

## Introduction

One of the many things that my father emphasized in his teachings was to empower people to carry out their jobs. He did not like micromanagement. My father said that micromanaging people leads to unmotivated people. Micromanaging people causes operations to run very inefficiently in both time and money. He said the key to well-run operations was to put highly trained and qualified supervisors out on the rigs and give them the authority to carry out their duties. He believed in empowering people so that they could do their jobs. In our industry, there has been a move towards micromanaging operations. Part of this is due to a lack of trust in the competency level of the people out on the rigs. The key is not to put people out there until they are ready and competent. Our passage today is about Jesus sending out the twelve apostles. Before He sent them out, He trained them. Then, when Jesus sent them out, He empowered them to do the things that He told them to do. He also gave them clear instructions. Jesus was a great leader, because good leaders train, empower, give clear instructions, and release people.

In Mark 1, Jesus began calling His disciples to follow Him. In Mark 3, Jesus chose the twelve apostles. We are now in Mark 6 and Jesus sends out the twelve apostles. A lot has happened between the time they were called and the time they are being sent out. Jesus has been teaching them and mentoring them; He has been making disciples. In our passage today, Jesus summoned the twelve, and sent them out in twos to go and do the things that He has been doing and role-modeling for them. After summoning the twelve, He gave them authority to cast out demons and then gave them instructions. Our passage ends with the apostles going out and preaching repentance, casting out demons, and healing many sick people. They did exactly what Jesus had trained and commissioned them to do.

(Mark 3:13-19) “And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. {14} And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He *could* send them out to preach, {15} and to have authority to cast out the demons. {16} And He appointed the twelve...”

## Jesus Sends Out The Twelve

1. Jesus Sent Them Out In Teams of Two
2. Jesus Sent Them Out With Authority
3. Jesus Sent Them Out With Instructions

(Mark 6:7-13, 30-32) “And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; {8} 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— {9} but *to* wear sandals; and *He added*, “Do not put on two tunics.” {10} And He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. {11} Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them.” {12} They went out and preached that *men* should repent. {13} And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them...{30} The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. {31} And He said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while.” (For there were many *people* coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) {32} They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.”

## 1. Jesus Sent Them Out In Teams of Two (Mark 6:7)

Jesus summoned the twelve to Himself. Jesus had lots of other disciples and followers, but Jesus summoned the twelve that He had chosen as apostles. We do not have any indication that they were resistant to come to Him when He summoned them. Jesus is their leader and their Lord, and when He summoned them they came. The church can learn a lot from this first phrase. When pastors summon their church to come to pray, typically less than ten percent come. When pastors summon their flocks to attend small groups, not everyone joins the small groups. Disciples are called to a life of obedience to the Lord and to their leaders. The apostles are the future leaders of the church and we find them being obedient to Jesus' call to assemble together. In Hebrews 10:24-25, Jesus has summoned the church to assemble together, yet there are many Christians that forsake the assembling of the church. If we want Jesus to send us out and to use us, it begins with obedience to the Lord. The apostles came to Jesus when He summoned them.

(Mark 6:7) "And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;"

After summoning them, Jesus sent them out in pairs. Christian ministry is not about one-man shows; it is about team ministry. When the apostles saw that the Gentiles in Antioch had received the gospel, they sent Barnabas there to survey the situation. After looking things over, the first thing he did was to go to Tarsus to look for Saul. Once he found him, he brought him back to Antioch, and for the next year they met with the church.

(Acts 11:25-26) "And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; {26} and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about that for an entire year they met with the church, and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."

In Acts 13, when the leaders of the church were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Paul for the work to which I have called them." Again, it was about team ministry. At Antioch, it began with Paul and Barnabas and it quickly grew to a leadership team of five. When Barnabas and Paul left, they took along with them John Mark, who wrote the gospel that we are studying. They were always developing future leaders, which is the Biblical pattern.

(Acts 13:2-3) "While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." {3} Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away....{5} When they reached Salamis, they *began* to proclaim the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and they also had John as their helper."

In Acts 15, when Paul and Barnabas split into two teams, Barnabas took along John Mark, and Paul took Silas with him. Before long, Paul had Timothy and many others.

(Acts 15:39-40) "And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. {40} But Paul chose Silas and left, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord."

When Barnabas and Paul raised up leaders in the churches they established, they raised up elders. It was a plurality of leaders. When Paul left Titus in Crete, he told him to raise up elders in every city just as he had directed. There was always a plurality of leaders. Where did this begin? It began right here in Mark 6:1, where Jesus sent out the apostles in teams of two.

(Acts 14:23) “When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”

(Titus 1:5-6) “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”

There was always a leader among leaders. Just because they were in teams does not mean that there was not a team leader. When the apostles sent Barnabas to Antioch, he was the one given authority to lead that work, and he was the team leader. When God called Barnabas and Paul to go out and do apostolic ministry, Barnabas is mentioned first, because he was leading the team. In Acts 14:12, when Barnabas and Paul were in Lystra, Paul healed a lame man in the name of Jesus. They began calling Paul, Hermes, and Barnabas, Zeus. In Greek mythology, Zeus was the chief God and Hermes was the spokesperson. They knew that Barnabas was the leader.

(Acts 14:12) “And they *began* calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.”

I will mention one other Scripture before going on. In Luke 10:1, which is after Jesus sends out the twelve apostles in our text today, He appointed seventy others and sent them out in teams of two. Our passage today is not an anomaly, it was a pattern that Jesus was establishing, and would be carried out by all the apostles and leaders in the New Testament.

(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."

There are tremendous benefits from operating according to the pattern that Jesus established. First, we have different giftings. In the example of Barnabas and Paul, Barnabas was a prophet. Bar means son and Nabas means prophecy. His real name was Joseph, but he was nicknamed Barnabas by the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 4:36). Paul was a teacher. Both of them became apostles, but their underlying giftings were prophet and teacher (Acts 13:1). When Paul and Barnabas split up, he took along Silas, who was also a prophet (Acts 15:32). Prophets and teachers seem to go very well together, and both are needed in establishing churches. In Ephesians 4:11-13, God appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints. The church needs all of these different giftings to preach. In most churches, there is not a plurality of preachers. Usually one gifted person does all the teaching. Consequently, the church does not get the full equipping that they need. Again, there is great benefit in having different ministry gifts on the team. Karen and I are a good team because I am a teacher and she is an exhorter, which is part of a prophetic gifting.

(Eph 4:11-12) “And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, {12} for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;”

Another benefit from team ministry is that there is accountability. We would have less problems with church leadership if they operated as teams rather than a leadership hierarchy. There is also wisdom in the multitude of counsel. I greatly appreciate the counsel that Tom, Karen, Mike, James, and others give me. I need that counsel, and I rely on their counsel. There is tremendous advantage to receiving wise counsel from fellow team members. Another benefit is found in Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, where Solomon said that when one falls down, another can pick him up. He mentions warmth and strength also. We might not fall, but we may get discouraged, and we need the encouragement from one another. That is why in Hebrews 3:13 and 10:24-25, God tells us to encourage one another day after day. We need the encouragement of one another. We need those notes, phone calls, and verbal affirmations.

(Eccl 4:9-12) “Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. {10} For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. {11} Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm *alone*? {12} And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three *strands* is not quickly torn apart.”

(Heb 3:13) “But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

(Heb 10:24-25) “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, {25} not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”

I will mention just one more tremendous benefit from team ministry. Lots of pastors get burned out. I know of one pastor here in New Mexico that has had two breakdowns in the past ten years. He does all the preaching and gets emotionally and physically drained. That is not healthy. Preachers that preach week after week without getting any time off, often get tired and burnt out. If you have a team of elders, you can have different people ministering and the lead pastor can have some time to recharge. Wise church leaders will train and raise up other leaders who can help shoulder the burden of preaching every week. I will be going on vacation on June 22, and will be gone for two weeks. It will be good for me to get away and have some down time. We are blessed because our leadership team is going to handle the preaching and the services while I am gone.

## 2. Jesus Sent Them Out With Authority (Mark 6:7)

Our text said that Jesus began to send them out in pairs and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. That is not in consecutive order, it is a grouping of things that took place at one time. Before sending them out, Jesus gave them authority.

(Mark 6:7) “And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;”

You should always empower people to do the job that they are being asked to do. Before Jesus sent out these twelve, He invested Himself in them. He taught the multitudes, but He explained everything privately to His disciples. He was teaching and mentoring and coaching His disciples. He was preparing them to be sent out. They had reached a certain competency level by Mark 6:7, and so He is now sending them out. We cannot expect people to do a good job in things that they

have not been trained to do. We have to train people. That principle applies to the church, and it applies to the business world. I mentioned Ephesians 4:11-12 earlier. These five ministry giftings have been given to the church to equip them for the work of ministry. Every joint is to supply. Every member of the body of Christ is to be a functioning member. The proper working of every individual member will cause the church to grow. But, before they can function, they need to be equipped. Messages need to do more than encourage people. Our messages need to equip people for ministry. Equipping does not just take place on Sunday mornings. That equipping may take place on a Wednesday morning, a Friday night, or a Saturday morning. Jesus met with His disciples regularly, and this was in addition to the preaching He was doing to the multitudes.

(Eph 4:16) “from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

The Biblical way of empowering people was through the laying on of hands. When kings were set into office, the priests would pour oil over them and lay hands on them. It is said that in the laying on of hands, the weight and responsibility of the office would be conferred to the king, and it was symbolized by the pressing down of the hands. There was also the anointing of the oil, which symbolized the anointing and empowering of the Holy Spirit. So, in the New Testament, Paul warned Timothy about laying hands on someone too quickly for the office of elder, lest he share in their sins.

(1 Tim 5:22) “Do not lay hands upon anyone *too* hastily and thereby share *responsibility* for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin.”

Jesus had ordained these twelve to be apostles, not pastors. It was the apostles who would be laying hands on future leaders and empowering them to pastor the churches. Jesus was giving the apostles authority over unclean spirits. In Mark 5 I spent some time teaching about demons and how they operate by authority. In Mark 1:22-27, people were amazed at the authority that Jesus had, for He was casting out unclean spirits. In Mark 3:14-15, Jesus appointed the twelve apostles, so that they could be with Him, and that He could send them out to preach and to have authority to cast out the demons. The disciples have been with Him, and now He is sending them out to preach, and He is giving them the authority to cast out the demons. The key for Christians today is to operate under Jesus’ authority. We are Christ’s representatives, and we operate under his authority.

(Mark 3:14-15) “And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He *could* send them out to preach, {15} and to have authority to cast out the demons.”

### 3. Jesus Sent Them Out With Instructions (Mark 6:8-11)

Jesus’ instructions can be broken down into two categories or groups. The first grouping is the Take column. Jesus gave them instructions about what to take and what not to take. They were to take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff. They were not to take bread, money in their belt, or a bag. They could take the sandals on their feet and the tunic they were wearing, but no spares.

(Mark 6:8-11) “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— {9} but *to* wear sandals; and

*He added, "Do not put on two tunics." {10} And He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. {11} Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them."*

The second group is the Do column. He gave them things to do and not to do. When they entered a house, they were to stay there until they left town. If a place did not receive them or listen to them, they were to leave there and shake the dust off their feet for a testimony against them.

TAKE	DO
Take nothing: (no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, no second tunic)	Stay in the same house until they leave
What they had on (tunic, sandals)	Shake the dust off their feet if not received

When Jesus told them to shake the dust off their feet when they left a town where they were not received, some scholars say this is a reference to God’s covenant with Abraham in Genesis 13. God said that He would make His descendants as the dust of the earth. So, when the apostles shook the dust off their feet, they were affirming that these people were not part of the descendants of Abraham. These people were being excluded from the promises of God made to Abraham and his descendants.

(Gen 13:16) “I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.”

The instructions that Jesus gave in Mark 6 were not the final instructions for the apostles. Jesus was training the disciples. He was getting them to depend on the Father for their provision. That is why He did not want them taking extra tunics, sandals, or money. They were to rely upon God for their provision. In Luke 22:35-38, Jesus speaks to the disciples about His instructions that He gave in our text today. He asked them if they had lacked anything, and they said, “Nothing.” Then, Jesus said to them, “But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one.” The twelve apostles were still in training. Jesus was teaching them to trust Him to meet all of their needs. God takes you and I through some difficult things at times to teach and train us.

(Luke 22:35-36) “And He said to them, "When I sent you out without money belt and bag and sandals, you did not lack anything, did you?" They said, "No, nothing." {36} And He said to them, "But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one.”

**Conclusion and Applications** (Mark 6:12-13, 6:30-32)

The apostles went out just as Jesus instructed them to do. They were obedient in all that He told them to do. When He summoned them, they came, when He sent them out, they went out. They went out and preached that men should repent. They cast out demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

(Mark 6:12-13) “They went out and preached that *men* should repent. {13} And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.”

In Mark 6:30, the apostles returned from their trip and gathered together with Jesus. They reported to Jesus all that they had done and taught. There was follow-up and accountability in their training.

(Mark 6:30) “The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught.”

In Luke 9:10, he said that when the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done.

(Luke 9:10) “When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida.”

In Acts 14:26-27, when Barnabas and Paul had completed their first apostolic trip, they returned to Antioch, where they had been sent out from. What did they do? They gathered the church together and began to report all that God had done with them. There was accountability.

(Acts 14:26-27) “From there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished. {27} When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they *began* to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.”

Ministry is a stewardship. Paul called himself a steward (1 Cor 4:1). He said that the ministry he had received from God was a stewardship entrusted to him (1 Cor 9:17). In Colossians 1:25 he said that he had been made a minister of that church according to the stewardship God had bestowed on Him.

(1 Cor 4:1-2) “Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. {2} In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.”

(1 Cor 9:17) “For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.”

(Col 1:25) “Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God,”

In 1 Peter 4:10 we read that each of us have been given a special gift, and we are to employ it in serving one another as good stewards. Whether you have the gift of helps, the gift of mercy, or serve as a prophet or teacher, your ministry is a stewardship. Stewards do not own the ministry; it belongs to God. We are stewards and we will have to give account for the things that we have been made stewards over.

(1 Pet 4:10) “As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

When the apostles came back, Jesus told them to come away by themselves to a secluded place and rest. Jesus understood the rigors of ministry and that they needed some down time and rest.

Jesus was not just their mentor and trainer, He was their Shepherd. He was caring for their souls and for their lives. They needed some rest, and He told them to get some rest.

(Mark 6:31-32) “And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many *people* coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) {32} They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.”

As we finish this morning, here are some things to consider.

1. What stewardship has God given you? What ministry has God given to you to accomplish? What special gift has God given to you to employ in the service of others? What is God sending you out to do? It may be local and it could be to the uttermost ends of the earth? (See 1 Corinthians 12:4-5 to see gifts and ministries.)
2. What training have you had to help you fulfill the ministry and the stewardship you have? Are there some gaps in your understanding and ministry that need to be filled? Have you asked someone to work with you and to train you? I asked a very prominent man to help me and he said he would, but he didn't. So, I went to another pastor, and he took time to train me. I sacrificed part of my golf career to get that spiritual training, but it was well worth it. Who is helping to mentor you?
3. Who are you giving account to for the ministry you have? The apostles came back and gave account to Jesus. In Hebrews 13:17, the leaders of churches are going to give account to God for those that God has placed under their care. Have you submitted yourself to the leaders of the church and are you giving account to them?

Q&A

**Introduction** (Mark 1, 3:13-19, 6:7-13)

- 1. Jesus Sent Them Out In Teams of Two** (Mark 6:7, Heb 10:24-25, Acts 11:25-26, 13:2-3, 15:39-40, 14:23, Tit 1:5-6, Acts 14:12, Luke 10:1, Eph 4:11-12, Acts 4:36, 13:1, 15:32, Eccl 4:9-10, Heb 3:13, 10:24-25)
  
- 2. Jesus Sent Them Out With Authority** (Mark 6:7, Eph 4:11-12, 16, 1 Tim 5:22, Mark 1:22-27, 3:14-15)
  
- 3. Jesus Sent Them Out With Instructions** (Mark 6:8-11, Gen 13:16, Luke 22:35-36)

**Conclusion and Applications** (Mark 6:12-13, 6:30-32, Luke 9:10, 1 Cor 4:1, 1 Cor 9:17, Col 1:25)