

Easier Said Than Done

Mark 6:1-13

KEY VERSES

He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. ² On the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary^[a] and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense^[b] at him. ⁴ Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown and among their own kin and in their own house." ⁵ And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. ⁶ And he was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. ⁷ He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. ⁸ He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff: no bread, no bag, no money in their belts, ⁹ but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. ¹⁰ He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. ¹¹ If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." ¹² So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. ¹³ They cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

This week's passage catches us a bit off guard, after a string of scripture highlighting Jesus' healing and power. Jesus has returned to His hometown of Nazareth where He is not only underperforming but being mocked and questioned. Our tendency to focus on the more positive aspects of Jesus' identity can cause us to overlook passages like this that reveal His humanity. Jesus was deemed both fully human and fully divine – and sometimes we relate a little too closely to His human experiences, and this makes us uncomfortable. The humanity of Jesus completes our faith, however, and reminds us how much God truly loves us and can identify with our troubles! **How can this reminder of Jesus' humanity reveal what is troubling you, and help you trust Him with it?**

Texts like this remind us that life will not always be easy. Jesus assures us, however, that these lonely spaces are **not** where we belong. He prepares us to carry out His work, just as He did for His disciples. And to do this, we must face the human experience, and use what He told the disciples as our model. **Consider how each of these commands play out in your life, and where you need to do more work:**

- 1) He tells them to go two by two, giving them authority (v. 7). Our journey is made full in community. **Who walks with you? How might you need to take a step in this area?**
- 2) He commands them to take nothing but the essentials for their journey (v. 8). We tend to do everything and have everything, which carries weight and the need for perfectionism. **What do you need to do to just carry the essentials?**
- 3) He commands them to shake the dust off their feet (v. 11). This is an acknowledgement that our journey will have loneliness and rejection, but to keep going, because this is not our final space. **What dust do you need to shake off your feet?**

