MISSION POSSIBLE
Mark 6:7-13 (NKJV)

Today we want to continue with our series of messages from the **Gospel of Mark**. Please open your Bibles to **Mark chapter six**. And let's pick up right where we left off last Lord's Day in **verses 7-13**.

**MARK 6:7-13 (NKJV)**

7 And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.
8 He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—
9 but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.
10 Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.
11 And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”
12 So they went out and preached that people should repent.
13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.
Introduction

Throughout history there has been a number of “famous missions.”

* If you were a fan of the original STAR TREK TV show you probably remember those familiar words of Captain James T. Kirk at the beginning of every show: Space: the final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Enterprise. Its five-year mission: to explore strange new worlds. To seek out new life and new civilizations. To boldly go where no man has gone before!

*In July 1969 NASA launched Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on their famous mission to become the first humans to ever set foot on the moon.

*Less than a year later, in April 1970 NASA launched Apollo 13 on the third mission to the moon. En route to the moon an on-board explosion deprived the spacecraft of most of its oxygen forcing NASA to abort the moon landing, and turning the mission into a struggle to get the astronauts home safely.

* Shortly after 1:00 a.m. on May 2, 2011 SEAL TEAM 6 successfully completed its mission to kill Osama Bin Laden, head of the Al- Qaeda terrorists group.

*And perhaps some of you have seen this summer’s biggest blockbuster movie: MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: FALLOUT.
In our scripture text this morning, JESUS sends His apostles on a mission. And this mission doesn’t have anything to do with exploring new lands or outer space or saving the world from a notorious villain.

The mission Jesus sends His men on involves something far greater and far more noble. He sends them on a mission to preach the gospel.

This mission comes at a very strategic time in Jesus’ ministry. Each and every day is bringing Jesus closer to the cross......closer to the completion of His mission to die for the sins of the world.....and resurrect from the dead.....and return to His heavenly Father.

But once Jesus completes His mission, His disciples will then begin their mission of proclaiming the “good news” of salvation throughout the world.

So what we find here in Mark chapter six is Jesus sending His apostles out on a “training mission” to prepare them for the work they will be doing once He returns to His heavenly Father.

There are four things I would like for you to note about this mission.

First of all, I would have you to notice:
I. The **TEAM WORK** (v.7)

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

1. You remember back in **Mark chapter one** when Jesus called His first four disciples, Peter, Andrew, James, and John, they were all fishermen. And when Jesus called them, He said, “Come follow Me and I will make you WHAT?.........I will make you “fishers of men.”

2. Quite some time has now passed since Jesus called those four men as well as the other eight men who would become His apostles. These twelve men have now spent months and months listening to Jesus’ teachings and witnessing His miracles.

   The time has now come for these men to “go fishing!” The time has come for them to transition from being students to being preachers ...............from being learners to being messengers. There is no JV team.....there is no “Plan B.” These are the men for the job! And this is their hour!

3. And so Jesus called the twelve to Himself and sent them out **two by two**. Now what was the purpose in that? Why not send each of them out individually in twelve different directions? Why did Jesus send them out in pairs? Jesus understood the Importance of **TEAMWORK!**
Ecclesiastes 4:9,10 (NKJV)

9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.
10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up.

4. In most things you set out to do two people working together can accomplish more than one person working by himself.

There is a Biblical precept found throughout the Bible that says “that at the mouths of two or more witnesses every word or every truth would be established.” (Deuteronomy 19:15; II Corinthians 13:1)

By sending His disciples out in “pairs” or “teams of two” it established the truth of what they preached and taught. And when they came back to report to Jesus, one could verify the report of his partner was true.

By going out in teams of two they were less likely to be attacked or robbed than if they traveled alone. They would also be less likely to become discouraged than if they went alone. There was also the added benefit of the blending of talents and gifts. They went out in two's.....they came back in two's...TEAMWORK!
5. To give added weight to the message they preached the LORD empowered His disciples to be able to cast out demons. This tells us the LORD knew that His disciples were likely going to have encounters with demonic forces as they carried out this mission, just as He had encountered several times in His ministry. By giving His disciples the power over the demons Jesus was insuring that His mission would not be undermined by the forces of Satan.

6. There is a valuable lesson to be learned here for all of us. When it comes to carrying out the mission of the Church it requires **TEAMWORK!** One person cannot do the work alone. It requires the God-given gifts and talents of each and everyone in order for the Church to be successful in carrying out her mission. I need you and you need me and we all need each other!

And just as the LORD equipped His apostles to do their mission, He has equipped us as well. The Lord never calls us to do a task but what He doesn't provide everything we need for success.
The second thing I would have you to notice about their mission is the...

II. The **TRUST** (vs. 8-10)

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

10 Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.

1. How many of you take everything but the kitchen sink when go on a trip? Most of us don’t even know the meaning of the words “pack lightly!”

   Why is it that when we're only going to be gone for two or three days, most of us take several pairs of shoes and enough clothes for a month? And we'll say something like, “*Well, I'd rather take it with me and NOT need it than to leave it home and wish I had brought it!*”

2. As Jesus prepared to send His men off on this mission He commanded them to “pack lightly!” They could take a walking stick.....the sandals on their feet.......and the clothes on their back.... AND THAT WAS IT! They were not to take any money....any food....any extra clothes....or a travel bag.

3. Now what’s behind this? **Jesus is wanting them to TRUST and DEPEND upon God for everything they need.** That is how JESUS lived His life, and now He wants His disciples to learn to trust completely upon God to supply everything they need!
4. If they needed MONEY Jesus wanted them to trust in GOD to supply what they needed. Most certainly they were going to need something to eat and something to drink each day. Jesus wanted them to trust in God completely to supply their daily bread. If they needed clothes on their backs or a place to stay, Jesus wanted them to trust God to provide what they needed!

Remember in Jesus' Sermon on The Mount He had taught His disciples “Do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will wear.” And “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.” (Matthew 6:25, 34a NKJV) Now Jesus is putting His disciples faith to the test in this matter! If Jesus permitted His disciples to take along as much as they wanted to take with them on their journey, their faith and trust would be in their physical comforts rather than in the LORD!

5. Remember this is a TRAINING MISSION. Jesus is preparing His disciples for the mission they will carry out after He has ascended back to His heavenly Father. They will encounter many hardships and difficulties as they take the gospel throughout Judea, and Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world. They will have to depend on GOD to supply their needs each and every mile of their journey. Jesus is now preparing them for that! “Pack light men and trust in God to supply everything else you need!”
5. Doesn’t the LORD want you and me to trust in Him completely too? Doesn’t He want us to trust in Him to provide our daily needs? Doesn’t He want us to trust in Him to give us strength when we are weak, comfort when we are hurting, forgiveness when we have fallen, and peace when we are troubled?

The third thing I would have you to notice about THE MISSION is…….

III. The TESTIMONY (v.11)

11. And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”

1. Jesus knew that His disciples were going to meet with rejection in some of the places they would go to preach, just as He Himself had been rejected in His hometown of Nazareth.

2. Before Jesus sends them out He gives them the authority to pronounce judgment upon those towns and villages that reject the message of the gospel.

3. Their job was not to change the minds and hearts of the people, their job was to simply present the gospel message in a plain, straight-forward manner. And if the people didn’t receive their message……if they rejected their message……if they reacted with hostility because of their message……they were free to leave.
4. And Jesus told His disciples that when they leave that town or village, “shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them.”

In those days, if Jewish people traveled through a Gentile city, they would shake the dust off their shoes as they left town because they didn’t want to take anything from that Gentile town with them, not even the dust of their streets.

5. In essence, Jesus was telling His disciples if you preach in a certain town or village and they reject the gospel message, treat that town as if it were a pagan Gentile city ……”shake the dust off your sandals as you leave as a testimony against those people.”

The fourth thing I would have you to notice about THE MISSION is the:

IV. The TRIUMPHS (vs. 12,13)

12 So they went out and preached that people should repent.  
13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.

1. After receiving their instructions from Jesus the disciples set out on their mission. They went out and preached the health and wealth gospel ……”just name it and claim it!”
2. That isn’t what they preached is it? (Just seeing if you were awake!) They didn’t preach a warm, fuzzy, feel-good message like is being preached from so many of our pulpits today.

They preached a message of repentance! In other words they presented the gospel in such a way that it would produce repentant hearts in the people.

3. While the disciples probably met with some rejection and resistance and experienced some disappointments while on this mission, the fact that they cast out many demons and anointed and healed many sick people tells us they enjoyed many victories along their journey.

CONCLUSION

If you remember the old Mission Impossible TV Show or have seen any of the Mission Impossible movies you know that each episode begins with a recording that says, “Your mission, should you decide to accept it is this...... and after the mission is explained, the voice says “this recording will self-destruct in five seconds.”

When Jesus gave us the Great Commission He didn’t say, “Your mission, should you decide to accept it is to go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you and lo' I am with you always even to the end of the age.”
Jesus didn’t give us the option of opting out of the mission. He said,

Here is your mission......ACCEPT IT!

“Lord lay some soul upon my heart,
And love that soul through me;
And may I nobly do my part,
To win that soul for Thee.”

That is our mission!