

3. The Pattern of Discipleship

34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.
- Mark 8:34-35 NIV

Later in Mark's Gospel Jesus announces that the pattern of discipleship is not about comfort. In fact, it requires self-sacrifice. John the Baptist, Jesus and 10 of the 12 disciples were literal martyrs for their faith.

Following Jesus is a commitment of your whole life, even if you become a martyr.

Jesus continues to send His followers to speak about the Kingdom and serve others. Where do you feel He is calling you to represent His Kingdom? How do you think you have an opportunity to serve?

The journey of a follower of Jesus should take us deeper into our relationship with Him and conform us further into His image. To do that we must exercise our trust in Jesus power and authority as He opens opportunities for us to be representatives of God's Kingdom on earth.

WRAP-UP

As Mark's Gospel unfolds, we see Jesus empowering His disciples to carry out His mission—proclaiming repentance, casting out demons, and healing the sick—demonstrating the authority of God's Kingdom on earth. Just as Jesus confronted spiritual darkness, He now sends His followers to do the same, relying not on worldly provisions but on God's power and guidance. The disciples' journey mirrors that of the Israelites in Exodus, called to trust in God's provision. The story of John the Baptist reminds us that representing God's Kingdom may involve sacrifice, yet Jesus continues to call His followers to serve boldly. As believers, we are invited to move from learning to doing, living out our faith in everyday life, and representing Christ as we speak and serve the Kingdom.

MEMORY VERSE

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. - Mark 6:12-13 NIV

Challenge – Be mindful of the opportunities you have this week to share the truth of the Kingdom, bringing Jesus' authority into the battle against darkness you may encounter in your life.

Sent To Proclaim the Kingdom **Gospel of Mark Ch. 5 - Week 2**

INTRODUCTION

As Mark's Gospel continues, we find Jesus sending His disciples out to spread the word and demonstrate the power of the Kingdom of God on earth. We have seen Jesus has demonstrate His authority over the enemy, and now He is giving His disciples that authority and charging them to confront the darkness just as He has done. Is the enemy still active in our world? Oh yes. And does Jesus still send His disciples to confront darkness and proclaim His Kingdom? Absolutely!

Ice Breaker

Have you been on a mission trip out of the country? If so, share your experience. If not, what have you heard from others who have been?

Key Passages

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. - Mark 6:12-13 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Representatives in the Name of Jesus

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.
- Mark 6:7-9 NIV

The time had arrived for the disciples to graduate from learners to doers. There had been many occasions when they witnessed Jesus casting out demons and healing the sick. And now it was their turn to apply Christ's teaching in the world around them.

Do you remember graduating from learner to doer in your own life? Perhaps it was when you completed your education and began your career. What feelings did it stir in you as you made that transition? How does that compare to the journey in your faith life? Are you still watching and waiting to apply what you've learned, are you taking steps to bring Jesus' authority into your battles, or are you raising up and sending out the next generation?

When we tackle a new challenge, we like to enter it well-equipped. But when Jesus sent out the disciples, they took virtually nothing with them. This was not the first time God's people struck out on a journey in this manner.

11 This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover. - Exodus 12:11 NIV

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." - Mark 6:10-11 NIV

In Exodus chapter 12 God tells Moses how His people are to eat their Passover meal before fleeing out of Egypt. The Hebrews had to rely on God's power and authority over Pharaoh to escape through the wilderness to the promised land. Moses' staff symbolized God's power and authority, and Moses used it to part the Red Sea.

As the disciples were sent out, what did Jesus provide them with? What did Jesus specifically tell them not to take (v.8-9)? How do you think they survived without those items? Has God ever provided for your needs in a miraculous way?

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. - Matthew 10:5-8 NIV

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. - Mark 6:12-13 NIV

In Matthew's account of the same event, we find that Jesus specifically told the disciples where to go and what to do. What is the first thing Mark tells us they did before driving out demons or raising the dead? Why is this so important?

2. Battling Darkness

Mark takes a detour in verses 14 to 29. In this section of scripture, we find the details of John the Baptist's encounter with Herod.

The Bible describes a unique relationship between Herod and John the Baptist. It says Herod feared John, and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. Yet Herod's wife was determined to silence John due to his condemnation of their illicit marriage. Eventually she won and John was executed at the request of the Queen's teenaged daughter (it's a long, sad, story of spiritual darkness).

14 King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "He is Elijah." And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago." 16 But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!" 17 For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." - Mark 6:14-18 NIV

23 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" - John 1:23 NIV

Jesus' disciples were preaching repentance, casting out demons and healing the sick. Herod took notice. What was Herod's explanation of who Jesus was? Who did John identify himself as? John was actually the forerunner of Jesus, but Herod recognized him as a representative of the Kingdom of God, and when Herod heard about what Jesus and His disciples were doing, he saw the same power at work in them. Think about someone you view as representing the Kingdom of God well. What are the indicators that this person has God's power and authority? What opportunities do you have to represent God's Kingdom at home, at work, or in your neighborhood?