

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 9

Mark 6:1 – 56

Review

- Baptism and Temptation (Mark 1:1-13)
- Year long ministry in Judea (John 1:19-4:45)
 - First Miracle in Cana – Water to wine; Cleansing of Temple; Encounter with Nicodemus; Woman at the well in Samaria
- Galilean Ministry (1:14-7:23)
 - Summary of Jesus Teaching
 - Calling the first disciples as fishermen
 - Healing a demoniac in Capernaum
 - Healing Simon's mother-in-law
 - Healing many people
 - Preaching tour through Galilee
 - Healing a Leper during the preaching tour
 - Healing a Paralytic
 - The Calling of Matthew
 - Conflict over fasting and parables of cloth and wineskin
 - Conflict over Sabbath work
 - Conflict over Sabbath healing
 - Teaching and healing great multitudes
 - Choosing the twelve
 - Opposition of Jesus' family
 - Opposition of the Scribes – the unpardonable sin
 - Jesus teaches in parables
 - Parable of the sower and soils
 - The purpose of parables
 - Explanation of the parable of the sower and soils
 - Parable of the lamp
 - Parable of the growing seed
 - Parable of the mustard seed
 - Summary statement on parables
 - Jesus calms the sea
 - Jesus heals the Gerasene Demoniac
 - Jesus heals a woman with a hemorrhage
 - Jesus raises Jairus' daughter

Last Visit to Nazareth - Rejection

¹Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown; and His disciples followed Him. ²When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get these things, and what is *this* wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? ³"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. ⁴Jesus said to them, "**A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household.**" ⁵And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. ⁶And He wondered at their unbelief.

- After raising Jairus' daughter in Capernaum, Jesus travels about 20 miles southwest to Nazareth to His hometown. Joseph and Mary settled here after their return from Egypt (Mat 2:23). After Jesus' baptism and temptation, He returned to Nazareth where He was rejected and the townspeople attempted to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:16-28). The reaction during this last visit to Nazareth was similar.

- Jesus brought His disciples with Him to give them a ministry example before they were sent out on their own.
- As was His custom, He entered the synagogue and began to teach. The listeners were “astounded, overwhelmed” – the same as in Capernaum (1:22). This astonishment soon gave way to the “who does He think He is” attitude – how could a mere carpenter teach and perform miracles.
- Son of Mary – This was a derogatory phrase “since a man was not described as his mother’s son in Jewish usage even if she was a widow, except by insult.” The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- Brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon – Most likely other children of Joseph and Mary, though some believe Joseph’s children from a previous marriage or Jesus’ cousins. James became a leader in the early church at Jerusalem (cf. Acts 15:13-21) and wrote the Epistle of James. Judas wrote the Epistle of Jude. Nothing is known of Joses and Simon or His sisters.
- Jesus’ response to the townspeople’s offense was to state a proverb. “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his *own* relatives and in his *own* household” meaning “familiarity breeds contempt”.
- He could do no miracles – There was no limitation on Jesus’ power. Jesus sovereignly chose to perform miracles in the presence of faith. Here He was “astonished” at their unbelief since they claimed to know Him so well.
- Their refusal to believe in Jesus pictured what the disciples would soon experience (cf. 6:7-13) and what Mark’s readers (then and now) would experience in the advance of the gospel. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament

Jesus’ Third Teaching Tour Through Galilee

^{6b}And He was going around the villages teaching.

- Jesus’ first tour is summarized in Mark 1:35-39:

³⁵In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left *the house*, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. ³⁶Simon and his companions searched for Him; ³⁷they found Him, and said* to Him, “Everyone is looking for You.” ³⁸He said* to them, “Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for.” ³⁹And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons. Mark 1:35-39
- Jesus’ second tour is summarized in Luke 8:1-3:

¹Soon afterwards, He *began* going around from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of God. The twelve were with Him, Luke 8:1
- This teaching tour set the stage for sending out the twelve.

The Twelve Sent Out Two-by-Two

⁷And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; ⁸and He instructed them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, except a mere staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belt— ⁹but *to* wear sandals; and *He added*, “Do not put on two tunics.” ¹⁰And He said to them, “Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. ¹¹“Any place that 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.” ¹²They went out and preached that *men* should repent. ¹³And they were casting out many demons and were anointing with oil many sick people and healing them.

- Summoned the twelve – From among all the disciples that were following Him.
- The disciples were sent:
 - In pairs – for mutual encouragement and to meet the Jewish legal requirement for a witness. A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. Deut 19:15
 - Given authority over unclean spirits – the means to authenticate their message.

- Taking nothing – no bread, no bag, no money, only one tunic – trust completely for their provision. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- The two concessions of a staff and sandals are unique to Mark. Both are forbidden in Matthew 10:9-10, and the staff is forbidden in Luke 9:3. Matthew used *προμηθευσαί* (“to procure, acquire”), instead of *λαβειν* (“to take”); so the disciples were not to acquire *additional* staffs or sandals—but to use the ones they already had. Mark and Luke both use *αφορμας*, “to take or carry along.” But Luke says, “Take nothing for the journey—no staff (*αφορμας*),” presumably no additional staff; while Mark says, “Take nothing for the journey **except** (cf. Mark 6:5) a staff (*αφορμας*),” presumably the one already in use. Each writer stressed a different aspect of Jesus’ instructions. The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- **shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them** – Jews would carefully remove the dust from their feet when leaving Gentile region and reentering Jewish territory. This symbolically showed those that had rejected the gospel that they were spiritually like Gentiles.
- The disciples 1) preached repentance, 2) cast out many demons, and 3) healed many sick people.
- Anointing with oil is unique to Mark’s account and indicated that the disciples were acting by Jesus’ authority and power, not their own.

John’s Fate Recalled

¹⁴And King Herod heard *of it*, for His name had become well known; and *people* were saying, “John the Baptist has risen from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him.” ¹⁵But others were saying, “He is Elijah.” And others were saying, “*He is* a prophet, like one of the prophets *of old*.” ¹⁶But when Herod heard *of it*, he kept saying, “John, whom I beheaded, has risen!”

¹⁷For Herod himself had sent and had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, because he had married her. ¹⁸For John had been saying to Herod, “It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.” ¹⁹Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death and could not *do so*; ²⁰for Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; but he used to enjoy listening to him. ²¹A strategic day came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his lords and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee; ²²and when the daughter of Herodias herself came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests; and the king said to the girl, “Ask me for whatever you want and I will give it to you.” ²³And he swore to her, “Whatever you ask of me, I will give it to you; up to half of my kingdom.” ²⁴And she went out and said to her mother, “What shall I ask for?” And she said, “The head of John the Baptist.” ²⁵Immediately she came in a hurry to the king and asked, saying, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.” ²⁶And although the king was very sorry, *yet* because of his oaths and because of his dinner guests, he was unwilling to refuse her.

²⁷Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded *him* to bring *back* his head. And he went and had him beheaded in the prison, ²⁸and brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹When his disciples heard *about this*, they came and took away his body and laid it in a tomb.

- Herod the Great... (From The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament) Herod was not “king”. The title was used reflecting that he was the ruler of Galilee and Perea.
- Mark relates three views as to who Jesus was: 1) John the Baptist risen from the dead, 2) Elijah, 3) a prophet. Herod though, plagued by guilt, was convinced that it was John. Mark 6:17-29 then brakes from the account of Jesus to relate the death of John in a “flashback”.
- John had been repeatedly rebuking Herod for marrying his half-niece Herodias. Herodias was the daughter of Herod’s half-brother Aristobulus. She had divorced his half-brother Philip. Herodias “had a grudge” against John (lit., “had it in for him”). She was waiting for the opportunity, “a strategic day” to destroy him and the banquet was her chance.

Herod the Great – King of Palestine, 37-4 BC (Luke 1:5); Killed Bethlehem baby boys (Matt. 2:1-17).

- **Antipater**
- **Alexander**
- **Herod Aristobulus**

Herod of Chalcis – AD 41-48

Herod Agrippa I – King over Palestine, AD 37-44; Killed the Apostle James (Acts 12:1-2). Imprisoned Peter (Acts 12:3-11).

- **Herod Agrippa II** – Tetrarch of Chalcis and northern territory, AD 50-70. Paul was on trial before him (Acts 25:13-26:32).
- **Drusilla** – Wife of Felix, procurator of Judea, AD 52-59, before whom Paul was tried (Acts 23:26-24:27).
- **Bernice** – Married her uncle Herod Chalcis. Was with her brother Herod Agrippa II at Paul's trial (Acts 25:13; 26:30).

Herodias – Married 1) uncle Herod Philip I (Matt 14:3), 2) uncle Herod Antipas (Mark 6:17).

- **Herod Philip I** – 4 B.C.-A.D. 34 (Matt. 14:3b; Mark 6:17). Married his niece Herodias.
- **Herod Antipas** – Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, 4 B.C.-A.D. 39 (Luke 13:31-33). Had John the Baptist beheaded (Mark 6:14-29). Judged Jesus at His trial (Luke 23:7-12)
- **Herod Archelaus** – Ruler of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, 4 B.C.-A.D. 6 (Matt. 2:22).
- **Herod Philip II** – Tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis; 4 B.C.-A.D. 34 (Luke 3:1). Married Herodias' daughter, Salome.

The Apostles Return

³⁰The apostles gathered together with Jesus; and they reported to Him all that they had done and taught. ³¹And He said to them, “**Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while.**” (For there were many *people* coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.) ³²They went away in the boat to a secluded place by themselves.

- The apostles (delegates, messengers) returned from their missionary journey and reported all that they had done (casting out demons and healing) and taught. The learning process includes acquiring knowledge, practicing, and evaluating efforts.
- **Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while.** – Each of us require time alone with Jesus to be refreshed and reflect on what He is teaching us. Here Jesus was attempting to physically remove to a secluded place (desert or wilderness) them from the crowds that would not even allow them time to eat let alone relax.
- They probably sailed from Capernaum to the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Five Thousand Fed

³³The *people* saw them going, and many recognized *them* and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them. ³⁴When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things. ³⁵When it was already quite late, His disciples came to Him and said, “This place is desolate and it is already quite late; ³⁶send them away so that they may go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” ³⁷But He answered them, “**You give them something to eat!**” And they said to Him, “Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them *something* to eat?” ³⁸And He said to them, “**How many loaves do you have? Go look!**” And when they found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.” ³⁹And He commanded them all to sit down by groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. ⁴¹And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed *the food* and broke the loaves and He kept giving *them* to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. ⁴²They all ate and were satisfied, ⁴³and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. ⁴⁴There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

- Some people were able to run the ~8 miles on land and arrive ahead of the boat making the ~4 mile trip across the sea. Along the way the runners gathered a large crowd from all the cities.
- Jesus and His disciples were trying to get away to relax together. Jesus could easily have felt annoyance at the incessant crowd, but instead felt compassion. They were like a “sheep without a shepherd”, helpless and in need of care, nourishment, and protection.

- 200 denarii – One denarii was the average daily wage for a farm laborer. 200 denarii was roughly 8 months wages.
- When an accounting of the available food was taken it came up as five loaves and two fishes. The loaves were small, flat, barley (John 6:9) loaves.
- Green grass – indicating it was spring before the grass turned brown during summer.
- The crowd was arranged in groups of hundreds and of fifties – A symmetrical seating arrangement, possibly 50 semi-circles of 100 people each with the semi-circles one behind the other in ranks. Such an arrangement was familiar to the Jews during their festivals, and it made food distribution more convenient. MacArthur Study Bible Page 1472
- There is no explanation for this event other than a miracle. “How the miracle itself took place is not stated, but the imperfect tense of the verb “gave” indicates the bread multiplied in Jesus’ hands” (The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament). All 5000 men (lit. males) along with an unspecified number of women and children ate and were satisfied. In addition, there were twelve baskets of leftovers, more than the original five loaves and two fish.

Jesus Walks on the Water

⁴⁵Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go ahead of *Him* to the other side to Bethsaida, while He Himself was sending the crowd away. ⁴⁶After bidding them farewell, He left for the mountain to pray.

⁴⁷When it was evening, the boat was in the middle of the sea, and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸Seeing them straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, at about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea; and He intended to pass by them. ⁴⁹But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰for they all saw Him and were terrified. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, “**Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid.**” ⁵¹Then He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were utterly astonished, ⁵²for they had not gained any insight from the *incident of the loaves*, but their heart was hardened.

- Jesus “made” (lit. compelled) the disciples to get in the boat and leave. John’s account explains that the crowd was intending to make Him king by force.

¹⁵So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. John 6:15

- The disciples were sailing to Bethsaida from the northeastern shore when they were blown off course to the south toward Gennesaret south of Capernaum. Assuming a near full moon Jesus could have seen the boat well out in the lake.
- At about the fourth watch, 3 to 6 AM by Roman reckoning of time, Jesus came to them walking on the stirred up sea amidst a strong wind (John 6:18). All the disciples saw Jesus and were terrified. Jesus immediately encouraged them by His words.
- While they all were afraid, Peter was the only one who desired to go to Jesus on the water. ²⁸Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” ²⁹And He said, “**Come!**” And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. ³⁰But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” ³¹Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said* to him, “**You of little faith, why did you doubt?**” Matt. 14:28-31
- There are four miracles in this account. When Jesus entered the boat the wind stopped then the boat was immediately at the sea shore (John 6:21). ²¹So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going. John 6:21
- The disciples were utterly astonished. The day’s events had done nothing to open their minds and hearts to Jesus’ nature.

Healing at Gennesaret

⁵³When they had crossed over they came to land at Gennesaret, and moored to the shore. ⁵⁴When they got out of the boat, immediately *the people* recognized Him, ⁵⁵and ran about that whole country and began to carry here and there on their pallets those who were sick, to the place they heard He was. ⁵⁶Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were being cured.

- This summary statement marks the climax of Jesus' Galilean ministry just before His departure for the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon (cf. Mark 7:24). The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament
- Gennesaret was a small town located on a fertile plain that supported a large population south of Capernaum.
- All those that came to Jesus in faith were healed – spiritually and physically.