

Focus on Mark 6:1–13

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Efraín Agosto

When they come to one place, they are to stay in the first home that receives them (v. 10). There should be no appearance of looking for the best meals or the most comfortable bed in town! However, should their message be rejected at a home or by an entire town, they should exercise the practice of “shaking the dust from one’s feet” (v. 11). Rabbis in later traditions talked of this symbolic way of returning from Gentile lands to one’s sacred spaces. Followers of Jesus perhaps used the practice to symbolize judgment on unrepentant places. However, the shaking off of dust could be a hopeful sign if such people and places would thereby see the seriousness of the matter and mend their ways.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Mark D. W. Edington

That Jesus cannot give authority he does not already possess is meant to make plain the *nature* of his kingship. But his commissioning of the disciples also makes a further claim about the *exercise* of his authority: Jesus *delegates kingly authority to those who come in faith*. Christology here is a case study in servant leadership. Jesus, deriving his authority (the “what”) from absolute and obedient faith in God (the “why”), shares his authority willingly (the “how”) with those who share in his faith.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,”

Michael L. Lindvall

These stories might raise our anxiety about evangelism and the potential for rejection that sharing the gospel risks. Such discomfort is widespread, especially among “mainline” Christians, who may be justifiably concerned about coercive or emotionally manipulative methods of proclaiming the Good News. Many Christians would sooner talk about *anything* else: sex, their salary, anything but what they believe about God. But evangelism is not “to get them on our side” or even “to grow the church,” but simply to tell others about the God who has come to mean so much to us. This is an action performed out of love, not competition or anxiety.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,”

Beverly Zink-Sawyer

Mark continues to raise in this text the question he repeatedly raises in his Gospel: who is this Jesus? In this story it is not those who are encountering Jesus for the first time but those who have known him for years who are asking questions about Jesus’ identity and responding to his teaching with amazement. The word for us in this text is that we are not held responsible for the response to our ministries in Christ’s name, but only for our own faithfulness. With such assurance, we can witness boldly and faithfully.