

Mark 6:1-30

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[0 : 00] Hey, would you turn with me in your Bible to Mark 6? We're going to continue our series in Mark tonight. If you're looking at it in the Pew Bible, it's page 841, if you want to turn there.

It'll also be on the screen above, too. Mark chapter 6, we're going to look at verses 1 through 30 tonight, a pretty big chunk. But I hope you'll see by the time of our time together that this big chunk all sort of hangs together.

So as we come to God's word, let me pray again that God, by his spirit, will open up this passage for us and open up our hearts to speak to us tonight. So let's pray. God, thank you so much.

Lord, that when we had nowhere else to go and nothing else to do, you came to us in Christ. Jesus, where else could we go? What else can we do but run to you?

Lord, help us to really sing that and say that and know that as we come to your word tonight. Lord, would you open up this passage for us and really, truly, Lord, speak to us about what we need to know in following you.

[1 : 16] Lord, we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Let me read this passage for us, Mark 6, 1 through 30. Mark says this. He, that is Jesus, went away from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him.

And on the Sabbath, he began to teach in the synagogue. And many who heard him were astonished, saying, Where did this man get all these things? What is the wisdom given to him? How are such mighty works done by his hands?

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James, and Josie's, and Judas, and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him. And Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household.

And he could do no mighty work there except that he had laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief. And he went about among the villages teaching.

And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. And he charged them to take nothing for their journey except his staff. No bread, no bag, no money in their belts, but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.

[2 : 19] And he said to them, Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.

So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them. King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known.

Some said John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him. But others said he is Elijah. And others said he is a prophet like one of the prophets of old. But when Herod heard of it, he said, John, whom I beheaded, has been raised. For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. For John had been saying to Herod, It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife.

And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man. And he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed.

[3 : 20] And yet he heard him gladly. But an opportunity came when Herod, on his birthday, gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. For when

Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests.

And the king said to the girl, Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you. And he vowed to you, Whatever you ask me, I will give you up to half my kingdom. And she went out and asked her mother, For what should I ask?

And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.

And the king was exceedingly sorry. But because of his oaths and his guests, he did not want to break his word to her. And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in prison and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl. And the girl gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb. The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. [4 : 28] Well, so I don't know about you guys, but I think it's kind of true that we all want to be part of something big. Don't we? To be a part of a movement that's kind of a little bit bigger and more significant than we are.

To make a mark in the world. I think we see this in advertising all the time, don't we? I mean, think of Apple. You know, you watch an Apple ad. And, you know, it's not just that owning an iPod or an iPhone or a MacBook will make me more efficient.

And it's not just that owning those things will make me look cooler. But it's that owning an Apple product will make me a part of a group of people who are on the cutting edge of technology and life. And just getting it right, right? That somehow, if I'm an Apple owner, I'll be a part of that revolution of work and play and connection, right? Owning an Apple, according to advertising anyway, is to be a part of a movement.

Or take Tom's shoes. Does anyone here own a pair of Tom's shoes? True confessions. Nobody! One, two. Oh, okay. Now it's coming out. You know, this is probably even more the case with Tom's.

[5 : 31] It's pretty explicit, right? What do they say? You know, we're putting shoes on the feet of kids all over the globe. We're this force for good in the world. So if you buy Tom's shoes, you can be a part of a movement that's saving the world.

Or at least saving the souls of kids, right? The feet of kids. Not the souls. The feet, right? I don't even think of that pun. So here's the thing.

I'm not saying that Apple or that Tom's shoes are bad. I'm not trying to be cynical. I own a Mac. I think Tom's shoes are great. But what I want us to see is, aren't they tapping into something? Aren't they tapping in to a deep longing of a human heart to be part of something?

To be part of a people or a mission or a movement that's bigger than you and I. And that will sweep me up into some larger purpose or goal. Now, have we ever stopped to think about where that longing comes from?

Why does the thought of being a part of that sort of awaken something in my soul? And, you know, it does this even when we know that whatever movement it might be, we know that it ultimately doesn't satisfy and we know that it ultimately won't last, right?

[6 : 36] We know that these movements don't satisfy. You know, you buy an iPad and it doesn't significantly, radically change the story of your life. You know, you still have a hard time returning your emails and you still forget calendar events and things like that.

And you buy a pair of Tom's shoes and the good feeling goes away after a while. You know, these movements don't satisfy and we know that they don't last, right? One day, Tom's shoes, unfortunately, will probably go out of business.

It's just inevitable. One day, Apple computers will be no more. And our, you know, grandchildren will laugh that we ever used a gadget so arcane as an iPhone.

Just like you and I laugh right now at old school car phones, right? Do you remember those things? They had the cord. They were like this big. You had to like connect to a satellite. Don't you remember car phones?

Yeah, right? Did anyone here own a car phone? My dad had one in his like company car. It was ridiculous. So why, right? Why? Why do I have this longing in my heart to be a part of something, to be a movement, even when nothing in the world seems to satisfy it?

[7 : 37] I mean, is that whole desire just completely delusional? Well, you know, it's interesting that according to the Bible, the answer is no. According to the Bible, we have this longing because

human beings, you and I, are created in the image of God.

And part of what it means to be God's image bearer is to be a part of God's mission. God's mission to display and to reflect his character and his love and his authority out into the world.

You know, in the Olympics, in the opening ceremonies, when they sort of have all the athletes come streaming into the stadium, and they're all sort of bearing the flags of their countries and images of their home country, and they're representing and they're reflecting their nation to the world, bearing their country's standard, bearing the image of their country.

Well, that image, in some sense, in creation, all of humanity was meant to be like that. With God's image stamped on our hearts, we were meant to stream into creation, reflecting and representing him.

We were created to be a part of God's mission to care for and cultivate the world in such a way that God would be seen and known as infinitely glorious and as infinitely satisfying.

[8 : 54] In other words, being created in God's image means that we were created to be a part of a movement that's bigger than us, and that ultimately has nothing to do with us, and that ultimately is about God. So you see, that's why even cheesy advertisements, when they start speaking this language of movement and of mission and of belonging, our hearts start resonating.

It's like they're playing strands of a song that we'd forgotten long ago, and yet we're begging to be reminded and to be called back. And called back not by advertisers and ultimately not called back by nation states, but to be called back by the one who created us.

Now, when Jesus shows up on the scene in Mark's gospel, what we find is that at last, in Jesus, God has come to reclaim his people and to send them out on his mission.

Jesus comes, after all, as we've been following the story of Mark, he comes starting a movement, right? In chapter 1, Jesus begins his ministry by calling disciples to himself. In chapter 3, he intentionally chooses 12 apostles, representative of the 12 tribes of Israel, a representation that he's renewing the people of God.

And he particularly builds into and spends time with those 12. And then here in chapter 6, what are we told? He sends those 12 out on this short, tactical mission to some surrounding villages and towns.

[10 : 16] And then in verse 30, they come back and tell Jesus all that they did. Now, what in the world is Jesus up to in sending them out in this way? Well, the reality is that from one angle, Jesus knows that after his death, resurrection, and ascension, he's going to entrust the apostles and to the rest of the church with the mission of taking the good news of his person and work, of his redemption to the whole creation.

At Pentecost, after Jesus completes his work, he pours out the Holy Spirit and the church explodes into the world. And it's still spreading today with the saving news of who Jesus is and what he's done.

And here in Mark 6 is in some sense the first spark of that. He's preparing the apostles now in this chapter for the mission that's eventually to come.

It's almost like what's going on here in chapter 12 is like a scrimmage before the big game. If you ever played a sport, you know that like before your season gets up and running, you always play these like nothing games.

Like they mean nothing. Oh, we're scrimmaging like Joe Schmo High School from across the, you know, tracks. Like they're going to pound on us, but it doesn't count because they're not in our league, you know. And Jesus is saying, look, I want you to suit up and hit the field and take some snaps and make some tackles before we hit game day and before the mission of the church begins in full at Pentecost.

[11 : 37] Okay, so what does this mean for us then? Well, first off, it means that the mission our hearts were made for is found in Christ. It's found in him.

That Jesus has come renewing and reinstating and resending the people of God on mission. And it also means that Mark 6 can show us some critical aspects of what this mission looks like.

So you see, to become a follower of Jesus, this is what we've been thinking about this fall. Who is Jesus? Why has he come? What does it mean to follow him? To become a follower of Jesus, to place your faith in him as your Lord and as your Savior, means finding your place in his mission to be a part of the movement that you were created for.

So tonight, I want to spend just a few moments looking at Mark 6 and seeing what it teaches us about our mission as Jesus' followers. So we're going to do that.

So the first thing I think that this text shows us about our mission as the church is that it's a team effort. Okay? Verse 7, Jesus sends them out two by two.

[12:44] He's not expecting that they would do it alone. Jesus doesn't want them to go out as lone rangers proclaiming the kingdom. I mean, you can almost imagine sort of Jesus gathering with the disciples saying, Okay, we're going to go out two by two.

And they're like, Jesus, look, there's 12 of us. If we go out one by one, we're going to get this job done like twice as fast. We're going to be done. We'll be home in time for Shark Tank. Like, done, right? Let's just, let's get efficient. Jesus says, no.

You're going out two by two. You can't go alone. Jesus knows that our work together, that our mission has to be done together. I mean, after all, when we hit difficulties, we'll need to encourage one another, right?

And when we're not sure what the next step to take or what the next word is to say, we need wisdom. We'll need each other's wisdom. And on top of all that, you know, it will be the quality of our relationships with one another that gives our message credibility.

It's going to be in how we love and how we serve and how we're generous with one another. It'll be the care and the love and the unity between us that starts turning heads so that people suddenly start thinking that there's something actually to this message about Jesus.

[13:56] In other words, our relationships with one another become living evidence of the truth and the power of the message. And as a side note, if you kind of look at the passage, I think that's one of the reasons why Jesus tells them when you go into a village and someone receives you, stay there.

Don't hop from house to house to house to house. Because he wants their life, he wants their mission to be incredibly transparent. Jesus doesn't want anyone thinking that the apostles are trying to hide something or trying to pull one over.

He wants their lives and their message and their motives to be completely open and clear with the people that they're staying among. So here's how I think this plays out for us today, this idea.

One of the most important things that you can do, that you and I can do as a Christian, as a follower of Christ, to be about Jesus' mission in the world, is to actually become an active, loving member of a local church.

To admit that we actually can't be lone rangers and to formally join a church so that the world can see our love for one another on display.

[15:03] Now, I know a couple of you tonight are actually in the process of becoming members. Scott, high five. Right? And that's awesome. I mean, that's exactly what it means to begin living out our mission.

But, you know, maybe some of you here tonight haven't given any thought to the idea of membership and what it means. But just think about it. I mean, to be a body of believers committed to one another, loving one another, open with one another, is going to be part of the evidence that the gospel of Jesus is real to the world.

Let alone the fact that we need encouragement when we hit hard patches, that we need wisdom when we're facing tough decisions. The reality is that we don't have to do this alone. And that Jesus doesn't want you to do this alone.

And I think that's a great comfort, isn't it? That we're not meant to sort of bear the load of the mission that Jesus has given us by ourselves. It's a team effort.

So that's the first thing. Here's the second thing. I think the second thing we see about our mission is that it's a radically dependent mission. We're not just to be relying on one another, but ultimately relying on God.

[16:07] Look at verses 8 and 9. In verses 8 and 9, Jesus tells them to go out with basically like minimal equipment, right? You get a staff and you get a pair of sandals. You get nothing else.

Don't even take an extra coat, you know? So I think on the one hand, what does this mean? It means that the disciples are going out pretty lightly equipped because it's meant to be a short-term mission.

They're not going to be out there for years and years and years and years, so they don't have to take a ton of stuff with them. But I think more than that, Jesus is teaching them a lesson about who

to depend on. Because think about it.

If they go out with minimum amount of supplies, they're going to have to rely on God to provide what they need. They'll have to rely on God to lead them, for example, to hospitable homes where they can stay.

You see, this is going to force them not to rely on themselves, but to be dependent on God. So for us today, I don't think this means that we should never make plans or wise preparations for what God is calling us to do, right?

[17:10] None of us should sort of grab a buddy and jump on a plane to, I don't know, Romania with sandals and a staff and say, we're just going, you know? Let's just go. That's not the point. In fact, Jesus, it's pretty clear that Jesus is meant to be teaching them a spiritual lesson here, right?

In fact, later on in Jesus's ministry, Jesus is eventually going to tell the disciples to go ahead and take all the things that he told them here not to take. It's in Luke 22.

He says, okay, remember how I told you not to take all that stuff? What did you need? They said, we lack nothing, Lord. He says, okay, now take all that stuff and I'm going to send you out. So the point is, is that here in Mark 6, he's teaching them a spiritual lesson.

And the lesson is that our mission is to be a radically God-dependent one. And what does that mean for us practically? I think for us practically it means that our time spent praying should match or even exceed our time spent planning.

You see what I mean? If we're going to be engaged in the mission of God that he calls us into, then we have to be relying on Jesus to see it through.

[18:20] You know, we often think, when we think about prayer, we often think that the thing that keeps us from prayer is our self-control, right? What keeps me from praying a lot? What's self-control? If I only had more self-control, then I'd pray more. I'd wake up earlier.

I'd force myself to pray longer and better. I'd read more books about prayer, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. But, you know, the thing is in prayer, self-control is not our real problem. It's self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is the real enemy of prayer.

When I think that I can accomplish what's before me through my own efforts and skill, then I won't rely on God in dependent prayer. It's pretty simple. Jesus intentionally puts the apostles here in a position materially where they can't possibly be self-sufficient.

That they'll have to rely on God. And that's supposed to teach us about our real position spiritually, right? It's a material example of a spiritual lesson. That spiritually we're never self-sufficient.

And isn't that the truth at the heart of the gospel? That we can't save ourselves. And that our good works aren't good enough for God to accept us.

[19:24] That we're not sufficient. But that Jesus is completely sufficient. That he's perfectly good. And he bore the penalty for my sins on the cross.

And I can stop relying on myself. And I can rely solely on him. And in him, be perfectly acceptable in God's sight. That's what it means to become a Christian.

To come to rely solely on Jesus and not myself for a right relationship with God. And you know, once we become Christians, our life continues in that same vein.

We learn more and more and more to stop relying on ourselves and to rely on God and Christ. And so our mission becomes one of increasingly dependent, prayer-filled reliance.

It's hard to pray, right? It's hard to pray when you think about mission. Because it feels like we're not doing anything. It's like, what are we doing? We're just praying.

[20:28] We should be doing something, right? Not just sitting here. But it's only God, right? It's only God that can change a person's heart. And it's only God that can bring someone to saving faith. And it's only God that can bring the renewal that we long for.

And so that's why we pray. That's why it's a dependent mission. So here's the third thing. That's the second thing. It's a very radically dependent mission on God. But third, the mission is supposed to be a both-and kind of mission.

That our mission as Christians, as we follow Jesus into the world, is supposed to be a both-and kind of mission. And now here's what I mean. When you look through this passage, what did Jesus tell the disciples to actually do? What are they supposed to go do?

Well, on the one hand, they're supposed to be engaged in really bold proclamation, right? This is verse 12. They went out and they proclaimed that people should repent. That's pretty bold.

They were supposed to go out and declare to people that in Jesus, God's kingdom was at hand. And that it was completely reordering the world.

[21 : 28] And it was completely restructuring how we were going to relate to God. And that everyone needed to respond. Everybody needed to respond. That's why they were shaking the dust off of their clothes when they left the town that rejected them.

In the first century, that was what Jews did when they left the Gentile area. They went like this and brushed the sand off because it was symbolic by saying, that's an unclean territory. And I'm leaving it there.

See what Jesus is saying here? If you go to a Jewish village and they reject the message of me, it's like they're unclean. That's pretty bold, right? Everyone is called to respond.

It doesn't matter what your spiritual pedigree is. You have to come to Jesus. It's a bold proclamation on the one hand. But what else were they doing in their mission?

Look at verse 13. They cast out demons and healed the sick. In other words, it wasn't just a mission of bold proclamation. It was certainly that. But it was also one of compassionate service.

[22 : 31] They were meeting people's felt needs. They were caring for the sick. They were dealing with people's spiritual bondage. And that's what I mean by saying it's a both and mission. It's both bold proclamation and it's one of compassionate service.

Now, there's a lot we can say about this sort of aspect of the mission. And we can come back to it in the Q&A; if you guys want to. But let me now just say that I think for most of us, temperamentally, we probably fall on one side of this or the other, right?

Some of us love bold proclamation. Like, we could preach about Jesus to anybody and not fear an ounce of, like, fear or anxiety. Has anyone ever been around someone like that? It's awesome. It's not me, right?

But it's cool, right? It's like, man, they don't care if they offend anybody. Like, they just love Jesus. They're going to tell about it. Other of us are on the other side of the spectrum. We're into the compassionate service, man. We just have really creative and insightful and effective ways to care for the people who are in need around us.

And I think the challenge for us is first to realize which side we sort of naturally tend to. Are we kind of more of the bold proclaimers? Are we more of the sort of compassionate servers?

[23 : 36] And to make sure that personally and as a church, as we minister, even as we minister out of our strengths, that we don't fall either way and let the other side fall off.

That we don't just become bold proclaimers without any acts of love. That we don't just become a church that's acts of love with no proclamation. That we always have to keep the both and. Both proclamation and service.

Okay, so here are three things we see about this mission. It's a team effort. It's radically dependent. It's a both and mission. This is sort of what it's taking shape to be, following Christ in mission. But the last thing that we see in our passage tonight is that in this mission, we shouldn't be surprised or discouraged by rejection.

That rejection shouldn't throw us off course or take the wind out of our sails. Look again at the chapter. Verse 7, Jesus sends the apostles out.

And way down in verse 30, we're told that they come back. And then sandwiched right in between is this account about John the Baptist. Right? About his execution.

[24 : 43] And a lot of commentators say, you know what? Mark's being very intentional in doing it this way. He could have put the account of John the Baptist anywhere in his gospel.

It doesn't happen here chronologically. He put it here for a reason. That Mark purposefully put the account of John the Baptist's death right in the mission, right in the middle of the account of the mission of the 12 to make a point.

And what point is that? Here's the point. That faithfully following Jesus will often result in opposition and rejection and sometimes even persecution and death.

Just as John the Baptist was unjustly executed by Herod. It's senseless, right? The whole account is just rife with ridiculousness. Just as that happened to John the Baptist, so for us, following Jesus will often result in being misunderstood and rejected, even hated.

Now, for some of you tonight, for some of us tonight, maybe that's part of what's going on in your heart as you consider becoming a Christian. You know, maybe you're attracted to Christ.

[25 : 50] Maybe you're seeing the difference that it kind of makes in your friends' lives. And maybe you've been exploring it, and it's starting to make sense, and it's starting to ring true. And you actually feel yourself being drawn to place your trust in Christ.

But you know, you know that if you were to take a step over that line and give your life to Jesus and identify as a Christian, that your friends and your family members would think you are totally crazy. And you'd be completely ostracized and made fun of. You know, sure, they're not going to literally put your head on a platter. You know, by God's grace, in America, we don't have to worry about that.

It's true in other parts of the world, though. To publicly identify with Jesus means pretty much an immediate death sentence. Okay, so we're not dealing with that.

But figuratively speaking, man, it feels like if I become a believer, there are a lot of people that are going to be putting my head on the social platter. Or maybe you are a Christian tonight.

[26 : 50] Maybe you are a believer, and you think, as you think, as you think about this mission that Christ is calling us into, this together, dependent, both-and kind of mission, honestly, you're kind of filled with a lot of fear.

The boldness that you know you should have in telling others about Jesus just isn't there. You're timid and nervous, and you're afraid of rejection, afraid of what others will think of you and say to you if you were open about your beliefs in Christ.

So what does Mark have to say to us? Okay, it's going to happen, right? Or at least it might. Well, I think that's why Mark starts the chapter the way that he does.

You know, as we face our fears of rejection, either in becoming a Christian or as living out our Christian life, what the first part of this chapter is telling us is that Jesus himself faced rejection. He goes to his hometown, and they mock him, and they ridicule him, and his own family calls him crazy, and they take offense at him. And this means that as we experience rejection, we can know that Jesus himself is not just empathetic, but sympathetic.

[28 : 10] That he's near to those who are experiencing the exact same thing that he's gone through. But, you know, it's even more than that. As comforting as that is, to know that Christ is near to the rejected, that as we go forth and experience that, that Jesus is near to us.

It's even more than that. Because the rejection that Jesus experiences isn't just like us, but it's for us. You know, Jesus lived a whole life of rejection.

And his mission ultimately leads him to the ultimate rejection of the cross. And why? Why does he go to the cross? So that everyone who believes in him can know acceptance.

That he's rejected so that sinners like you and me can be accepted. So that we can know the acceptance of God. And friends, as we meditate on that fact, that my sins actually deserve God's rejection.

But because of what Christ has done in my place, I now receive God's acceptance. As we meditate on that, we find that our assurance and our boldness actually grows. And you know what that means?

[29 : 23] It means that those other kinds of rejections that we face, it means that they'll still sting us, right? But they won't ultimately stop us. Because God no longer rejects us.

He accepts us in Christ that we have his favor no matter what may come. And that he'll never leave us or forsake us. And we can start to say that his love is better than life.

So tonight, I want you to know that this is the mission that you were created for. To follow Christ into the world. That nothing else will satisfy your heart and nothing else will captivate your life.

And that when this mission takes you to the hardest places of rejection and opposition and hurt, you can know that Jesus has already gone before you.

And that anything that we face will ultimately be worth knowing him and experiencing the acceptance that he's won for us. So let's pray together.

[30 : 31] Lord Jesus, thank you that on the cross you were rejected, Lord, for our sins so that we might be accepted. Lord, so now as we go forth, we can go forth in boldness and confidence.

God, thank you for these things. Lord, as we think about this mission that you've called us into, Lord, would you empower us for it? Lord, thank you for your Holy Spirit who gives us a deep knowledge of your love for us so that we might go forth together depending on you, proclaiming and loving and serving in your name.

Lord, we ask this. Amen. Hey, so we're going to go ahead and take a seat, guys. So the preacher was long-winded tonight. So we don't have as much time for Q&A, but let's fire away. What questions do you guys have about this passage? Nord, yeah. Planning, I'm sorry. Planning, yeah. You know, we sort of spend all this busy energy like trying to concoct a strategy, right? But, you know, and executing it. And those are good. Those are, like, right on. You know, we see the apostles all the time planning and executing in the book of Acts.

[31 : 44] But there's just dependent prayer that surrounds that. So, yeah. Matt.

Why couldn't Jesus do miracles in his hometown? Why couldn't Jesus do miracles in his hometown? Was he somehow sort of tied up? Was his power sort of limited because there wasn't any faith?

You know, I think one of the best explanations I've read about that is that what is the purpose of Jesus' miracles? The purpose of Jesus' miracles really are to affirm his identity, right? And his mission. They're not just meant to be sort of brute acts of power that just sort of overpower people. But they're sort of all a part of his mission and his sort of establishment of his identity. So if people are sort of not believing and hardened in their unbelief, then in some sense, the purpose of the miracles is already useless.

It's already shot. So he doesn't. Yeah. Yeah.

[33 : 01] That's a good question. So how would that aspect apply to our mission? Hmm. Yeah. I don't know. That's a good question. I haven't thought about that.

I have nothing interesting to say. Yeah. It can be a mission where somehow it may be a mission. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. Oh, right, right, right.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. You know, that's a really interesting question. And I think there are different strands in the New Testament that sort of give us sort of a robust wisdom about that. You know, because even in this passage, you see them shaking off the dust from their feet when they're not received.

Now, you know, we need to be careful with a passage like this, because on the one hand, like all of scripture is God breathing is useful for us in our life, right? But we also have to acknowledge that some of these things are just historical particulars.

[34 : 05] Like in God's redemptive history, like there are things that he's doing that are non-repeatable and they're significant and they're powerful, but they're not necessarily just a playbook for us to follow. So this sort of shaking of the dust is one of those things that might just be sort of just a symbolic act for that time period, sort of announcing the identity of Jesus, that the King has come right now.

So, you know, does that mean if we sort of are witnessing at work and no one's converted, we're just like, fine, I'm done. You know, I'm sick of these pagans. I don't think so, actually. I actually don't think so.

I think that, you know, Christ would call us to stay there and to persevere and to keep loving and witnessing. But there's also wisdom too, you know, in some sense, you know, some people are just really hardened and really sort of, you know, just pretty against the gospel.

Now, should we stop praying and loving those people? No. No. But we might not want to pour all of our energies into a person like that at the expense of maybe some other avenues that God might be opening. So there is a prudence there that I think is called for.

Again, not that we stop loving, praying, and sharing Christ with them, but we might not want to dumb 90% of our sort of time into that one person that just seems really, really hard. But again, I think that's best worked out in community.

[35 : 23] What else? Jonathan. Yeah.

Uh-huh. So Jesus, right. So verse 7 says that Jesus gave his apostles authority over unclean spirits. What does that mean? And do we have that same authority today? Okay, so what does it mean?

I think it means he gave them authority over unclean spirits. And that when they went and preached, like, they actually were casting out demons out of people. I think that's kind of what the text says. So do we have that same kind of authority today?

First, I think, what did it mean? What was the point of that? What was the significance of it in Mark 6 in the first century? I think, you know, especially when we're talking about the apostles and this sort

of early birth of the church.

You know, whenever there's sort of a great movement in God's redemptive plan, things like this tend to happen. Why? Because they're confirmations of what God's doing.

[36 : 26] That they're confirmations of the message and the messengers. So these miraculous signs are God himself bearing witness to the truth of the gospel. That's what you see in Hebrews 2, actually. He gives sort of a little snapshot of a theology of spiritual gifts.

How did God bear witness to the gospel in those early ages? Through signs and wonders and miraculous things. And by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will. So I think part of it was, you know, Jesus was sending these guys out with this message.

And this was a way of confirming that message for them. Now, there are a lot of different views on whether we still have that power today within the church. Some people say that, you know, there's no difference between then and now.

And that it's the same kind of authority exercised in the same kind of way. And we should have the same sort of expectations for it today. Other people are kind of way on the other side of the spectrum and say, no, that was unique to the apostles in the apostolic age.

And that once the sort of foundation of the church was laid and the gospel was confirmed, that stuff kind of petered out and stopped. And then there's some who kind of take a third way, which say, yeah, there's a lot of uniqueness in the first century in the apostles.

[37 : 31] And we don't want to overlook that. But it seems as if when the gospel sort of breaking new ground, when it's going to unreached people groups, say, that oftentimes we'll see an increase in these sort of confirmatory signs as the gospel and the kingdom sort of spreads to unreached people groups.

But there's also the fact, too, that, I mean, as believers in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, if we feel like we're ever sort of encountering demonic oppression, then we should pray in Jesus's name.

You know, I think that's pretty clear from the New Testament, too. Should we expect the same sort of fireworks that are happening? Maybe not. But I think we do have authority as believers. I think our expectations probably are a little different.

I'm kind of more in that third way. But I do think that if we're ever up against spiritual opposition, then we can pray in the name of Jesus. Because it's interesting, in Colossians, it's the cross of Jesus Christ that has disarmed the powers and the rulers and authorities of the world.

Paul's speaking there of demonic powers. That the forgiveness of sins, that the cross has won, defangs Satan and his minions. Because they have nothing to accuse us with. If our sins are forgiven, what is left for them to do?

[38 : 41] Is that helpful, Jonathan? Okay, cool. Yeah, Kevin. Thank you. Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm. What is your question, Kevin, what does he mean?

So the question is, what does Jesus mean when he sort of quotes this thing, a prophet's not without honor except in his hometown? What's he mean by that? So he's being rejected in his hometown.

Jesus very much has a prophetic ministry. Prophetic meaning proclaiming God's message. And he comes to his hometown, and they're like, we know this guy. He's a carpenter, right? He built my shed.

How can he be the son of God? You know, like, or at least a prophet. No, I don't think so. So I think Jesus is sort of quoting here. It seems like this is pretty proverbial. Like, there it is.

[39 : 51] Because in a lot of the other cities, I mean, he was drawing massive crowds, right? Now, the crowds are always a bit ambivalent in the Gospels. They can be sort of fickle, right?

So at the same time that there's a swell of approval, there's a swell of opposition, which grows in Mark's Gospel as we go. It grows in all the Gospels, actually. But he hits Nazareth, and it almost seems like it's complete rejection.

Very few people. I mean, he says, does it say it here in Mark? He laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. So there's a little bit. There's a little kindling there.

But it's largely because of this over-familiarity, right? Which is a deep spiritual lesson, right? I think we can sometimes become inoculated to Christianity. We sort of grow up with it. We become familiar with it.

Like, oh, yeah, Jesus, I get that. You know, like, that's my parent shtick. Or, like, all those weirdos in youth group are all about that, but it's not my thing. Or I grew up in church. Yeah, I'm good with Jesus. Whatever. You know, this over-familiarity actually blinds us to the just stark reality of who he

is and the just complete response of our life that he deserves.

[40 : 58] Is that helpful, Kevin? Did that kind of get at your question? Okay. One more. Oh, Mike.

Yeah, sorry. That's a great question. Yeah. How do we relate to people who do feel satisfied and captivated by whatever sort of chosen mission they're on?

Hmm? Yeah. Well, one, I think, A, just living an authentic Christian life before them.

Sort of letting the reality of what we have in Christ sort of be almost a foil for the life that they're living. So that as they sort of pursue whatever their track is on, and once the wheels start falling off of that, hopefully they start seeing in our life and in our words something that's a little more lasting and real.

So sort of just a faithful presence with people like that. But, you know, there are a lot, you know, sort of dissatisfaction with our current life is only sort of one of the means that God uses us to bring to himself.

[42 : 11] You know, that's not all of our stories. Sometimes there's a lot of other things that might be sort of means that God uses. So, I mean, tonight we were kind of talking just about that one, but there might be others.

So, yeah. Bring them along to church. See what they say. That was crazy, huh? He was talking about Jesus the whole time. What do you think of him?

You know? I mean, sometimes it's just a brute reality, just a sort of brute reality of Christ that sometimes we just have to get around, you know? But it is true. I mean, I think very often in our time, and this is how it has always been, but, you know, usually when people's lives are going fine, they're not asking deep questions about what's really real and what's truly true.

They're kind of inoculated to it. And usually it's when the wheels fall off that they actually start asking deeper questions. Not because they're desperate and they need to, you know, it's like this psychological crutch, but it's like finally the blinders are sort of taken off, and they see sometimes how bottomless our existence is.

Yeah. Yeah. Hey, we should close. I'm over time. So just a couple quick announcements. In a few Sundays, December 8th, in the evening service, we're going to be doing our carol service, our annual carol service.

[43 : 34] If you want more information about that or you want to join the ensemble, you can talk to me or you can email Jonathan Rogers-Salem, which is in the bulletin. There's also flyers in the back if you want to hand them out. The Wednesday before that, I think it's December 4th, there's going to be another concert here at Trinity that's a bit more classical in its aspect.

The carol service is a big carol sing. We'll just get together, have a good time singing carols, and there's a talk. Good thing to invite your non-Christian friends to. The thing on Wednesday, the brass concert, is going to be a bit more of sort of a classical concert.

Also a really good thing to invite non-Christian friends to. Pretty high art, but it's sort of rich with gospel themes. So those two things coming up, there's a lot more stuff in your bulletin. Okay. Great. Great. Great.

Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great. Great.