From Teaching to Training

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Date: 11 December 2022

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.! We worship all throughout the year. On the platform, you saw all kinds of teenagers because our middle school and high school youth choir, they meet not just at Christmas.

They meet all throughout the school year and serve and lead us. And of course, our adult choir does as well. So much gifting and so much talent that the Lord has given our church.
But talent is everywhere. Hearts that love Jesus are what move us and lead us in worship. And so we are thankful, not just for talent, much more than that, for their heart and for the love of Christ that those have that were leading us today.
If you've got your Bible, turn with me, please, to Mark chapter 6. As we pick back up today where we have been for most of this calendar year as a congregation, walking through the Gospel of Mark.
It's been a few weeks since we were there. We stepped outside of Mark for a few weeks to look at the Old Testament, just to provide some balance for us this year. But as we jump back into the Gospel of Mark, something interesting is taking place.
[1:47] You'll remember a few weeks ago when we looked at verses 1 to 6, that Jesus was rejected. That those who heard Him and did not believe questioned who He was and where He had come from and questioned His family and questioned the source of His authority.

They did not believe in Him and did not believe in Him.
And He went about among the villages teaching. The fact that people rejected Him did not alter His message.
It did not alter His mission. It's not that He was indifferent at the response. It's not that He didn't care about their response.
It's just that the rejection of those who refused to believe would not keep Him from doing what He had been sent to do. And there is so much for our church to understand about the end of verse 6.
[3:19] He went about teaching. He just kept doing what He was sent and called to do. That must be true of our church.

We live in days where, in a season now, where we see very clear evidence of the Lord at work. And we see very clear evidence of the Lord adding to our church.
We see it today with more than 200 people on the platform leading us with our choirs. We see it every couple of months with our membership class.
We just finished another one this past Wednesday with another large group of those who are joining our church. We see it Sunday after Sunday with about 1,000 people or more here most Sundays this school year.
We look at that and we can see that the Lord is adding to our church. And we're excited about all of the people the Lord has brought to our congregation. But let it be said clearly, even in days like these, that if tomorrow people in our congregation said, we don't want to hear the truth of the Scripture.
[4:38] If tomorrow people in our own church said that if we don't change the message, they're not coming. Let's be crystal clear, next week we will do something, and that is we will teach the Word.

And if people stop coming to our church and if attendance dwindles down to dozens instead of hundreds, we still will not change our message because our mission has not changed.
And we need to understand that whether it's days of plenty or days of want, we are to preach the gospel.

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There are times where Jesus preached and the crowds were so numerous, you couldn't even get to Him. And other times where people would thoroughly and outright reject Him.
Either way, the message did not change because the mission had not changed. And we must understand that. And we must guard against looking at churches that are larger than us and being envious or looking at churches smaller than us and thinking that we're somehow superior to them.
[5:53] Nothing could be further from the truth from either one of those. Our call is to be faithful and let the Lord build His church. And those may be days of many salvations and days of many new ministries.

There may be days of pruning. There may be days of judgment. The Lord is sovereign over His church. Our responsibility is to preach the gospel and to love people.
We're to love the truth and we're to love people. And whatever the results of those things are, then let them be. But Jesus is our example that when He would preach and people would respond, He kept preaching.
And when He preached and people rejected, verse 6, He just kept doing it anyway. When you come to verse 7 of chapter 6, there's a bit of a transition in the gospel of Mark.
What we have seen for six and a half chapters to this point is Jesus calling His disciples, calling the people who would follow Him.
[7:04] We have seen Him elevate them. He's got these 12 apostles now. But something in the gospel of Mark is transitioning in verses 7 to 12.

What we've seen is Jesus teaching and Jesus ministering and Jesus healing. And His apostles have been with Him. And they have heard Him and they have watched Him.
They have had a front row seat at what He was doing. But when you come to verses 7 to 12, it's time to send them out. But we're going from teaching to training.
There are three words that I have tried my best to have in the forefront of my mind as a father while my kids were being raised in our house. And those three words were teach, train, and release.
You teach your children. You tell them the truth. You flood them with truth. They may get it. They may not. They may believe it. They may not. They may live according to it.
[8:09] They may not. But you just teach. No matter what. You just teach your children. As a parent, you don't determine what you teach your children based on their response to it.

You just teach the truth over and over and over. And then you move from teaching to training. Where it's not just them listening to you.
Now you're training them. Now they're starting to do it themselves. They take the lessons and the lectures. And they begin to, with their own hands and feet, do what you've been teaching and now training them to do.
And as a parent, the end of that, teach, train, release. Now you release them into the world to be who God has equipped and called them to be.
My job as a father today with two grown adult sons, in one way, is very different than it was just a few years ago. We've tried to teach.
[9:10] We've tried to train. Now we've released. Now in another sense, the job of a parent never changes. We're still trying to teach. We're still trying to train and model with their lives.

We're still trying to pray for our children through the seasons of life and encourage them. But that transition happens when you go from imparting information to letting them do the work to then releasing them to go and do it fully.
You see that beginning to transition here in the Gospel of Mark in chapter 6. Jesus is going to take his 12 disciples and they're going to take what they have been hearing him teach and now we're going to go to training.
They're going to get to go do what they've been watching him do. Look at the text with me in verse 7. And he called the 12 and began to send them out two by two and gave them 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.
[10:23] 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.

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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. They're going to take what they've been taught.
And go do it. Teach, train, release. And in this short description of, essentially this is a short-term mission trip is what you have.
This is Jesus. He's been teaching his disciples. Now we're going to train them and we're going to send them out. And it's this short-term mission trip. They're not gone forever.
Jesus isn't leaving them. We're just going to send them out two by two. Let them do themselves what they've been watching and observing Jesus do. Then they're going to come back and Jesus will be able to continue to teach them, continue to train them, strengthen them, build them up, correct them where necessary.
[11:36] So this is essentially him telling his disciples, we're going to take a short-term trip. We're going to send you out. And I want you to make note of a few words that I think are important when we consider this event in the life of Jesus and the disciples.

First is the word authority. The disciples carried the authority of Jesus. He called the twelve and began to send them out.
And he gave them authority. Back in chapter 3, verse 13 and 14, you'll recall what they were supposed to do. The disciples were going to be with Jesus and then go out on his behalf.
First, you have to spend time with him, then you're going to be sent out to preach, chapter 3 said.
That's how it is for us today. We spend time with Jesus and then we go and serve.
We spend time with Jesus and then we go preach. We spend time in Bible study, then we go and minister. And they were under the authority of Jesus.
[12:46] Much like if you're a football fan, a coach calls a play from the sidelines and the team huddles together or they've got hand signals and they have a play. And their responsibility is to carry out the play of the coach.

And what you cannot have are 11 offensive players who half of them think, I don't like that play. I'll do it this way. And this group says, I really think we ought to run the ball.
And this guy thinks, I think we ought to pass the ball. And this guy thinks, I think we ought to take time off the clock. And this player thinks, I think we ought to go hurry up offense. And everybody just does their own thing. If you do that, it's a disaster.
The role of the players is to do what the one called them to do. The execution, the follow through is the responsibility of the players.
But it's all under the authority of the coach who has called them to the play. The disciples are going out, but they're going out under the authority of Jesus.
[13:52] And he calls them two by two. Partly this is companionship and partly this is safety. The Bible tells us that two are better than one.

If one falls, there's someone to pick them up. That's Ecclesiastes 4. The Bible tells us that a fact was established and confirmed by the testimony of two or three.
And so he sends them out on purpose on the short-term mission trip, essentially two by two, under the authority of Jesus. And it's quite an interesting group, these 12 disciples.
None of them were religious leaders. None of them were rabbis. None of them were priests. These were common, ordinary men called by the Lord to do an amazing work.
Their authority is not their own. It comes from Jesus. The word in the original language that helps us to understand this.
[15:04] Exousia. This isn't just the power to do something. It's the authority to do something. Some people may have the ability to do it, but they don't have the authority.

This is the word that's being emphasized here. It's not just that they can preach. They have the authority to preach. They don't just have the ability to speak words. They have the authority to declare truth because they are preaching under the authority of Christ.
And understand, this is no easy task they've been given. The way that Mark arranges his gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is very telling to us.
Verse 6, the people rejected Christ. And now he tells them, I want you to go out and preach the same message I just preached.
And the disciples have to be thinking, now this didn't go real well for you. And if they rejected you, won't they reject us? But the message never changes.

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[16:09] Because the mission never changes. And Jesus isn't hiding that it's going to be hard. He tells them in verse 11, if they will not listen to you, here's what you do.

Why would he tell them that? Because he knows there will be people who will not listen to them. This is a hard task. But they are sent out and given authority.
And they are called to preach. Luke 9, when he describes this same event, says he adds to it that Jesus sent them out to preach the kingdom of God.
To preach it. Caruso. To declare. To be a herald. To make clear. The kingdom of God is here. Authority. Make note of a second word. Simplicity. The disciples were to simply rely upon God to meet their needs.
[17:13] Simplicity. Look at the text. Verse 8. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff. A staff was a walking stick.

It would help you as you were traversing difficult terrain. It would help you with balance. It could help protect you against enemy. If they attacked you, it could help protect you against an animal. Take nothing with you except a staff. No bread. No bag. No money in their belts, verse 8 says. In other words, they are to travel light.
Travel light and trust the Lord. If you know your Old Testament, when you read this, it takes you back to the exodus in your mind. Where they were just to keep things simple.
No bag. No beggar's bag. We're not taking a beggar's bag to go out and look pitiful. Or to look poor. Or to look needy. We're not going out trying to get funds from people because we want them to feel sorry for us.
[18:17] Not on this trip. They're just to simply trust the Lord to provide. Now, this was not always what the instructions were.

There are other times where Jesus sends his disciples out and it looks a little different. Luke 22, for example. Jesus said to his disciples, When I sent you out without a purse or a bag or sandals, did you lack anything?
And they said nothing. Verse 36, Luke 22. Now, however, Jesus told them, the one with the purse should take it. And likewise a bag. And the one without a sword should sell his cloak.
The one without a sword should sell his cloak and buy one. So, in Luke 22, he sends them out. And he says, you can take some provisions. You can go and you can take some extra things.
Well, why is it in Mark 6, we take nothing. And other times he says to take things. Here's why. This is a short-term mission trip. This is a boot camp, if you will.
[19:22] This is the apostles learning in a boot camp style how to survive with nothing other than just trusting the Lord. It's not that making provisions is wrong.

This is not in Mark 6, a call to poverty. This isn't saying that it's wrong to have things. This is saying in the training of the apostles, they need to understand what it's like to trust only in Christ.
Most of you know one of the things I get to do is I get to help train doctoral students at the master's seminary. And so, every week of my life, I'm watching these students preach.
And I'm grading their preaching. And I meet with them for about an hour at a time to try to help them develop as preachers. And from time to time, one of the things I will assign them to do is to preach without any sermon notes.
And it's not because I think sermon notes are wrong. I use them every week. It's because if you're overly relying upon your notes, then sometimes you have a difficult time engaging with the people because you're so relying upon your notes.
[20:34] So, it's not that notes are wrong, but at times you need to do without them so you can learn to have the message in your heart, in your mind, and not be relying upon them. So, sometimes I'll have my students go through a short-term preaching boot camp, so to speak, where they don't get to use their notes.

Yes, not that notes are wrong, and not that I want them to never use notes. I just want them to be able to do that so they can learn and grow from the experience. That's what's going on here in Mark 6.
It's not that you can't ever take provisions with you. It's not that forever you need to do things just with the least amount of things possible. But these disciples need to learn. They need to grow. They need to be trained. They need to understand that if all they have is the authority of Christ, that's all they really need. And so, he gives them authority, but then calls them to leave and to serve with simplicity.

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He says, you can wear sandals, but don't put on two tunics. The second tunic was what you would wear if you were cold. It served as an extra layer, essentially like an extra sheet at night if you're cold.
[21:48] But he's saying the plan's not for you to be homeless during this short-term mission trip. We're going to trust that homes are going to be opened up for you to stay in. Simplicity.

Third, write down the word contentment. Contentment. The disciples were to be content with what God provided for them.
Verse 10, And he said to them, Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. The culture in the first century was known for hospitality.
And the disciples were going to go out, and they were going to look for a place to stay, someone who would receive them, while they go and preach under the authority of Christ. But they were on a mission trip, not vacation.
They weren't to be looking for upgrades. They weren't to have someone offer to keep them, and they say, you know what, how many square footage is your place?
[22:50] I don't know if I want to take that one. They weren't to go stay for two nights in this house, and then say, you know what, I've got a better offer. I'm going to move to a bigger house down the street for the rest of the trip.

What false teachers were known to do was they would be welcomed into a house, and they would try to drain the resources from their host. And once they got all of the money or the food or the resource they could, then the false teacher would go find another house and try to drain them dry as well.
Jesus says, be completely different than the false teachers. I'm not sending you out on a vacation. I'm not sending you out so you can look for the biggest house, the nicest room, the most money, the biggest gifts.
I'm sending you out under my authority with the simple task to preach the gospel and be content. And maybe these two disciples over here got the big house with the pool for a few nights, and you're over here on a cot in the hut.
Be content. Maybe the house over here cooks great meals and has great dessert, and the people over here give you Brussels sprouts and peas at night.
[24:06] Be content. We're not looking to upgrade. I'm going to send you out. You're going to trust the doors that get opened.

You're not going to operate like the false teachers do. And you're going to be content. Write down a fourth word. Accountability.
Accountability. Verse 11. 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.
Why does Jesus throw this part in? Because He knows rejection is coming. But they're accountable to not change the message.
What He does not say is, I'm going to send you out, and people are going to receive you, and if it doesn't go very well, look for a different approach.
[25:17] If they don't like preaching, look for a different method. If they don't like the gospel, look for a different message. He doesn't say anything of the kind. They're accountable. Not for results, but for faithfulness.

They were accountable. Not for the way their host would respond, but for their fidelity to Christ. What He doesn't say to the disciples is, is I want you to preach, and it's your responsibility to make sure they believe.
That's not what He says. He doesn't say, I want you to preach, and if they will not listen to you, you've got to find some way to make the gospel more palatable for them. That's not what He says. Your accountability is to be faithful. Faithful. Be faithful. That's true for you individually.
[26:23] That's true for our church as a congregation. That's true for every ministry inside of our church. Be faithful.

Some will believe, some will not. Some will repent, some will reject. Some will be converted, and some will appear to be converted, but be frauds.
Some will be with us for five years and never see them again. Some will be with us until they take their final breath. But be faithful. Accountable.

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To the one who has called us. And Jesus has already shown them this in chapter 6, verse 6, that after He was rejected, He went among the villages teaching.
Just being faithful. Which gets us to our final word, obedience. Obedience. Back to verse 11.
[27:28] If they don't receive you, and they will not listen to you, shake out the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them. Meaning, you're not going to stay and beg them. You're not going to change the message.

You're not going to do whatever it takes to get them to like you. You're going to be faithful. You're going to love Christ. You're going to love people. You're going to present the gospel. And if they repent, we praise the Lord.
And if they don't, we keep preaching. Verse 12, So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent.
They did what they were called to do. It's not fancy. It's not flashy. It was just obedience.
They went and they shared about the work of Christ and the words of Christ. They went out and proclaimed that people should repent.
[28:38] And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil, many who were sick and healed them. They were taught and now they're being trained.

Ministry is not going to be easy for the disciples. Rejection is certain. They will sometimes do well. They will sometimes falter. But Christ will keep teaching them and He will keep training them. And then after Christ is raised back to life and ascends into heaven, He will release them with what we know as the Great Commission where He calls the church to take the gospel and to all the world under the authority of Christ.
Teach, train, release. and so, as we think of this as His children and as a church, we need these same words to be true for us.
The same things that mark the disciples in Mark 6 need to mark us. We're under the authority of Christ. Christ. We are simple in our ministry.
[30:07] We are content with what the Lord has given to us. We are accountable to say what He told us to say and we are obedient to do what He's told us to do.

Like the apostles, sometimes we may do this well and other times we fall. That's why Ephesians 4 says that to the church, the Lord gave pastors and teachers to keep teaching and to keep training and to keep equipping the saints for the work of ministry because it's not the church's job to just watch one or two or five or six men do their job and use their gifts.
It's the pastor's responsibility to equip the saints so that we are all doing the work of ministry. Where does that come from? It comes from Ephesians 4. Where did that come from in Ephesians 4?
The very model of Christ. Teach, train, release for ministry. All under the authority of Christ.
Under the authority of His Word. Lord, and so even this Christmas season, these are good words for us to think about even at Christmas time.
[31:36] That we remember that with all that's going on in the world around us, that we live under the authority of Christ. Our responsibility is not to please everyone in the world.

We live under the authority of Christ. Christ. And like the disciples had a simple charge of how to live, let your life be ruled by simplicity.
Don't let your life get too complicated. Don't let your ministry get too complicated. Love Christ and serve people.
Don't let things get much more complicated than that. We spoke on this a few weeks ago. It's not that it's easy. It's just not that complicated.
It may be hard to do, but it's pretty simple to understand. Love Christ, live under His authority, and lead those in your family and in your ministry to do the same.
[32:40] Contentment. It's a good word for us this time of year. Contentment. Content with what God has given you. Content with the providence of God has led you.

Content with the family He's given you. Content with the blessings He's given you. Be content. Be accountable.
Accountable to understand the gospel. Accountable to believe the gospel. Accountable to keep Christ the center of your family this Christmas season, every season. And then finally, even here at Christmas time, obedience is a good word for us to remember that we are to obey the things the Lord has revealed to us through His word.

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So Jesus takes His 12 disciples and up to this point in Mark, it's been, listen to me preach. Watch me serve. Watch me heal. Observe me doing ministry.
And now He says, I'm going to send you out. And they say, oh my goodness, we got to get all of our services. You don't need a bunch of stuff. Take your staff. I want you to be able to walk.
[33:51] I want you to be able to clear rocks and debris out of the way. I want you to be able to protect yourself if a stray dog comes up to you. Other than that, that's all we're taking. We're not taking a bunch of stuff. You pack for vacation, you may take four suitcases.

You pack for the mission trip, take a backpack. You don't need different shoes for every evening. You're just going to serve. That's what He's telling them.
I need to take you through a short-term trip where you're just going to rely upon my provision, my authority, nothing else. I've taught you.
Now I'm going to train you. And soon, I'm going to release you. But even then, it's all the message and the mission that has come from Christ.
Church, that's what must forever guide us. His message, His mission, His authority, and ultimately, His glory.
[35:15] And the reason we talk like that and the reason we try to act like that here is because this is the very example Jesus has given to us.

He's teaching through His Word. He's training you through your spiritual gifts. And as Christians, He releases us into the world not to do our own thing, but like Christ did when He was here in the flesh to do the will of the One who has sent us.
Lord, we thank You today for Your Word. We thank You for the truth. We thank You that we can understand and we pray that we would believe and apply.
Help us as church to be faithful no matter what, to never lose sight of the fact that we have been called to speak Your words for Your glory.
We want to love You. We want to love people. We want to be faithful and obedient, living under authority, content, and accountable. May Christ be magnified through our church, through our homes, and through our lives.
[36:41] It's in His name that we pray. Amen. Just a couple of quick things before we go. God bless you. To be upon you, let me already know what you think it's in His name in Jesus.

Thank you. To be upon you, He has been on your field. Thank you. Thank you. For your family, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself, or an empty yourself. into your house. But it's in Jesus, that it's in Jesus. The song is for you. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus. It's in Jesus.
It's in Jesus. Thank you.

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