today. God does not change and neither does His word. We know God’s truth and we must learn to communicate His truth with others. The most important truth of God is, we can only have a right standing with God by having faith in God’s grace seen in the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Jesus (Romans 5:1-2). To put it another way, we must be born again (John 3:3). To put it another way, no one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

We know that there is a judgment day coming. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their widespread immoral corruption, from the leading city officials to the commoner on the street. Their destruction was just their physical punishment for their sin. There is a coming spiritual punishment for the people of those cities on the Day of Judgement. **It will be based on the revelation they have received from God.** God has revealed His godliness and His righteousness to every single person on this planet (Romans 1:19-20). What did the people in Sodom and Gomorrah do with the knowledge God gave them? They suppressed the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18). They denied what God had made known to them in their day. Remember, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah happened before the 10 Commandments was given. They did not have the revelation of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for our sins and His resurrection from the dead. They did not have access to the word of God like people do today. And their punishment was severe. Today, people who have heard the 10 Commandments, who have heard of Jesus’ death and resurrection, who have access to the Bible, will be judged much more severely than those people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because God has given us so much more evidence to believe. Still, God is *“not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”* (2 Peter 3:9).

Verse 12 *“So they went out and preached that people should repent.”* This is what people needed to know two thousand years ago. They were sinners who sinned against a holy God. They needed to repent of their sins and faithfully follow Jesus and His design for life. This is still the most important message people need to hear today. We just know the fuller revelation of God in Jesus Christ. All those who have heard the message of Jesus and who refuse to believe in Jesus will be judged more severely than those people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah.

Verse 13 *“And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.”* Jesus gave His authority to the apostles to cast out demons. He did not teach them a formula or a step-by-step guide. Jesus gave them authority that the demons had to obey. Later, when that power was going to their heads Jesus told them not to rejoice that the evil spirits are subject to them. Rather they are to rejoice that their names are written in heaven, that they have listened and obeyed God as everyone should. (Luke 10:20). Jesus also told the apostles to anoint the sick people with oil. Shepherds did this with their sheep. We do not find Jesus doing this. The medical field was just beginning. People anointed the sick with olive oil as a medicine for many problems. Though it is not mentioned I am sure that the apostles prayed whenever they anointed anyone with olive oil (James 5:14). James said it is the prayer of faith that will save the sick (5:15). God works through medicine and He works powerfully through prayer to bring healing to people. It soon developed into a ritual and a sign of God’s presence through His Spirit. Like the apostles, **we have been given the responsibility to tell the good news to those who will listen.**

Questions to ask yourself: Are you still learning? What are you doing with what you are learning? Are you quicker to listen or quicker to speak? Why did Jesus call the apostles? (Mark 3:14) What does He call His followers to do today? What are you learning about God/Christianity that you can share with someone else? What power has Jesus given you to do? Is it your responsibility to tell the good news?

Actions to take: Choose someone you want to communicate the gospel of Jesus to. Pray for them to be open to listening to you. Ask God to give you an opportunity to share His message of salvation with them. Live the gospel out faithfully before them.

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