Serving Him

Part 1

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Place	Plumstead Conference
Duration	00:53:38
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/mv044/serving-him

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[00:00:00] Meine Damen und Herren, ich möchte ein paar Versen von dem Gospel von Mark lesen.

Beginning in chapter 1.

The Gospel of Mark, chapter 1, from verse 16.

Now as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets and followed him. And when he had gone a little further, thence he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who also were in the ship, mending their nets. And straightway [00:01:03] he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with their hired servants, and went after him. Then in chapter 2, verse 14.

And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples. For there were many, and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he said unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. And from chapter 3, verse 13.

[00:02:10] And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would. And they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils. And Simon, he surnamed Peter. And James, the son of Zebedee. And John, the brother of James. And he surnamed them Boanerges, which is the sons of thunder. And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas. And James, the son of Alphaeus, and Sadaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him. And they went into a house. And chapter 6, verse 7. And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth [00:03:06] by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits, and commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only, no script, no bread, no money in their purse, but be shot with sandals, and not put on to coats. The same chapter, verse 30.

And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately. And the last passage from the last chapter, 16. Mark 16, verse 14.

[00:04:05] Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Thus far, the word of God tonight.

The blessed person of the Lord Jesus is shown in scriptures in different titles and offices or how we would call it, and we had before us in the readings, the Lord Jesus as the Apostle and High Priest. Mark, in his gospel, shows us the Lord Jesus as the perfect servant and prophet of God, who was here on earth, serving, and is now gone back to heaven, and [00:05:04] is still serving. If we read the last verse of this gospel, in chapter 16, verse 20, I think it is. Yeah, 16, verse 20, the last verse. And they went forth, the disciples, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. So, in heaven, he is still working with those that work for him. And it is interesting that in Mark's gospel, from the first to the last chapter, we find that the Lord Jesus, the perfect servant, is calling others to serve with him. And so, I would like to give a few principles. We find when the Lord calls us to follow him, this command, follow me, [00:06:03] was also mentioned in the Bible reading, that that's what the Lord says to us, to follow him, and he wants us to serve him. And we want to find out a few principles that can help us to serve the Lord at the time we are here. He is now in heaven, strengthening us, working with us, and he has left us here to serve him. And we find in the first chapter that he is calling some of his disciples to follow him. Simon and Andrew, James and John, fishermen at the Sea of Galilee. The first two were casting a net into the sea, the other two were mending nets, when the Lord called them. The first thing we learn here is that the people the Lord Jesus calls to serve him are those that are busy in their activities, [00:07:03] their jobs, the situation they are in. He is not looking for people that are lazy and having nothing to do, but those that are busy working. Taking the example, the story we had in the Bible reading, those that are on their way to heaven, mending shoes, repairing shoes, or catching fish, or whatever it might be, you are occupied in. And so he calls them.

And it says of Simon and Andrew, they were casting a net into the sea, and of the others it said they were mending the nets. The first work, casting a net into the sea, is a kind of laborious work, while mending of nets is, a careful skill is needed to see what has to be done. On the one hand we could say both things are needed when we want to follow the [00:08:03] Lord, when we want to serve the Lord. Serving the Lord is labor, is work, and on the other hand it needs careful attention, paying to it. On the other hand we could say perhaps that the one casting net into the sea, this laborious work, may point to the work of the gospel work, the work of the evangelist, casting out the net to catch fish, while mending the nets, may be pointing to the teacher and pastor shepherd who is trying to see what has to be done in the work with the carefulness that is necessary for it. The Lord knows what has to be done on the service he gives. But the first thing here is, he is calling them, come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. He is the one that is going to, if I may say so, to train his servants. I will make you to become fishers [00:09:07] of men. And so it says about them, the first two, straightway they forsook their nets and followed him. That reminds me of a sentence that Peter in the tenth chapter of this gospel later on says, in Mark 10, Mark's gospel chapter 10, verse 28, Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus

answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that is left house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospels, but he [00:10:06] shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life. So Peter, after having followed the Lord, when this situation came up, he says, Lord, we have left all for thee. And it was right, they had. They left the ship and their past life. But the Lord Jesus said, Peter, you know, there is nobody who has left anything for me, who will not be rewarded richly in this life, and in the life to come. And it's interesting to note that when the Lord Jesus speaks about leaving things for the Lord, he says in verse 29, there's no man that has left house, or brethren, or fathers, or sister, or mother. He puts the word all behind it. But when [00:11:08] he speaks about what we get, he says, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers. The Lord is saying, to put it with my own words, maybe you have to leave one thing for me, this, or that, or that. But I will give you richly if you leave anything for my sake, because I called you, and if you followed me, and therefore you had to leave things, you will get a rich reward of that. And so these disciples followed the Lord Jesus, and also the other two, John and James, when the Lord called them, they left everything and followed him. And in the second chapter, a little bit later, [00:12:01] we find another one of the disciples of the Lord Jesus who was called. He was not a fisherman, but he was a publican. It says in chapter 2, verse 14, and as he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, follow me. And he arose and followed him. It speaks about one Levi, the son of Alphaeus. If we turn to Matthew's Gospel, chapter 9, we find the same incident, Matthew 9, verse 9. And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, and he said unto him, follow me. And he arose and followed him. So we know that this person called Levi here, [00:13:01] is Matthew, the disciple whom we know perhaps better. But it's interesting to note who says what. Mark is calling him Levi. He is not talking about the past of this man Matthew, that he was a publican. He hides it a bit. He speaks about Levi. But Matthew, when he speaks about his own life, he's not ashamed to talk about his past. And I think we can learn something from it. Very often in our practical lives, it's just the other way around. In our own lives, we try to hide things, but point out the past of a brother or sister. But here we're saying it's the other way around. Mark says, well, there was this disciple Levi. Only insiders, so to say, knew who he was talking about. But Matthew says, well, that was me, this publican, this who was [00:14:03] put among the sinners, a publican and a sinner. And if he arose and followed him, I would like to point out what Luke says about that in his Gospel in Luke 5. Luke 5, verse 28. And he left all, rose up, and followed him. That's what Luke says. But this order of things seems a bit unlogical.

Should it not be, he rose up, left all, and followed him. But it starts with, he left all, rose up, and followed him. We spoke in our Bible readings that the important thing is our heart. And he left everything in his heart before he rose up. The decision falls in our hearts, [00:15:02] and our feet will follow. And that's what we see in him. He had left it in his heart, which means that afterwards, he still had possessions, because he made a big meal for all these sinners there. But he realized, it's not mine, it belongs to the Lord. I use it for him, to invite all these publicans and sinners for a great feast into his house. He was the man, another one of these that he called. And here it says, for the first time when he made this meal, the publicans and sinners sat together with Jesus and his disciples. The first time in Mark's Gospel where this word is used, the disciples, the learners. That's what we are. He calls us to follow him, and to be his students, so to say. To learn from him, our teacher and example. But [00:16:05] then these Pharisees who were there, they sat unto his disciples. They did not ask the Lord directly, but they spoke to the disciples. How is it that he, they didn't even mention his name, how is it that he eateth with sinners and publicans? They want to discredit the person of the Lord in the eyes of the disciples. We have to expect that. When we follow a rejected Lord in this

world, there will be people who want to speak bad about our Lord Jesus, in a disrespectful way, to influence us. But it says, when Jesus heard it. The disciples didn't even have to answer. The Lord Jesus heard what was said, and he gives the answer. And he says, [00:17:04] well, they that are whole have no need of the physician, but only those that are sick. And so I came to call sinners to repentance, not the righteous that thought they were righteous, they didn't, they don't need a saviour, but he came for those that need a saviour. But it's nice and interesting, and I think it's heartwarming to see the Lord hears all these things, when people try to criticise the Lord Jesus before our eyes. You may not be able to answer all these critical remarks they made, but you can be sure he hears it, and he will tell you, and reveal to you, who he really is. The one, this wonderful person you follow. These four, plus one, are shown individually how the Lord called them. But then we come to chapter six, where we have read, [00:18:05] in verse 13, that the Lord Jesus goes up into a mountain. When it comes to the Lord Jesus calling people to follow him, and to serve him, this call comes from above. He's on the mountain, he's in heaven now, and he is the one that calls. And he calls unto him whom he would. He is absolutely sovereign in calling, and sending, and giving service down here. And when speaking about service, and the principles that are involved with it, I'm not talking exclusively about missionaries, or brothers preaching the word, but every one of us has a service committed to him down here, [00:19:05] and the principles are the same. Maybe you have some children's work you do. He is committed to your group of children, whom you want to bring the person of the Lord, and the gospel, and that's the service he's given you. Maybe you have worked with young people. Maybe they're, just to mention one or two examples, maybe there is a sister whom the Lord has given a Titus 2 ministry to counsel younger sisters, and mentor them on their way of faith, or whatever it may be. We have to see this calling comes from above, from the mountain. The Lord is sovereign. The Lord does not ask you or me, what would you like to do? But he calls, and he ordains. And that's the next point, and he ordained [00:20:08] 12. That's the only ordination the Bible knows of. He ordained 12. In our neighborhoods, we had a believing family we knew, and they asked me, when the father died in that family, to speak at the funeral. But as he was a member of the church, the pastor phoned me, and he said, well, at what Bible school did you learn, and who ordained you? And when I could say, the only ordination I know about is the one of the Lord. And he, the Lord, ordains or appointed these 12 persons that they should be with him. He ordained them. The Lord Jesus says in John 15, I think, I have chosen you, and you have [00:21:11] not chosen me. He is the one that makes the choice, and he has ordained them to be with him. That's the first thing with which it all starts. He has ordained them, and every one of us who follow him as his disciples and want to serve him, first of all, to be with him. Our brother mentioned in the Bible reading the importance, individually, of these quiet moments with the Lord in prayer and reading his word, which we all need for our path of faith. But they are also needed for every kind of service we do. To know these moments where we are in his presence, in prayer and Bible, studying, trying to find out what he wants [00:22:03] us to do and to give us the power and the guidance and everything we need in this service. The first thing, to be with him. And if that is the case, it will be seen. Let me turn to the book of Acts, chapter 4. Acts 4, verse 13.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. There were these two men, Peter and John, and they realized they were unlearned and ignorant men. They hadn't learned, as the rabbi said. They hadn't been, to use our day language, they hadn't been to a Bible school or school of theology, but what they realized was they had been with [00:23:09] Jesus. So this personal communion, fellowship with the Lord they had was to be seen in their service. I'm sure we all know that we need this.

Even in the simple examples I've mentioned before, if you do some work in Sunday school or

children's clubs, how do you go into that work?

Are you making a didactic plan? How you want to teach them the things you want to teach them? Which songs to sing? Which crafts to use?

All these things have their place, but have you been with him before it? Have you been asking the Lord what he wants you to do?

[00:24:04] Have you perhaps before in prayer brought before the Lord every child you are going to meet in this group and go with that into this service that there is?

And if your service is on an individual level, you want to talk to another believer, don't you think you need to be with him before you go?

And if your service is your family, your children, I don't have to tell you that because the best teachers that teach us that we can do nothing without the Lord are our children.

And as parents you know, you need this time with him. If you want to bring up your children for the Lord, it's also a service he may have given you in the first place, but we need this as well, to be with him. [00:25:10] This time of fellowship with him. And that's the first thing he has ordained, the twelve and us, to have us with himself, to have fellowship and communion with him, and then he might send them forth to preach and to have power to heal sicknesses, to cast out devils. Then he is the one that sends out with the different services. Here of course, in connection with the disciples, it was to preach, to have power, to heal sicknesses, to cast out devils or demons.

And we know that this, particularly in the beginning of Christianity, was something the Lord used to acknowledge this work. We have read Mark 16 verse 20, where it says that the Lord in heaven was working with them through signs and wonders he gave in the beginning. [00:26:06] This is not what we are looking for today, for miraculous signs and wonders. It was something that God did in the beginning, and you can find this all over in scripture.

Let me just take another example from the Old Testament. When God brought out Israel out of Egypt, he worked signs and wonders. When he brought them out in a day of weakness from Babylon, we had the prophet Haggai in the young people's meeting last night, there were no signs and wonders.

He simply guided people back that were obedient to his words. Well, the service may be different from the disciples, but the principles are the same. He is the one, the call comes from above, and he is sovereign, and he is the one that ordains us to be with him. [00:27:08] And then to give us the service he wants to give us. And he knows each and every one of his servants. There were these twelve disciples, quite a mixed company that the Lord put together to work together and to follow him. Very often in the scriptures we find that we are fellow workers, working together in the work of the Lord, what we do for him. And here, there were these people, he mentions them, we just go through them quickly, seeing how the Lord can use very, very different persons. You might think, well, if he wants to use someone, he has to be like that. But he is sovereign. He called these twelve. Simon Peter, always mentioned in the first place. We don't have to say much about him. We all know him, and we all, I would say we all like him a bit, because he mirrors very much of our own behaviour. [00:28:15] When we see this man in the Gospels, how he is always full of energy, always very quick to speak, but he was also a man with love for the Lord.

And when we particularly find him in the book of Acts, what a useful servant he was, after he had been in the school of the Lord, through this scene of denial, and how the Lord brought him back, and then the same Peter in the book of Acts, serving his Lord. And so, it really encouraged me when Peter stands before these Jewish people, and he preaches, and says to them about Jesus Christ. He speaks about Jesus Christ, and he says, whom you have denied before Pilate.

[00:29:07] Strange thing, isn't it? They couldn't have said, Peter, you must be the last person to give us a lesson on denial. Oh yes, he could. Yes, he had denied his Lord, but he was the one that had confessed, that had been brought back, and his restoration was so complete that he could point out to the Jews the same thing that had happened in his own life. And say, you are still denying this. And when they threatened him not to speak, he says, we cannot be silent of the things we have heard and seen. I think that's a challenging word for us.

I suppose sometimes we can be quiet, when we should speak. But Peter says, well, we have to speak about this. God has given us this message, and we are going to speak about it. [00:30:08] And James, the son of Zebedee. We have different lists of disciples of the 12 in the New Testament. The order of names is slightly different, and there are other little differences, and the characteristic of Mark's list is that there is an and between each individual name.

In other lists, they are grouped together, some of them. But here we have always the individual responsibility of the individual servant. He, and he, and he. We may be grouped together and work together in some business for the Lord, but each is responsible individually before the Lord for what the Lord has given us and what he wants us to do. Every individual is mentioned. James, the son of Zebedee, this man was very likely the first one who died for the Lord. In Acts chapter 12, Herod beheads him.

[00:31:17] And if we think about some of the news we get today, where Christians are beheaded in a brutal manner because they believe in the Lord Jesus, James was one of the first of them who suffered this trial.

We don't know many of the things we know of some of the other disciples that he did, but he was faithful unto death.

Follow me, the Lord said, and he followed him, even if it meant for him to die for the Lord. He was the first of these disciples who had to die for the Lord. John, his brother, is mentioned, and they are both called together Boanagas by the Lord, which is the sons of thunder. [00:32:08] Obviously they had quite a temperament, these two. We get a few examples of that in the Gospels. For example, in Luke 9, verse 54, it says of them, or I read from verse 53, And they did not receive him, the Lord Jesus, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when the disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did? They were honoring for the Lord, yes, but in a way that was not the mind of the Lord, calling fire. And there is another example where at least one of them is mentioned of these two sons in Mark, in this same Gospel, Mark chapter 9, verse 38.

[00:33:13] And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

So they were always very energetic for the Lord's glory and for the Lord's honor, but in a fleshly way.

They were sons of thunder, but nevertheless, the Lord could use them in his service. And the one of them, we said it already, died for the Lord, and the other was the one that learned what it meant to be the disciple whom Jesus loved. That's the way John usually, in the Gospels, calls himself, the disciple whom Jesus loved. [00:34:02] Peter was the disciple, that's what Hamilton Smith, I think, wrote, Peter was the disciple who loved Jesus, and John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. There's only one letter difference between these two sentences, but it's a different world. What he wanted to say is Peter trusted in his own love for the Lord. And we know what happens when we trust in our own weak love for the Lord. But John was the one that was wondering and was delighted about the love of the Lord to him.

That was really what filled his heart, that the Lord loved him and called him. And he was one who followed these two. We get Andrew.

It's interesting that in John's Gospel, we're not going to read all the verses tonight, but you can look them up for yourself. It's particularly John who gives individual details of some of the disciples that we do not find anywhere else. [00:35:07] In Andrew's case, it is that he was a fisher of man, so to say, in what in modern terms is called personal evangelism.

He was speaking to individuals. When Peter preached the Gospel, he was throwing donatum, thousands of people got saved. But Andrew was usually leading individuals to the Lord. The first was his own brother. He led Simon Peter to the Lord. When he found the Lord, Andrew, he found his brother and he led him to the Lord. Maybe that's where the service starts in your own family. If there are still members that do not know the Lord Jesus, or if you have children that do not know the Lord Jesus, to lead them to him. The next incident we find is that Andrew was the one who noticed the little boy. [00:36:04] Who had the bread and fish at this meal with the 5,000 men.

And he brought him to the Lord Jesus. Maybe that's the kind of work the Lord has given you, I said it already, to lead children to the Lord. And later, when the Greeks wanted to find the Lord Jesus, wanted to see him, they come to Philip. But Philip calls the help of Andrew, and then together they lead the Greeks to the Lord Jesus. What a wonderful thing that is, individual, to work with individual persons, bringing them to the Lord. Maybe you say, well I'm not an evangelist, I cannot preach to thousands of crowds of people. But there are individuals you're in contact with, like Andrew. Philip is one who is also mentioned in John's Gospel several times by asking questions that show that his understanding of the things was limited. [00:37:07] As with most of the disciples at that time, when the Lord was here. And he was the man, probably, who was always calculating things. Always reasoning. The Lord tested him, said, how can we get food for these 5,000 people? And he said, we have so and so much money, and that would not be enough for these people. And where shall we get all the food? And the Lord wanted him to learn to trust in the Lord. Maybe you are one of those people that always calculate and reason, how is it going to be? And the Lord simply wants you to trust him. And just follow him. And leave it to him. How the things will come out. There is Thomas. Thomas is one who is a man who had a love for the Lord Jesus like Peter.

[00:38:06] But with little understanding and full of doubts. He once said when the Lord wanted to go to Jerusalem, he says, let's go with him and die with him. There we see this love for the Lord.

He wanted to follow and he encourages the others to go with him. He is not saying like Peter, if all will leave you, I will follow you. But he says, let's go with him and die. He did not understand that this was not the time for the Lord to die. He did not understand that this was not the time for the Lord to die.

But he wanted to follow.

And when the Lord said, you know the way where I go. It's Thomas who said, Lord, we do not know the way. How can we follow you if we do not know where you are going? He wanted to follow the Lord but did not understand what the Lord said. And then we have this well-known incident on the resurrection day. When we see that this man was disappointed and he was not there. [00:39:06] When they were all gathered together and the Lord appeared in their midst. But then the others, they went to him. They visited him and said, Thomas, we've seen the Lord. And Thomas' reaction is, I don't believe it. I don't believe it. If I can do not see the things, I will not believe anything. I'm so disappointed by what's happened. I thought he was coming to set up his kingdom and now he died on the cross. And I'm not going to believe anymore. And I often thought when these disciples that had visited Thomas. And when they were going home. They may have thought this visit was useless.

Didn't bring anything. Didn't bring anything. But a week later, when they were together again. Suddenly the door opened and Thomas came in. [00:40:02] And they might have said, oh, probably the visit was not so useless.

Sometimes we may think we want to encourage somebody and he says no. And we think, well, was it worth the effort? Well, let the Lord work.

And so Thomas, in the end, he was there and says, my Lord and my God. Well, these disciples, these servants of the Lord. Are not these heroes you get in Hollywood or some other places in this world. They are men and women like you and me. With all our weakness and failures we have. And the Lord calls them. There were some others. Where we know not much about, but their names. There's Bartholomew, there's Matthew. There's James, the son of Olpheus. Sadaeus.

Simon the Canaanite. We don't know much about them. [00:41:01] But the Lord knows them. Probably the service he has given you is some service that is not in the open. Not many people take notice of it. But the Lord knows about it. And that's the only important thing. He has called you, he has given you maybe something to do. Which is not noticed by many people, but he knows about it. He knew every one of them and called them. Yes, and there was another one. Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him.

At this time, only the Lord knew what kind of man that was.

But when his life on earth drew to a close, and he was on the upper room with his disciples.

He said to all the disciples, one of you is going to betray me.

To put it out of the way for a more general application. [00:42:03] One of you is not real.

We were talking about the Hebrews. We were talking about the Hebrews. The confessors and professors. Those that say, well we are Christians but they are not real. There was one of these among the disciples. One who was not real.

Is that no language for us tonight? I don't know what the Lord would say tonight in this hall.

One of you?

Ten of you?

I don't know. That are not real? The Lord is still calling you. Follow me.

Not outwardly just going along with the company. But in a real devotion of heart to the Lord as your personal saviour.

So he has called them all. And if we then turn to chapter 6. We get some more teaching on this.

[00:43:06] Following the Lord Jesus. The first thing in this chapter 6. We didn't read the first five verses. There the twelve followed the Lord Jesus into his own town.

And the result was they experienced that the Lord Jesus was rejected.

He was in the synagogue and they were offended at him. They have to learn and we have to learn that we follow a rejected Lord.

He is still the one that is rejected in this world. And that is the one whom we follow. We serve him now down here. And there is a time when we will be glorified with him. But now is the time to follow him. And if that means to suffer for him. Rejection, reproach. And after they had learned this lesson. [00:44:03] The Lord teaches them another lesson. He sends them out. The twelve.

And he says, commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey. Save staff only, no script, no bread, no money in their purse. But be shot with sandals and not put on two coats. He wants them to learn that they are completely dependent on him. They should take nothing to take care for every circumstance that might arise. But simply a staff and a sandal.

Which points out that we are pilgrims down here. Where we have the staff and the sandals. Walking our way here with him. Some have wondered. If there are discrepancies or contradictions in the Bible. Discrepancies or contradictions in the Bible. Because Matthew and Luke say. They should not take staff and sandals. But I think what Matthew or Luke wants to say is. [00:45:02] They should not take extra staff or extra sandals. So in case the one might not be enough. Let's.

No though it says just take these and go on. Depending on the Lord. He will take care of the other things. You don't have to care. Take care of all the circumstances that might arise. On the way following the Lord serving him. But simply.

As strangers and pilgrims follow the Lord. And so he sent them. And so they went. But then.

In the end of this chapter. We read from verses 30 onwards. And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus. This is now the first time. In Mark's gospel where. They are called apostles. Send ones.

Because he had sent them out. They started as disciples. As learners.

And there was a moment when he sent them. And they were apostles. [00:46:01] And they had been

on a mission. For the Lord. And then they gathered themselves together. Unto Jesus.

That's how it started. He appointed them to be with him. And that's how it finishes. They came back to him. After he sent them. After we have. Done. A service for the Lord. Some little ministry has given us. We come back to him. Together.

Together unto Jesus. And told him. All things.

Both what they had done. And what they had taught. When we are in the presence of our Lord. We can tell him everything we have done. Because he.

Will judge it. In the right way. And he will tell us. And make clear to us what he thought about it. We may be.

We may prefer to tell other people what we have done. But that's not the way scripture puts it before us. [00:47:02] They went to the Lord Jesus to tell him everything. When it comes to. Other people. It's interesting what we find in the book of Acts. In chapter 14. It's a different expression. Acts 14.

Verse.

Twenty.

Seven.

And when they were come. And had gathered the church together. They rehearsed all that God had done. With them.

And how he had opened the door of faith. Unto the Gentiles. Before man.

With them.

But in the presence of the Lord. We can speak. Quite openly. We don't have to. Make any impression. Because he knows us. Through and through. And they told him everything. What they had done. And what they had taught. They gathered themselves together unto him. [00:48:02] And I think also we could say this is. Also the end. Of the whole matter. When the service is finished. There will be that moment. When we are gathered together. Unto Jesus.

And the service is finished here on earth. Nothing more to do. When the Lord comes. And there's one great gathering. Together unto Jesus. For all his saints. But here on earth. When they came and taught him everything. He said unto them. Come ye yourselves apart. Into a desert place. And they had no leisure. So much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place. By ship privately. The Lord is also the one. Who knows exactly. What we need. And he knew that this disciples needed. A time of rest. And he says come apart and rest. A while.

Or a little.

[00:49:02] We are not here on earth to rest. But he knows. If we need this time of rest alone with him. Well you need some time. In a wellness holiday. Or some entertainment. But time with the Lord. In a

desert place. It's a place where there's nothing exciting going on. Only time of quietness. With the Lord. And even this time. Was not very long. It was just the journey in the ship. Because when they came to the other side. There was the multitude. And there were no needs there. And the Lord started to meet the needs. But this time. Travelling over the sea. They were together with the Lord. He gave them again a time. Where they should be with him. He took them apart. We need to be with the Lord. To know exactly. What we have to do. On the one hand we see the Apostle Paul. [00:50:02] Who was.

Labouring for the Lord. In a way.

That I don't know if he ever had a holiday. I don't know. I don't think so. But the other problem is. As somebody said. Satan wants to wear us out. Before the time. Well that's the danger of course. When our.

Service is finished down here. It's. Better to be worn out. Than to rust out. But. To wear out before the time. So that we are of no use. Anymore for the Lord. But the Lord knows about this. And he says to them well come here. Rest a little while. And then you will be able to go on. And we finish now with the. Shortly with verse. The verse in chapter 16. Which is also a bit of an encouragement. I suppose.

This last chapter. [00:51:02] The Lord again in resurrection. Appears among his disciples. And he reproached them. With their unbelief. And hardness of heart. In the Bible reading bespoke about unbelief. And hardness of heart. In a sense of apostasy. Among unbelieving professors. But here we see that. Believers.

Had unbelief. Had hardness of heart. They didn't believe what they were told. By these women. Who had seen them. And the Lord had to reproach them. And then.

Did the Lord say you know. I cannot use you anymore. Unbelief.

Hardness of heart. I have to look for other people. No. Exactly the same persons. In the next verse he sends. And he said to them. Go ye into all the world. And preach the gospel. To every creature. He takes these weak disciples. Weak people like you and me. [00:52:01] He takes.

Maybe he has to reproach us. Because there is unbelief. And we didn't trust him. In the way we should. And he will reproach us. In a tender way as he. In perfectional ways does. But then he would say go. And send us.

On the next.

He wants us to do. He knows how we are. And still.

He wants to use you and me. As long as we are here. On earth.

He has saved us. He has called us. He is the one that ordains us. First of all. To be with him. And always to come back to him. This time of fellowship with the Lord. Is. Of utmost importance. When we want to do anything for him. How small you think. Your ministry may be. Without this time with the Lord. We can do nothing. But the Lord shows us. That he wants to equip us. He wants to send us. He wants to help us in these ways. And we can come back to him. [00:53:01] Speak with him about

everything. And he will teach us. Because we are his disciples. And he may send us. So let's use the time. As long as we are here. There will be the time when. We will gather unto Jesus. For the last time down from here. When he takes us to himself. We will be forever with him. But then.

There's no more opportunity. To serve him. And to show our gratitude to him. In being obedient servants. Of a great Lord and saviour.