THE MASTER’S MEN

 **DATE: 2/25/2018 -**

**TEXT: Mark 6:7-13**

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the most amazing features of the Gospels, and of the ministry of the Lord Jesus, is the men He chose to be His Disciples / Apostles

If you and I were putting together a ministry team,

These are probably not the kind of people we would choose to represent us

Consider these men for just a moment …

-- Several were fishermen

-- One was a former tax collector for Rome

-- A couple of them were quick tempered

(Sons of Thunder) (**Mk 3:17**)

-- One of them was a revolutionary (**Lk 6:15**)

-- One was a traitor and not a true believer at all

All were very common men

These men lacked spiritual understanding

They lacked humility / they lacked faith

They lacked commitment /they lacked power

These men were always getting into trouble; missing the point or Christ's teachings

Lashing out at people who were different; saying the wrong thing; walking away from their commitment to Jesus

In spite of their weaknesses, the Lord used these men to turn the world upside down for His glory (**Acts 17:6**)

If He can use them, surely He can use us as well!

That gives me hope!

Jesus called these men to follow Him earlier, **Mark 3:13-19**

For some time now they have been following Jesus from place to place

They have been listening to Him teach and watching Him perform miracles

Since He called them, they have been in seminary training

Jesus has been training them so that He could send them out with the message of the Gospel

**Mark 6:7-13** gives us the details of our Lord's commissioning of His Disciples for their first missionary outreach

This passage has something to teach anyone interested in Serving the Lord

I want to Teach on this thought - ***The Master's Men***

And I’d like for us to see that just as Jesus had a mission for the original twelve Disciples, He still has a mission for us

Let's examine their Commission and their Work

In doing so, we can learn more about how the Lord expects us to serve Him

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. THEIR “MISSION” – v. 7**

***“And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;”***

Jesus calls His closest Disciples to Him and sends them out on a preaching mission

He sent them out two by two and gave them power

Let's look at the different aspects of their mission

**A. They Went Two by Two**

**Matthew 10:2-4** give us some idea of how these men may have been paired up

***“Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his …***

***… brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;” “Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;” “Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him”***

(How would you have liked to have been Judas’ partner?)

There are a couple of reasons Jesus sent them out this way

**1.** It fulfilled the requirements of the Law

For every Testimony was to be established by the words of at least two witnesses

**Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15 *– “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death” “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established”***

**Numbers 35:30 *– “Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die”***

**2.** It provided the men with companionship, encouragement and for someone to pray with

Fellowship would be important

**3.** This was the method used by John the Baptist when he sent out his followers

**Luke 7:19 *– “And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou He that should come? or look we for another?”***

**4.** This has been the method followed by Christians since the days of Jesus

The early church employed this method

**Acts 13:2 *– “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them”***

**Acts 15:39, 40 *– “And … departed one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;” “And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God”***

**Acts 19:22 *– “So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season”***

**5.** It’s still the best method today

When two people go out to share the Gospel together, they can encourage one another, pray for one another and help one another

**B. They were Given Power**

We are told that Jesus gave them His **“*power*”**

This particular word refers to *inherent power*

It has the idea of someone *possessing the right to do something and having the authority to carry it out*

Jesus gave them His Power when He sent them out

In a literal sense, they were an extension of Him as they ministered around the country side

Jesus literally multiplied His Influence when He sent His disciples out with His Power

In **John 14:12** Jesus made a startling statement

He said - **“*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father*”**

The only reason we are able to see this done, is because He gives us His Power to serve Him

When someone is saved, it’s because Jesus gave us His Power to do so

**Acts 1:8 *– “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth”***

We may feel inadequate for the task, …

… but having His Power enables us

We may be weak in our words and we may feel that our testimony lacks Power,

But Jesus has promised to give us His Power

And His Power is more than enough to get the job done!

Therefore, we can go into this world and share the Gospel, knowing that He has called us and Empowered us to do just that!

**THEIR “MISSION”**

**II. THEIR “MANDATE” – vs. 8-11 …**

As part of His commissioning, Jesus gave His men some very Specific Commands

**A Mandate** – *is an official command or instruction from an authority*

Let’s look at what He told them and see how it applies to us

**A. They were to take nothing with them – vs. 8, 9**

They Could take a walking stick, the shoes on their feet and the clothes on their backs (But that’s it)

They were not to take a scrip, which was a travelers bag

Nor were they to take any money or food

There are a couple of thoughts here that I’d like to elaborate on

**1.** There is the idea here that they were *to go as they were*

Without making any special preparations for their travels

They were to undertake this assignment with full faith in the Lord and in His ability to take care of them

That is still God's plan for His people

We are saved by faith and the Lord expects us to live by faith!

He wants us to walk in complete dependence on Him and on His power to supply our needs

**Matt. 6:25-34 …**

**Philippians 4:19 *– “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus”***

If the Lord sends us out in His service, we can trust Him to take care of us

I have seen Him do that countless times in my own life and ministry!

Now, we are not to be foolish with our resources!

Just because the Lord will meet our needs does not imply that we are to give away everything we have

We should give when the Lord tells us to, but we are also commanded to be good stewards of that which we have been given by the Lord

**Proverbs 21:20 –** ***“There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up”***

**Proverbs 27:12 *– “A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished”***

If we squander everything the Lord gives us, we might have to do without when the hard times come

Sometimes, the Lord allows us to save during the days of prosperity so that we will have resources during the days of adversity!

There are two timeless principles that we do not want to miss here –

-- Always be a wise steward of the wealth God blesses you with

-- Always trust the Lord to take care of you

**2.** There is also the idea here of *urgency*

Jesus wants them to go now!

The fields are white unto the harvest now

**John 4:35 *– “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest”***

There is still an urgency that comes with the Gospel message

The time to tell the world is today

The time to go is right now

If the Lord has it on your heart to tell an individual about Him, the time to do that is today

**John 9:4 *– “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work”***

**II Corinthians 6:2 –*“(For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)”***

There will come a time when it will be too late

**3.** They were told to take only one coat **– v. 9**

In that day it was usually just the rich who could afford two coats

Jesus was sending them out as common men among common men

They were not to put on an air and come across as…

… though they were better than the people they encountered

There’s a Lesson here for you and I

Sometimes we act like we are better than the lost

We look down our self-righteous noses at others and talk about how much better we are than them

In truth, the only thing that separates us from the most wicked of sinners … is the Grace of God!

If it were not for His Grace, we would be as bad, or worse, than they are!

Shame on us for thinking that we are better than anybody!

Shame on us for sticking our religious noses up into the air, parading around before a lost world, acting like we are something special!

There was a time when we were just like them

Apart from the blood of Jesus and the Grace of God, we still would be!

**They were to take nothing with them**

**B. They were to accept the hospitality – v. 10**

***“And He said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place”***

They were to abide in whatever house they were invited

They were Not to seek out better accommodations

They were Not to look for more comfortable lodging

They were to take what they were given and they were to be happy with it

The English church of the 18th and 19th Centuries was rocked by scandal

The pastors were notorious for seeking their comfort above the needs and welfare of their churches

They were more famous for their hunting dogs and for the wines in their wine cellars then they were for preaching the Word of God or ministering to the needs of God’s people

The same could be said about many pastors today

They live like kings while their people struggle to support their lifestyles

I’m thinking of the television preachers with their opulent homes, air-conditioned doghouses, and limousines

This has left a bad taste in the mouth of this generation

The Christian life is not about being comfortable

There are times when serving the Lord is anything but comfortable

Our duty is to take whatever He gives us with a heart of gratitude and learn to be content with the things He provides

**Hebrews 13:5 a** -***“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have:”***

**I Tim. 6:6-12 …**

We should look to the hand of the Lord and trust Him to meet our needs!

If someone is serving the Lord, you can trust Him to take care of you,

That is His promise and He will stand by it,

**Psalm 37:25 – *“I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread”***

**C. They were to Shake the Dust Off – v. 11**

***“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them”***

What in the world does that mean?

 What is He talking about?

When the disciples entered a village and they and their message was rejected,

They were to leave that village and shake the dust off their sandals

The Jews often did this when they were returning from a journey to a pagan land

Before they crossed back into Israel, they would shake the dust off their clothes and off their shoes

It represented a total disassociation from the pagans and the pollution of their land

It was an illustration of Separation

In this case, Jesus told His man to do this as a sign that those who rejected the Gospel would face a harsh judgment someday

In fact, their punishment would exceed the judgment that fell on ancient Sodom and Gomorrah

**v. 11 b – *“Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city”***

Why? All Sodom and Gomorrah had was the testimony of a wayward believer named Lot

These villages had the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ!

They would face a harsh judgment for rejecting His offer of salvation

The primary message of the disciples was a message of hope and salvation

However, those who rejected the offer of salvation were given a message of judgment and damnation

The message of the church is also a message of hope and salvation

We are to point the way to Jesus Christ, extending His free offer of salvation to all who will believe it

We are to point the way to Heaven, but we must never neglect to warn sinners about the fiery judgment of Hell

No one likes to hear that message

We are ridiculed for preaching that there is a literal place called Hell where lost souls suffer for eternity

Let the world kick against that message!

Let lost people accuse us of being out of step with modern thinking

Let them mock our pleas for them to turn from their sins and come to Jesus

Let them say what they will, but the truth still stands!

There is a Heaven to gain and Hell to shun

And the only way into Heaven is through the Lord Jesus Christ,

**John 14:6 *– “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”***

The only way to avoid Hell is through the Lord Jesus

**John 5:24 *– “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”***

That is our testimony!

It is a testimony of Deliverance to those who Receive it

It is a testimony of Damnation to those who Reject it

**THEIR “MISSION”**

**THEIR “MANDATE”**

**III. THEIR “MESSAGE” – v. 12**

***“And they went out, and preached that men should repent”***

The Message of the twelve was a simple, straightforward

It was a Message that could be understood by anyone who heard it

**A. They Preached that Men should *“Repent”***

That word means *to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence one's past sins*

It refers to *a change of attitude that leads to a change of action*

It can literally mean *to be converted*

When genuine repentance takes place the change in a person's life is radical and powerful!

Most of the time repentance is only preached in its negative sense

People are told that they need to stop doing certain things, and that is true

Repentance is far more that that!

Repentance has both a negative aspect and a positive aspect

Repentance looks backward, but it also looks forward

Repentance says, “*I will stop doing the things I should not do and I will begin to do the things I should do. I will stop living a life of sin and I will start to live a life of holiness*”

Repentance rises out of a heart that is sorry for the wrongs it is guilty of committing,

**II Corinthians 7:10 *– “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death”***

That sorrow produces a desire to change the way the repenting sinner is living

That is genuine Biblical repentance and it is something that we do not see a lot of these days!

**B. Not many Preach this Message**

Most people do not like to be told that they are wrong and need to change their lives

I am here to tell you today that you will never have the blessings of God on your life until you repent of your sin!

You will never have assurance of your salvation until you repent of your sin!

In fact, if you refuse to repent of you sin, you are probably not saved to begin with!

But …

**C. That’s the Message that needs to be Preached today**

One of the characteristics of the new birth is a changed life,

**II Corinthians 5:17 *– “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”***

If you can live in sin, without seeing the need to turn from it and repent, most likely you are not saved by the Grace of God,

**I John 3:9 *– “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed (God’s Word) remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”***

Let me make it as plain as I can

The message has not changed!

The Lord still commands sinners to repent of their sin if they want to be saved from their sin,

**Acts 17:30 *– “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”***

That truth applies to you / It applies to me

It applies to every person in the world

Repentance is an essential prerequisite for a saving relationship with Jesus Christ

Have you experienced a time of genuine repentance in your life?

**THEIR “MISSION”**

**THEIR “MANDATE”**

**THEIR “MESSAGE”**

**IV. THEIR “MINISTRY” – v. 13**

***“And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them”***

The Disciples went out in the Power of the Saviour and they saw Him move and work in power and glory

Their Experience has something to say to us

**A. God Confirmed His Work to Them**

God Confirmed His work in them in powerful ways

He Manifested His power, He confirms His Message

We will probably not see the same things these men saw

What the Lord did through them is what is known as sign gifts

That is, they were manifestations of His power designed to give validity to His message

In that day people did not have the complete Word of God as we do today

They needed proof of the message

God proved His message by working powerful clear miracles among the people

**B. God Confirms His Work to Us**

Today we will see the Lord confirm His Word by changing lives

When the Gospel is preached and shared in His power,

He will use the Gospel message to draw people to Himself

The greatest miracle the Lord can achieve is the salvation of a human soul

It so far outweighs healings and the casting out of demons that they are not even in the same category!

When Jesus saves a soul it eclipses even His power in creation

I thrill when I think of the Lord making everything out of nothing

But, to think that He could take a lost, hell bound sinner and make them into a child of God is marvelous beyond words!

To consider that He would love the lost and reach out to them in grace is amazing

To think that He would die on the cross to redeem them from their sins is wonderful beyond belief!

To think that He would save people who are trapped in their sins is a miracle the mind can hardly comprehend!

**CONCLUSION**

Our Saviour is in the life-changing, soul-saving business!

One of the most amazing truths I ever learned is that He desires us to have a part in His ministry

When we hear His call, accept His commission, walk in faith and share His message with a lost and dying world,

We can expect Him to honor His Word,

**Isaiah 55:11 *– “So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”***

**THEIR “MISSION” IS OUR MISSION**

**THEIR “MANDATE” IS OUR MANDATE**

**THEIR “MESSAGE” IS OUR MESSAGE**

**THEIR “MINISTRY” IS OUR MINISTRY**