


The Gospel of Mark
Part 20
The Training of the Twelve

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2024.4.14



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
 Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God’s will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “Talking Points, Walking Points” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don’t linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time”, are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday’s message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
 ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?

- Pastor Doug described TCC's process for transforming ordinary people into disciples of Christ with three words: "**Know**", "**Grow**" and "**Show**". To **know** Christ as one’s personal Savior is necessarily the foundation.

According to John 17:3, **what** is eternal life?

According to John 3:1-21, **how** can a person be born again?

How confident are you that you are born again?

- How does 2 Peter 3:18 **summarize** two aspects of growth to which we are to give particular attention?

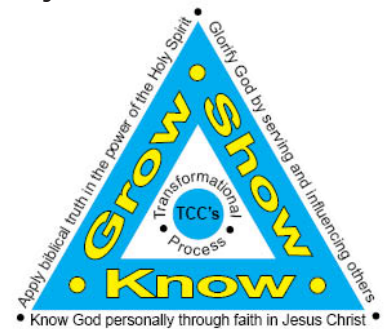
How does 2 Peter 1:2-11 **expand** on the steps a Christian disciple must take in order to **grow**?

Which of those steps are you currently taking? Which one(s) do you most need to develop?

- Read 1 Timothy 4:12. List the areas in which we are to “**show** ourselves examples of those who believe”?

- Read Matthew 5:14-16. **How** exactly do we show God’s light to believers? ...to non-believers?

Are you doing those things? Tell us about it.



Sermon Summary Key Text: Mark 6:7-13

Jesus was a traveling teacher—constantly on the go (Mark 6:6). As He traveled and taught the people in the villages, he also taught His closest disciples as they walked with him. Jesus intensified their training by sending them on a mission trip (v. 7-13)—which he had made clear from the very beginning when he had appointed them (3:14–15). Since that time, Jesus’ disciples had observed him as he taught and performed miraculous signs. Now he paired them up and gave them authority over unclean spirits (v. 7). Notice that their calling came before their sending. The same is true for us (Matthew 11:28 cf. 28:19-20). This is the pattern: coming and going, being summoned and then being sent.

We tend to think that the two words, “disciple” and “apostle”, are synonyms, but they are not. A disciple is a learner, a student. An apostle is someone who is commissioned by his master with the master’s own authority, then sent out in the master’s name. This distinction is critically important because the Apostles are the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20). They have authority over the church—authority given to them by Jesus who then sent them out to convey his message. (The Apostle par excellence, of course, was Jesus Himself—see Hebrews 3:1 and John 12:49.) The twelve were chosen out of a larger group of disciples to be Jesus’ special Apostles (see Luke 6:13). To this special group he gave his own authority—authority no one has in this day and age. We can’t separate apostolic authority from Jesus’ authority. We must not pick and choose what we will, and will not, believe and obey.

But why did Jesus send out the twelve in pairs? Think about it: they could have covered twice the ground had Jesus sent them out individually. But sending them out two by two provided support and companionship. It also established the truth of their testimony (Deuteronomy 19:15; Matthew 18:16). Jesus also gave them power and authority over unclean spirits (v. 7). Jesus gave them this authority to authenticate them as agents of revelation (2 Corinthians 12:12; John 3:2). Bona fide miracles are restricted to those on whom God places his seal of approval. (Imagine God sending Moses to confront Pharaoh, but not giving him authenticating miracles. It would be like God commanding you to go to Vladimir Putin to demand that he immediately withdraw from Ukraine! But convincing Pharaoh wasn’t Moses’ only hesitation. Moses’ miracles also convinced the Israelites that God had commissioned him to deliver them from their slavery (Exodus 4:5).) Jesus gave the twelve power over demons for the same reasons (Luke 11:20). Successfully commanding demons to come out of possessed people would reveal that Jesus had bestowed kingdom authority to the twelve.

Notice also that Jesus instructed them to travel light (v. 8-9). Jesus was directing his disciples not to take a spare pair of sandals: “Just take the ones you have on.” He said that they could take their walking stick (the shepherd’s “staff”), but not a weapon (the shepherd’s “rod”)—see Psalm 23:4. And he didn’t permit them to take a beggar’s bag or extra clothing—as they ministered from place to place, they were to rely upon the hospitality of those who received them as friends and to depend on the Father in heaven on this mission. Jesus also told them “wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town” (v. 10). Be content with what God provides; don’t be constantly looking around for better accommodations. But if any place does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, “shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them” (v. 11, cf. Acts 13:51).

Catch this: there is no such thing as neutrality with Christ. You are either for him or you are against him. These apostles were to confront people with a yes or no decision concerning Jesus; there can be no middle ground. If they reject the message, they will deprive themselves of the opportunity to receive healing and deliverance. If they continue in their dogged defiance, they will face the judgment of God. That is the choice. Today, when we invite people to place their trust in Christ, we tend to focus on the benefits—forgiveness and eternal life. We don’t usually add: “Those who refuse to trust in Jesus, realize that you will go straight to hell.” The gospel is a two-edged sword; it offers forgiveness and eternal life, but if you refuse that offer, it promises God’s judgment (Luke 10:12-14, cf. Genesis 19:24-25). Jesus was not hesitant to talk about the final judgment. In fact, He talked about it quite a lot.

For the record, there are two future judgments: the “Great White Throne Judgment” is where unbelievers will be condemned, but believers will face “The Judgment Seat of Christ”, which determines eternal rewards based on our faithfulness and obedience. The issue is not heaven or hell; that is decided the moment one places his trust in Christ. So it really matters how we live as Christians. God always is fair in his judgments; there will be varying degrees of punishment in hell and varying degrees of rewards in heaven. God always judges fairly—so Jesus’ statement in Luke 10:12-14 should chill us to the bone! Today, not many people believe in a coming future judgment. They confidently go about their lives giving little thought to God and their accountability to Him. But Jesus is clear, judgment is coming. To benefit from Jesus’ atoning death, we must repent (v. 12). Repentance is a call to turn from sin and idols, to return to the God of the Bible, and to receive Jesus as Messiah-King. On this mission trip the apostles learned dependence, commitment, self-sacrifice and the reality of rejection. Some will receive our message, but many will not. Some of the seeds we plant will bear fruit. Many will not. It is God’s responsibility to convert people, not ours. Our responsibility is to faithfully and lovingly share the message. Jesus first calls us to come to him in faith and then he sends us out in the world to minister in his name (Matthew 11:28; 28:19-20). It is our responsibility to share the gospel message; it is God’s responsibility to convert people, so be prepared to face rejection. It’s part of being a follower of Christ.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see below) *is useful for studying any topic.*
Let's use it to explore the life of a disciple in the early church...

Monday—Study Acts 6:1-6.

Tuesday—Study Acts 9:1-31.

Wednesday—Study Acts 11:19-30.

Thursday—Study Acts 13:48–52.

Friday—Study Acts 14:19–23.

Saturday—Study Acts 18:22–28.

Need blank copies for doing more

"Five Question Bible Study"?

e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]