

THE BIG IDEA: To take the Light, we need to travel light.The Take-Off

With the end of summer quickly approaching - and the end of summer vacations - my guess is that many of us can relate to overpacking for a trip.

I doubt that any of us have ever overpacked like these people!

[PICS - Overpacked]

Today we find Jesus sending out His 12 disciples and giving them some pretty specific instructions that tend to run counter to what you and I would expect to be told in preparation for a trip.

We tend to pack for a trip, but Jesus told them to unpack for a trip.

We talk a lot here at The Gathering about margins and living focused lives, about seeing the mission and knowing what's expected of those who live on that mission, and Jesus is the perfect picture of what that looks like here.

He tells the 12 that they have 2 tasks - to preach the gospel and to heal the sick - and then He gave them what they would need to succeed at that: power and authority.

The end result is found in verse 6: they went everywhere and did exactly what they were sent to do.

The genius of Jesus is in helping the disciples pack for the mission.

Jesus knew that when we understand the mission and take only what we need for the mission, we'll succeed in the mission.

Yes, Jesus is talking to the big 12 - His original disciples - but what He sent them to do - preach and heal - is what He sends His followers to do today. Matthew records the Great Commission to take the gospel everywhere and Mark records signs that will follow us when we do, and healing is one of them.

So don't discount what we read here as only important for 12 men who lived and died a long time ago. You and I have a mission, and Jesus is just as interested in our packing list as He was in theirs.

Our mission is to take the Light the gospel, and in order to take the Light, we're going to need to travel light.

Let me say that again, because that's the Big Idea: to take the Light, we need to travel light.

That means that we've got some unpacking to do so that we aren't lugging heavy baggage with us on the journey.

Here are 3 things that we've got to get rid of before we go:

1. Unpack fear by falling in love with Jesus

- a. Imagine a trip with no spare, no backup, a trapeze act with no net
- b. That's what Jesus called them to - take nothing for the journey
- c. Let's not kid ourselves, this strikes right at the fear many of us have about the future and God's ability to take care of us
- d. God has crazy ways of dealing with that fear, and He will because we can't carry fear on the journey
- e. [Phillip and the Skycoaster]
- f. Jesus wants us traveling without the baggage of fear, and the way to get rid of fear is to fall in love with Jesus (1 John 4:18)
- g. When we realize how much Jesus loves us, fear begins to disappear and we begin to see that God will take care of us because God loves us and He's a good, good Father!
- h. There was no other way for the 12 to learn that other than going on a journey without a safety net
- i. But when you and I have learned that lesson and are full of the love of a Father who ALWAYS comes through, we'll gladly lighten our load by leaving fear behind

2. Unpack pride by humbling yourself before Jesus

- a. James 4:6 is sobering: either God is with us or against us.
- b. He opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble, and we can't be successful on this journey without the enabling power of God's grace.
- c. It would be so easy to confuse HAVING the answer with BEING the answer, but you and I are only messengers with good news. We aren't the good news!
- d. I love what Jesus told His disciples: "If you enter a house, stay there!"
- e. Jesus knew that there would be a temptation to become demon-casting rock stars and that many people would want to be around those disciples.

- f. But humility stays put. Humility honors the ones who receive it.
- g. Proverbs 23:29 / humility and honor or tied closely together
- h. Pride says “Everyone needs me and the message I’m bringing” and can’t stay still
- i. Humility says, “Everyone needs Jesus and the messengers He’s sending” and stays in its lane
- j. Trust me, there is no room for pride on this journey, so humble yourself before you even start

3. Unpack regret by remembering the cross of Jesus

- a. It’s interesting what Jesus told the disciples to do if people weren’t receptive to the gospel
- b. Verse 5: shake dust off your feet
- c. In that day, it meant to completely remove the dirt of unreceptive people from your feet before returning home so that your city wouldn’t be defiled by the sin and error of the other cities
- d. There is only one person who doesn’t want the good news to get out, and that’s Satan
- e. His greatest weapon is to remind us of our past failures, to cause regret from past sins to make us feel that we aren’t the best messengers
- f. But that is dust that you and I need to shake our feet because the cross dealt with all of that
- g. The cross deals with the pain of our past and gives us hope for the future
- h. There is no room for regret when we remember the cross of Jesus and the hope that it brings
- i. Isaiah 43:18-19 / the cross is the way that God made in the desert

The Landing

If you’ve ever carried too much luggage on a trip, you know how quickly you realize that you didn’t even need a fraction of the things that you packed.

When we’re motivated by fear, pride and regret, our luggage quickly turns into baggage, and it weighs us down and makes it hard to even move.

But for us to take the Light, we need to travel light, and so we want to end this morning at the altar doing a little bit of baggage check, and so if you know that you’ve got some stuff in your bags that are slowing you down as you try to take the Light, then I want to invite you to spend some time allowing us to pray with you and thanking God for His love, for His acceptance, and His forgiveness.

Let’s pray.