

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ don't try to follow Jesus on their own.

SCRIPTURE

MARK 6:7-13

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

When Jesus first called his disciples, it was to equip and prepare them to do the ministry he was doing (Mark 3:13-15). These ordinary guys would eventually be tasked to carry on Christ's work after he returned to his heavenly throne. Today's passage looks at their early efforts toward that overall goal. They went out as representatives of Jesus with a difficult mission where they learned to trust Christ and each other a little more.

Check out the *Teacher Prep Video* for this lesson: <https://vimeo.com/816571856>



FACILITATOR NOTE: We've giving you a lot of teaching material. Don't feel like you should cover everything here. You know your group better than anyone. Choose the material that will best fit your students and skip over the rest.

OPENING

PRAYER

1-2 minutes

Start your small group by asking the Lord to bless your discussion and time together.

OPTIONAL: Give students an opportunity to lead the prayer.

OPENING QUESTIONS

3-5 minutes

- How was the week? What's the best thing that's happened? Anything major going on?
- What is something you have tried to do on your own that you knew would go better with help?



EXPLORE

EXPLORE GOD'S WORD

3-5 minutes

Jesus sent his disciples to cast out unclean spirits in the region. This simple command to go is packed with depth. Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs. He gave them authority. He challenged them as they went, knowing it wouldn't always be easy. But in all of this, Jesus was reminding the disciples and us today that it's better together. In a community of faith, we can support each other in the journey because *disciples of Christ don't try to follow Jesus on their own.*

Read Mark 6:7, 12–13 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- Why do you think Jesus sent out the disciples “two by two” instead of on their own?
Answers will vary. Help students see that Jesus made an intentional decision to send the disciples out in community.
- What does it mean to you when someone gives you “authority”? Share about a time when you were trusted with authority/responsibility over something or someone.



Answers will vary. Giving someone your authority is all about trust. When we receive someone's authority, we usually want to work hard so that trust is not broken.

Say something like: These verses help set up the rest of the story because Jesus sends them out together and sends them out with his authority. When someone gives you authority over something, they entrust you to speak and act on their behalf. Jesus was saying that he trusted the disciples, but he was also going to ask them to trust him.

Read Mark 6:8–9 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- What do you think went through the disciples' minds when Jesus told them not to take anything?
We can't know for sure, but the disciples were real people, not just names on a page, so they probably felt the same way we would.
- On a scale of 1–4 (1=not at all, 4=completely), how would you rate your willingness to trust in Jesus?



The goal is to get students to think through their relationships with Jesus. Don't be afraid to push back a bit if you're simply getting the answer they think you want.

- Why do we sometimes struggle to trust that Jesus has our best intentions in mind?
Answers will vary. Often, we either think we know better, or we want what we want now and are unwilling to wait.

Say something like: Our willingness to trust that Jesus is our provider in all things is an important part of a Christ-follower's life. But we also must be willing to trust that Jesus will work in the lives of those around us, especially those who might reject him and us.

FACILITATOR NOTE: If you have extra time, go through the next set of questions. If not, skip to the **Connection** section.

Read Mark 6:10–11 and discuss 1–2 of these questions:

7–10 minutes

- Share about a time when you shared Jesus with someone or invited someone to church. How did they respond? How did it make you feel?

Answers will vary, and some students may not have ever shared their faith. Come prepared with a personal story about inviting someone to church. If that story is about being rejected, focus on how you responded, not the rejection.

- Why is it important for us not to take on the responsibility of someone else's faith?

Help your students understand it's not their role to save or convict someone of their sin. Only God can do that. Our job is to point them to Jesus. Jesus saves, not us.



Say something like: It can be easy to think that the faith journeys of our friends and family are our responsibility. Although God chooses to use us, the ultimate responsibility is God's. Sometimes we might face rejection for the sake of the Gospel, but together, we can shoulder the burden and keep moving forward.



CONNECT & APPLY

CONNECTION

5-7 minutes

Show your students how Scripture connects to their lives: Use the example below OR share a personal story of how you shared your faith with someone in your life.

Example: Jesse was super excited about his new faith. He had recently decided to follow Jesus and believed everyone is called to share their faith with those around them. So he started inviting all his friends and everyone he knew to the youth group at his church. One of those friends was Sarah, and though she showed some interest in coming to youth group, every time Jesse asked, she had an excuse to not come.

Eventually, she said yes and connected with the church—she made friends, joined a small group, and learned more about Jesus. But Sarah never decided to follow Jesus. It could have been really discouraging for Jesse, but he never got discouraged by the rejections because she was his friend, not a project or a checklist. He knew his role was to invite and plant seeds, but it was God's job to work in Sarah's heart and life.

- What are some of the obstacles that keep you from sharing your faith with others? How could you trust Jesus to overcome those obstacles this week?

Answers will vary. Sometimes what we think of as obstacles are just excuses. This is a challenge for your students to trust in Jesus. Help them come up with specific ways they can practice trusting Jesus.



MARK OF A DISCIPLE

2-3 minutes

Disciples of Christ don't try to follow Jesus on their own.

Use the Mark of a Disciple to reinforce the lesson and challenge students to apply it to their lives.

APPLY IT

5-10 minutes

This week, look for someone in your life who you can join in community and support each other as you go into the world and share Jesus with others. Then make a plan to each talk to at least one person about Jesus in the next 30 days.

Be specific:

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Is there someone who can keep you accountable?



FACILITATOR NOTE: Allow students who are comfortable to share their plans for application. This may encourage or spark ideas for other students, plus add a level of accountability.



CLOSING**PRAYER**

2–3 minutes

Take time to let your students pray for each other's applications in the upcoming weeks.
Write down any prayer requests mentioned and ask your students about them at your next meeting.

MEMORY VERSE

Send the memory verse graphic included in your download to your students later this week to keep the conversation going.

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV)

NOTES

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