

February 23, 2014
Port Gardner Church
Chuck Hickman

Mark 6:7-13
Jesus Summons, Jesus Saves

Mark 6:7-13 *And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave the authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff – no bread, no bag, no money in their belts – but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. 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.*

[7] And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two,

Jesus Summons and Jesus Sends: He calls and He commissions.

Being called of God happens to all believers. When we hear the gospel and respond by God’s grace, we have been called by God.

We don’t necessarily like to think of it this way do we? We like to think that Jesus presented an idea and we said “yes, I like that idea”. But if you are a believer, and you say you are a disciple of Christ, a follower, the you have been summoned by the most high God of all creation. Summoned for salvation, service and eternal friendship with God through Jesus Christ His only son.

When we get this backwards, when we think that we chose Jesus, it changes the entire dynamic of the relationship. Because if we chose him, we can now unchoose him. We can choose to serve him when it’s convenient and we can choose not to when it suits our own desires.

This is one reason why so many (so called Christians) can have such a hard time being faithful to God’s calling. Because they don’t see it as God desiring them. They see their relationship as one of their own making. Jesus offered us a deal and we decided it was a good one. We pondered the offer and said, “sure, OK, I’ll take that deal”.

But in every man made deal there seems to be a way out... right. Take your mortgage. You make a deal to borrow money for a home with that same property put up as collateral. Why do you need collateral? Because there is a possibility that you might default on the first part of the agreement. That you may not follow through and therefore another part or clause of the agreement now kicks in. Man made deals have contingencies and such that make accommodation for a change in the relationship.

Not so with Jesus. There is no deal to be made with Jesus. There is no change to be made in the relationship by him. It is his relationship. He is God and we are his.

So, just know this: YOU HAVE BEEN SUMMONED. CALLED. GOD DESIRES YOU!

And here’s the scary part... everyone that is summoned, will eventually be sent.

But we don’t like that part do we? We want to be in control. We want to make the decision. We want to choose our destiny. But just like the fact that we didn’t make a deal with Jesus, we don’t get to control the relationship. Jesus controls the relationship.

I went through a training exercise on a Monday two weeks ago with the EPD and EFD. I was assigned to certain responsibilities, some that I was not real excited about, but as a new Chaplain, I serve at the discretion of the Police

Department. They make the determination as to my involvement and areas of service. In some ways I wanted to do more than they asked, in other ways I wanted to do less. But I was submitted to their leadership and authority. I am a disciple of the department in a way.

Submission is an affront to our pride. We like to say that Jesus is cool and I like Him and all. He did some really amazing things and healed and fed a bunch of people. The casting out of demons is cool and the walking on the water part... wow. Impressive! But acknowledging Jesus' works is not following Jesus.

James R. Edwards says *"The doing of a deed, even the performing of a miracle, does not necessarily exact any commitment from those who behold them. They may, if they choose, remain simply impressed, without considering the possible significance of the event for their lives."*

Discipleship means submission. So much so that our whole life is on the line. If Jesus wants my life, He has it. My car, my family, my job, my parents, my hobbies, my money, my friendships... He has it. And when Jesus sends us, all of these things are on the line.

J.C. Ryle said "It costs something to be a true Christian. It will cost our sins, our self-righteousness, our ease and our worldliness."

Now please know that Jesus is not going to break up your marriage so you can serve Him, we must use godly discretion and seek out wise counsel when making big life altering decisions, (Proverbs 11:14 says, there is safety in a multitude of counselors) but if God does the sending, there will be agreement and unity in the plan. Sometimes that unity can be strained and sometimes it will take a period of time for it all to come together, but, when God sends us, He will make a way for all to come together for the sake of the gospel, for the sake of our sanctification and for the ultimate glory of God.

And he may send us down the street, across the country or across an ocean. But when God does the sending, He provides for the one he sends.

And think about this for a minute: when Jesus sends us, we usually don't feel ready... do we? If you've walked with God for even a little while, you will find that we are never fully prepared for the place and/or thing God is sending us to. We are never really quite ready for the journey or the job.

And the sending of the twelve disciples seems pre-mature doesn't it? So far their past record is not very reassuring. And so far, your record probably isn't very reassuring either.

Look at these disciples: We've read 5 chapters so far that have covered a few months of time. These guys have no seminary training, no Bible school, no real world ministry experience. They've hung out with a guy that they really are kind of unsure of so far. Watched Jesus do amazing stuff. Marveled at him and feared him like everyone else and they Jesus grabs the up 2 by 2 and sends them out. These guys are just not ready.

Jesus **always** sends us before we think we are ready. He does this because there is always an element of faith involved. Because when our faith is about our decisions, about our knowledge, about our desires, It's all about us.

We don't see what God sees. Sometimes we get to see what God saw in retrospect. Hind sight is 20/20. But God is God and we are not. He will show us what He wants to show us when He wants us to see it. We think things are messed up. People aren't doing what we want them to do. Things aren't happening the way we want them to happen. But we don't see what God sees. He has the plan. He orchestrates everything. Scripture says, the earth is the Lord's and everything in it.

And as He sends them He does so kind of like a Boy Scout Order of the Arrow Event. Kind of a "oh, by the way, you can't take any food or water. No compass or tent or sleeping bag. Just one shirt and a stick. And you have to preach a

message that is offensive to most, and then ask to spend the night at their house and have them feed you, but many aren't going to let you in, so you just kick the dust off your feet and move on.

Their job as preachers wasn't to change people's minds. They were to persuasively present the message; but if their audience didn't receive it, they didn't receive it - and they could leave, and **shake the very dust from your feet** as they left.

In that day, if Jewish people had to go in or through a Gentile city, as they left they would shake the dust off their feet. It was a gesture that said, "We don't want to take anything from this Gentile city with us." Essentially, Jesus told them to regard a Jewish city that rejects their message as if it were a Gentile city.

So they went out: They actually did it. We can hear Jesus' word to us all day long, but something is missing until we *do* it.

They went out and proclaimed that people should repent: Proclaiming is preaching, to tell others in the sense of announcing news to them. Some of the best and most effective preaching never happens inside a church. It happens when followers of Jesus are one-on-one with others, telling about what Jesus did for them.

They proclaimed that men should repent. It does not mean that they **told** men to repent, but that they preached in such a way as to produce repentance."

They did not *create* a message; they *brought* a message.

This is important when thinking about being "ready" to be sent by God. We never bring our own message. We bring the message of the risen Christ. He is where our authority comes from. We lose the authority He has granted when we preach our own ideas and philosophies. It is the gospel of Christ, the word of God that brings men and women to repentance, not our eloquent words or persuasive nature. It is all about Jesus... always and all the time.

"Let this be to you the mark of true gospel preaching - where Christ is everything, and the creature is nothing; where it is salvation all of grace, through the work of the Holy Spirit applying to the soul the precious blood of Jesus."

Charles Spurgeon

Jesus not only sends us before we "think" we are ready. He sends us when we really are NOT ready. The question is... do we trust Jesus. Do we trust Him. Not His works, Not His miracles and Not even His message. Do We Trust Jesus?

And this comes back to my initial point. Do we believe that we chose Jesus or that Jesus chose us?

You see, Jesus always does the reaching, the calling, the sending. Jesus always makes the first move. Jesus makes the only move. God is not dependant on your cooperation for His success. Yet... He desires you. He doesn't need you, but He wants you.

The biggest obstacle in following Jesus is fear. We fear the loss of our life, our loves, our stuff, our social standing... the American dream. We fear pain and suffering and lack and illness and financial ruin. We fear... everything.

Jesus says, perfect love casts out all fear. God's love is perfect. His love and desire for us is the greatest love we can ever know. And when we have faith in Jesus, when we are free in our gospel identity, when we know that we are indeed a child of the King, we have immense freedom... from fear.

Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Here is the bottom line. You're not ready.

In your mind, you're not ready to be saved... because you have not cleaned yourself up yet. You see, you still think you've got to get good enough for Jesus to desire you. That he has to see something good in you to save you. You've got to show some initiative and change first.

And in your mind you're not ready to be sent either. You've got to get yourself cleaned up first. Fix this habit and that situation. Clean up your resume a little bit before God can use you.

Have you ever been told that "God can't use you until you do ___X___? Until you fix this or that? Hogwash.

Jesus is just looking for willing servants. Obedient, humble followers. That still sin, still make a mess of things, still argue.

Here's a question? Do you think that I deserve to stand up here and speak to you about Jesus? Do you think I've earned a position with God that lets me speak with His authority? What if you knew that I bit the heads off of a couple of grocery store clerks yesterday? What if you saw me do that? Would I still "deserve" to be a pastor. To be your pastor.

The truth is I don't deserve anything. Nothing Good at least. I deserve eternal damnation. Just like you. I deserve the wrath of God for my sin and rebelliousness, just like you. But Jesus saves us past, present and future. He redeems everything and forgives everything, and demands... everything. But what a great exchange. Not a deal where we keep our part of a bargain. A gift, a free gift that cannot be refused.