

Tri-State Community Church

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*Gathering a family who loves and serves God through
Jesus Christ and leads others in kind.*

A Bible Study in Mark
Called, Sent, and Empowered

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Mark 6:7

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Mark 6:7¹
Called, Sent, and Empowered

Jesus has now left Nazareth where He was largely rejected. Verse six tells us that *He went about among the villages teaching*. During this period Jesus begins to take a monumental step.

Jesus calls, sends, and empowers His disciples

Look at verse seven: *And He called the Twelve*. Some of you will recall a similar passage way back in chapter three: *And [Jesus] went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve (whom He also named apostles) so that they might be with Him and He might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons (Mark 3:13-15)*. These verses were a preview of what we have now come to.

Jesus first calls the *Twelve so that they might be with Him*. This should be observed carefully. The initial call to Jesus is a call to *be with Him*. Many have made shipwreck of their faith and lives because they went immediately into Christ's service and not into His arms.

We are first called to be with Jesus

Back to verse seven: *And Jesus called the Twelve and began to send them*. The *Twelve* were Jesus' closest companions and partners in ministry. Up till now, the *Twelve* were to be at Jesus' side but now a transition begins—the *Twelve* are sent into service.

We are first called to be *with* Jesus then we are sent into His service

This is how a Christian is to mature. One famous preacher used to say “The call to Christ is the call to service.” When we are first summoned to Jesus' side by the power of the Holy Spirit we are to spend time with Jesus to get grounded in the faith. It is vital that this time be spent in the fellowship of the local church. It is there where our spiritual giftedness is identified and discerned and it is there where we can move to this crucial step of being sent into service to our Lord.

Let us also observe that when we go into Christ's service we are to remain in His arms. Someone may now say, “Wait, how can we go into Christ's service while remaining in His arms?”

When Jesus commanded His followers to go into the world and *make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that [He] had commanded* Jesus also promised, *I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19-20)*.

¹ Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

Though many of us know this truth very well we nevertheless function as if we are on our own. We go to Jesus in private and then we go into His service. We come in from His service and go to Jesus in private—and so on and so on. Let us remember that:

While we are in His service we are in His hands

Back to Mark 4:7, notice how the *Twelve* are sent: *And [Jesus] called the twelve and began to send them out two by two.* The disciples are sent in community—*two by two*.

King Solomon expresses the advantages of community: *Two are better than one. . . For if they fall, one will lift his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up. . . And though a man might prevail against one who is alone two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).*

The disciples were not sent out to be lone rangers. This is a difficulty in our culture where rugged individualism prevails. In the United States we have a lone ranger mindset in many ways. Many are attempting to follow Jesus on their own. This is a deadly mindset for your spiritual welfare and ministry.

If I were following Jesus apart from a church fellowship then I would never have known what God's calling for my life was. I would have never become a minister because I would have never had a loving group of Christians to help me discover and nurture God's direction and calling for my life. If you are following Jesus apart from the local church how do you know what God's will is for your life? How do you affirm it?

Aside from companionship and accountability, going out in pairs also serves to strengthen our testimony. According to Old Testament law a person was not to be accused of any crime by only one witness. *A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established (Deuteronomy 19:15).* The testimony of Jesus Christ had much more strength with two witnesses than it did with one.

Again, let us look to our verse: *And [Jesus] called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits.*

Jesus has called the Twelve. Jesus has sent the Twelve. And now Jesus is empowering the Twelve. Jesus *gave them authority over the unclean spirits*. That is to say, Jesus gave them authority over the demonic realm.

The first thing we may notice about this statement is that the authority which Jesus gave was His to give. Jesus had clearly demonstrated His authority over the demonic realm and now He is imparting this authority to the Twelve.

Secondly, when the Twelve receive authority from Jesus to preach their preaching and teaching now carries the authority of Jesus. This will develop further in verses ten and

eleven but for now we need to realize that the preaching and teaching of the Apostles carry the full authority of Christ. Failure to heed the message of the *Twelve* is one and the same as failure to heed Christ. We will see you next time.

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