

**Sermon: Pack Like A Disciple****Text: Mark 6:6-13; Ephesians 6:10-20****Discussion Questions:**

I'm sure there are some folks who enjoy packing for a trip. I'm not one of them. It's typically something I do at the last minute, grabbing this and that as I try my best to work through my mental checklist of necessary items.

- How about you? What kind of packer are you? Are you a “last minute throw things in the bag” packer—or a “start packing well in advance” methodical packer?
- What are the benefits of being a last minute packer?
- What are the hazards or downsides of being a last minute packer?
- What are the benefits of being a well-in-advance packer?
- What are the hazards or downsides of being a well-in-advance packer?
- Do you tend to over-pack or under-pack?

Most of the time, our packing list is fairly straightforward. What kind of clothes do I need? What footwear do I need? What toiletries/medicines do I need? Do I have my phone chargers? Etc... There are also variables that need to be considered: What will the weather be like? How many days am I away? What kinds of events will I be attending?

- Are there other variables that come to your mind that need to be considered before packing?
- How often do “what if’s” play a role in our packing?
- How often do these “what if’s” impact a tendency to over-pack?

There are times when we're going on a trip that requires a very specific packing list.

- What are some trips you've taken that have come with a detailed and specific packing list?
- Does a specific packing list stress you out—or do you prefer it?
- Are you a “follow the list down to the T” sort of person—or do you view the packing list as a general guideline offering nothing more than basic suggestions?
- Can you think of a situation where, looking back, you wish something had been on the packing list that wasn't? Or turning that around—are there times when the packing list was ridiculously too long, and included things that weren't at all necessary?

These questions lead us right into our topic for the day. The Bible mentions several different packing lists for a disciple of Christ. The first is a very sparse and minimal list that Jesus gave to His disciples before sending them out on a short-term mission trip. A second list includes numerous items that we need to have with us and wear each and every day. This second list applies to each and every one of us every single day—and comes with the warning: No matter where you go, don't ever be found without these things!

## Examination:

- Read **Mark 6:6-13**:
  - Up until this point in the Gospels, the disciples had one job: follow Jesus. If Jesus went to a village—the disciples followed. If Jesus stopped for the night to camp along the way—the disciples stopped and camped. Their job was to watch and listen and take care of logistics (John 4 describes how the disciples left Jesus at the well to go into town to buy food). But all of that changes in Mark 6. Jesus flips the script, and sends the disciples out in pairs—instructing them to go and exercise power over the forces of the Devil. But there's one major change: JESUS ISN'T WITH THEM.
    - Why do you think Jesus decides to do this? What do you think is behind Jesus' decision to send the disciples out?
    - How does this line up with what Jesus told His disciples when He called them back in **Mark 3:14-15**?
    - Why do you think he sent them in pairs?
    - What does it mean that Jesus “gave them authority over impure spirits”? Does it surprise you that this is at the top of the list in terms of instructions?
    - Now we get to the packing list. What's ON the packing list? What's NOT on the packing list? What surprises you about this list?
    - Do you find it interesting that Jesus tells them to take a staff? Does this remind you of any other stories or Old Testament heroes?
    - What do you make of the instructions in verses 10-11?
    - According to verses 12-13—how did things go?
    - What role does faith play in all of this?
  
- Read **Ephesians 6:10-21**:
  - What is the purpose of our putting on the armor of God? (vv. 11-13) How does this correspond with the authority that Jesus gave His disciples in Mark 6?
  - Take a few minutes to discuss why each of these are on the “packing list”:
    - The belt of truth buckled around your waist
    - The breastplate of righteousness in place
    - Feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace
    - The shield of faith to extinguish the Devil's flaming arrows
    - The helmet of salvation
    - The sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God
  - How often do we need to “put” these things on?
  - What does it look like to put these things on? How do we do it?
  - According to verses 18-20, what role does prayer play?
  - Be honest—are these things you consciously think about when you get out of bed each morning and set about your day?
  - How does this list of the pieces of armor correspond with the very simple list of things that Jesus told His disciples to take with them in Mark 6?

## Application:

The application today centers on faith. Jesus instructed His disciples to NOT bring money or bread or an extra shirt because He wanted them to walk by faith. Look for ways TODAY that you can increase your faith, and trust the Lord to provide for you (resting in the assurance that God is more than able).