

Wheat Street Baptist Church

Wednesday with the Word

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“We are a church in the heart of Atlanta with Atlanta in our heart!”
We Are Atlanta’s Church

Know When to *Holdem*, When to *Foldem* and When to Walk Away: Their Mission is Our Mission Mark 6:6b -13

Introduction: This lesson opens up with one of the hallmarks of Jesus’ ministry. It is Jesus and his disciples going out to be with the people. They left his hometown and the text says, Mark 6:6b “Then he went about among the villages teaching.” What we see at the start of this lesson is what should be at the foundation of our ministry. God didn’t call us to come to church but rather God called us to take the church to the people. When we we take the church / the Gospel to the people then we return and assemble for worship. The key here is that we must leave and in real ways touch the world with the word of God in action if we are to call ourselves the church. We gather to praise God we leave the church to serve God.

Psalms 150

- 1 Praise God *in his sanctuary*;
praise him in his mighty firmament!
- 2 Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!
- 3 Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
- 4 Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
- 5 Praise him with clanging cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
- 6 Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!

Leaving the Church to be the Church:

We Come to Church to Feed Our Faith - We Leave the Church to Live Our Faith

We have to be willing to walk outside the walls of the church and touch the people of the community with the love of God. What we are going to see in this lesson is that we will not always be well received and when this occurs we have to move on. While we and the word we share may not be well received we are not relieved from being called and obligated to share this word in love. We are called to love the world. We share the Gospel for the Gospel sake. Parenthetically, one thing we have to do is think of ways we can be more effective in sharing the love of God so that we will be better received.

John 3:16-17

16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Team Ministry: We Do This Together

Mark 6:7

7 He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.

Jesus calls the disciples and sends them out as teams. The principle here is that we are not called to be lone rangers. There is a team principle in ministry. We are called to work together. One of the keys of a great leader is how he or she empowers others to serve with them. We are not called to be the star but rather we are called to create teams that shine, ministries that grow by serving others and teams that work together for the common good is our goal.

The second part of this verse has always pushed me. They were given authority over the unclean spirits. As they went about teaching, touching and healing they were also given authority to cast out demons. I believe that one of the things going on in our community is that the church is absent from the streets and as a result the devil is running roughshod over our communities. We are afraid of the very children we have been called to save. We have to go and take the authority God has given us to deal with the death in our communities. These are spirits that are bent on destroying our people and we have the power to cast them out. Our very presence will cause them to run. This is because we come in the Name of the Lord!

Mark 6:8-9

8 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics.

This is radical! Jesus is saying to them that you are not to weighted down with stuff. Your ministry is not about money, or comfort or wealth. You are called to go and to serve. Your security is not found in your possessions. Your security is found in your being obedient to God’s call and going out and doing ministry.

Many ministries (and people) think their security is found on how much money they raise. In reality your security is founded on how much ministry you do. When you help people out of your need God will miraculously provide. The step of faith is to leave our comfort and security in stuff and find our comfort and security in God. Our security is in giving away what we don’t have to give away. I am not talking away the reality that we have bills to pay and obligations to meet but rather I am talking about how we go about meeting those obligations. We are not called to get members to help us pay bills. We are called to serve the world and develop disciples of Jesus Christ who will then support the work of God in the world and in the church.

The church has been captured by the world's consumerism and we like the world have succumb to trying to find comfort and security in stuff. No matter how much stuff we have we will never be secure or have enough. We have our security in God and God alone. We have been sold the lie that money and stuff brings us happiness and security but this is a lie. We buy stuff we don't need, we spend money we don't have (credit) and in the end we are no more joy, we aren't happy and we are left unfulfilled. We have been sold a bill of goods that actually goes against how God has called God's disciples to live. God said to them:
take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts;

Where does this desire to have more and get more come from and how can we respond?

The High Price of Materialism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGab38pKscw>

Jesus ordered them:

He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, ***no money in their belts***; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on ***two tunics***.

Jesus told them to take two tunics not for their security but so that they could give one away. God wants us to give to others, to serve others; God has not called us to accumulate wealth at excess. I am not saying we should be financially irresponsible but what I am saying is that we are not called to worship money and stuff. If truth be told many of us, if not all of us, in this room could get rid of half of the stuff we own and still be more than OK! But...not only will we not get rid of half of the stuff we own we will go out and buy new stuff. God is calling us to give to the poor and challenge systems and structures that create and sustain poverty. We are not called to buy into consumerism as a way of life (buying stuff we really don't need).

Sharing the Gospel for the Gospel Sake: Moving On in Love

Mark 6:10-11

10 He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place.
11 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them."

The first thing we see here is that the Disciples had to rely on the hospitality of those they were sent to serve. They didn't stay in hotels or luxury bed and breakfast inns but rather their ministry of hospitality relied on the hospitality of others. The people we are called to serve are called to welcome us.

On the flip side Jesus was clear, where you weren't welcomed, that is OK just move on. We are not called to badger people and or go out and pester people. When people have rejected our ministry we simply move on in love. While text appears to imply a

sense of condemnation on those who do not welcome the Disciples that is a misinterpretation. The text is really calling them to note that they weren't well received, so just move on.

Mission Impossible is Possible

Mark 6:12-13

12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13 They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The first thing we see hear is they went out preaching and teaching. They were calling people to repent, to change their ways. Now we have to remember that a part of this change they were modeling was an attack on the class system. They were calling for a change on how we see wealth, status and stuff. They didn't seek to be esteemed or sit up front or be important but rather they divorced themselves of wealth as to be empowered to serve. They challenged the hierarchical system they found themselves in.

They are also calling people to repent and follow this new way. The teaching, ministry and lifestyle of one who follows Jesus Christ. This call to repent is not a one time call. Yes, we give our lives to Christ and we are saved but our sin just lurks around. We are constantly having to reorient our lives and ministry to be more in line with what God has called us to do and be. So they preached a ministry of repentance as are we called to preach this ministry.

They also cast out demons, prayed for the sick, anointed people with oil and they saw the fruit of their ministry. The people were healed. The demons were cast out. This is the ministry we inherit. We literally are called to go and do as they did. We have that power to do it but we have to go in order to get it done.