

Teaching Plan EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Date: March 31, 2019

Lesson Title: "Sends"

Lesson Passage: Mark 6:7-13, 30-32

ABOUT THIS LESSON

A part of Jesus' purpose in choosing his disciples was to multiply his ministry by sending them out to spread his teaching (Mark 3:14). After they had been with him long enough to understand his purpose, he sent them out on this mission, after giving them careful instructions. When they returned, reporting amazing success in their teaching and healing ministry, Jesus took them on a retreat in a solitary place, to recuperate from their efforts.

TEACHING/LEARNING GOALS

(1) Describe the nature of the first teaching mission of the disciples of Jesus. (2) Explain the relationship between their healing ministry and their teaching.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

Begin with this: An old legend imagines Jesus arriving in heaven after his ascension and being welcomed by all the angels. The angel Gabriel says to him, "Master, you suffered much, dying for the sins of mankind. Does every one on earth know it?" "No," replied the Savior, "just a handful of folks in Jerusalem and Galilee know about it." "But, Master," Gabriel continued, "how have you planned for everyone to know of your great love?" The Master replied, "I asked Peter and James and John, and a few other of my followers to carry the message into all the world. I told them to tell others, who will tell yet others, until the last person in the farthest corner of the world has heard the story." With a worried expression on his face Gabriel asks, "But, Master, what if they fail? What if Peter and James and John just don't tell others? What if they just go back to their fishing? And suppose Matthew returns to his tax booth in Capernaum. What then? What is your back-up plan?" After a pause, Jesus answers calmly, "Gabriel, I have no other plan."

TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Read Mark 6:7-9, then comment: (1) Itinerant religious teachers were a common sight in Eastern lands in that day. Heathen preachers equipped with staffs and wallets traveled about speaking their messages. And pairs of Jews, as well, were sent out as collectors of alms. (2) But Jesus' disciples were forbidden to collect alms ("no bag, no money in their belts.") NOTE: The word "bag" referred to the begging bag carried by itinerant preachers. (3) Jesus' disciples were to travel "light." They could wear sandals, but were told not to carry an extra tunic. NOTE: It was to be a short trip. Their journey about Galilee would not be long, in either time or distance, and they could rely upon the hospitality of the people for food and shelter. APPLICATION: A contemporary example shows the wisdom of these instructions. One woman who came to South Korea with a church missions team had a great deal of luggage, for she brought numerous packages of processed food, since she was reluctant to eat Korean food. For fear of being contaminated by the poor communities in which

the team was working, she seldom ventured out of her hotel room. Needless to say, her contribution to the missions effort was quite negligible.

2. Comment on verses 10-11: (1) Verse 10 reflects the fact that, in a culture where hotels and inns were virtually unknown, extending hospitality to wayfarers was a common practice. (2) The instruction in verse 10 was designed to prevent the practice of some religious teachers who went from house to house, imposing on the hospitality of as many people as possible. (3) "Any place" in v. 11 probably refers to a local synagogue, where the disciples would naturally go to deliver their message. ("and they refuse to hear you," v. 11, would fit this interpretation). (4) To "shake off the dust that is on your feet" (v. 11b) was not a curse. It was a symbolic act that meant that the place was unresponsive to the word of God.

3. Explain the essential message of the disciples ("repentance") and the significance of "casting out demons" and healing the sick in Mark 6:12-13: (1) "Repentance" was literally "turning around." It denoted a complete change, a turning from sin to righteousness as revealed by the teachings of Jesus. (2) "Casting out demons" and healing the sick demonstrated the authority of Jesus' teachings. (Refer to Mark 1:27, where the exorcism of an "unclean spirit" causes the people to believe that the teaching of Jesus was authoritative.)

4. Comment on Mark 6:30-32: As we are told in v. 31, the disciples needed to rest after their arduous mission. They must have been hungry and tired, after their involvement with the crowds; and they were very glad to go away "to a lonely place by themselves." But, also, Jesus wanted to use this retreat as an opportunity for "de-briefing" them, a time to instruct them further on the basis of "all that they had done and taught." (In this sense, we might regard the mission they had just completed as part of their internship.)

CLOSING THE LESSON

To conclude the lesson, share this quotation from a biblical writer: "Up to this point, Jesus' predominant word was 'come.' Now another verb is added, 'go.' So, the question arises for each of us: Is ours a commissioned life which the Master's word 'go' has put in motion? Are we in the parade or merely on the reviewing stand?"

Lucien Coleman PO Box 2951, Weatherford TX 76086 682-262-1312