

JESUS: THE SERVANT AT WORK

VOLUME ONE

STUDY TWENTY

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13

Time with Jesus changed their entire lives from what they had been to the kind of men they were to become.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

GIFTED athletes travel cross-country to be mentored by a coach who will sharpen their skills, improve their coordination, and nurture their giftedness. Those who aspire to become great musicians study under professionals to learn their techniques. Even medical students consider their time with a top-ranked doctor in his or her specialization to be the most beneficial part of their training. *Time with mentors is invaluable.*

In our rapidly changing world, everything around us and within us screams, “Hurry up! Get going! You’re falling behind!” Life moves along so quickly that we feel like we can’t slow down long enough to learn from the greatest mentor, Jesus. *Learn to wait, learn to listen, learn to trust, learn to live wisely, and learn to minister effectively.*

Time with Jesus transformed the disciples. Their education was not typical, though. There were no classes to attend, no fees to pay, no final exams, and no grades. *Jesus* was their school and their curriculum. They learned by observing Him, and when they went out, they turned the world upside down. In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we’ll witness their first steps as Christ’s ambassadors and discover essential principles for ministering like Jesus in any generation.



INSIGHT FOR LIVING



Scan to listen to
Chuck's message.

The Bible-Teaching Ministry of Chuck Swindoll
Study 20 • Page 1

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Time spent with the Lord is life's most precious privilege. Tell Him of your readiness and willingness to learn from Him and to live according to the truths revealed in His Word.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Earlier in his gospel, Mark recorded how Jesus selected His disciples. He “went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go with him” (Mark 3:13). Then, Mark told us Jesus’ simple training strategy.

He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons. (3:14–15 NASB)

Note that the disciples’ primary responsibility was to be *with* Jesus. That’s all . . . but that’s *everything*. Learning in a personal, informal, and intimate relationship with Jesus would lead to preaching with His authority and extending His ministry to the world. Jesus was preparing them for the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations of the earth (Matthew 28:16–20).

Acts 1–5 chronicles the impact of Jesus’ training after He ascended into heaven. The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, empowered them, and ignited their hearts to boldly preach Jesus despite persecution. The authorities arrested Peter and John and forbade them to talk about Jesus, but Peter could not be silenced. “God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved,” he declared (Acts 4:12).

When the religious leaders observed that Peter and John were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures and no sophisticated schooling, they were amazed. Then they recognized them as “men who had been with Jesus” (4:13). Time *with Jesus* made all the difference! Being with Jesus is essential to being a disciple of Jesus and a prerequisite for ministry.

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13



Observation: Jesus' Disciples and Their Ministry

Imagine the disciples in the shadows watching, listening, questioning, and learning from Jesus. They observed Him until that day when they graduated from internship to involvement. Observe [Mark 6:7–13](#) by reading it carefully. Then answer the questions below to dig deeper into the details of the passage.¹

Effective Method—Mark 6:7

What particulars does Mark 6:7 provide about the method Jesus used as He sent His disciples to do the work? What did He give them?

Specific Instructions—Mark 6:8–11

Jesus was practical in teaching His disciples. He outlined the values of functional simplicity—*traveling light*—and the guidelines for a discerning mentality—*thinking right*. These were His disciples' marching orders. In the table below, fill in the clues or pieces of evidence that support the values and guidelines Jesus taught.

Jesus' Values and Guidelines for the Ministry of the Disciples		
Values	Guidelines	Supporting Evidence
Functional Simplicity	Travel Light Mark 6:8–9	
Discerning Mentality	Think Right Mark 6:10–11	

Obedient Response—Mark 6:12–13

What does Mark 6:12–13 state about the disciples' obedient response to Jesus' instructions in the type of message they preached to the people? How effective was their ministry?

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13

The disciples dispelled the darkness of people's minds when people repented. They cast out demons, and that brought people freedom from bondage. And they brought healing to those who were sick. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Jesus' Training Plan for His Disciples

We noted the value of companionship as the disciples traveled in pairs and the need for authority to minister in Jesus' name. *Authority* is not the same as *power*. Look up the Greek terms *exousia* for “authority” and *dynamis* for “power” in the Greek dictionary at billmounce.com and note the difference between the two words. What is the meaning and significance of Jesus' giving His disciples authority?

In this case, “By the authority vested in me as an apostle of Christ, I hereby command you, demon, come out of that person.” There wasn't a demon in existence who could help but come out of that person, because of the authority of the one making that statement. It isn't the power of the individual; it's the authority that that individual represents. That's what Jesus gave them. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

How would you explain *traveling light* in your own words? What principles can you glean? What caution must be applied to this passage against extremes? What is the meaning of *thinking right* in ministry?

“In other words, I want you to live an unencumbered life. Travel light. Focus on the main things. That's the way I want you to operate when I'm gone off this earth. And you need to think right. It means staying where you are, where you're being received. If you're welcome there, stay there. Don't get restless. However, if it gets so thick with rejection and resistance, as if you're pushing a rope, it's time to go.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13

In Mark 6:12–13, Mark noted the disciples' obedient response in talking straight to the people about repentance. Explore the section "Repentance toward God" from the article on "[Repentance](#)" in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible* at biblegateway.com. In your own words, explain the meaning of *repentance* and the importance of *talking straight* in ministry.

When you decide that Christ is the answer for your life, that means you deliberately move from a narcissistic, self-serving direction to an unselfish, dependent lifestyle where Christ is your master, not yourself. That's repentance. The disciples talked straight. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Some Essentials for Ministry Effectiveness

How do other passages such as [Exodus 18:13–26](#) and [Ecclesiastes 4:9–12](#) resemble Jesus' instructions to His disciples in our passage in terms of ministry as a team effort? What wisdom can we glean from Jethro's advice to Moses?

It is important for every minister of the gospel to understand that you cannot do it on your own. Ministry is a team. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Compare our passage to [John 15:1–5](#); [Galatians 5:16–23](#); and [1 Peter 4:10–11](#). What message do all these passages convey to Christ-followers today about our dependence on God's power for ministry?

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13

You must operate under the authority of another. That's why the importance of the Holy Spirit is emphasized over and over again. If you are impacted by any minister of the gospel, it isn't because of the minister. It is because of the authority that has been given, the vested authority of the one who is teaching or preaching or counseling, serving Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

How do [Acts 2:22–41](#); [3:1–19](#); [26:12–20](#) reveal that Peter, John, and even Paul followed Jesus' instructions on essentials for ministry effectiveness? What lessons can we learn from them?



Application: Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight!

Through the step of application, we live out the values that Jesus communicated to His disciples in the first century AD. Three guidelines keep us on track.

First, *travel light by keeping your life simple and free from distractions*. What area(s) of your life do you sense the Holy Spirit nudging you to declutter? What attitudes or strategies do you need to adopt or develop to stay free of distractions, to travel lighter, and to trust God more?

You have to determine if this much is too much or if it's enough. Determine that you will live life simply and free of distractions. Learn to say no. Practice saying, "That's enough. That's enough." —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Second, *think right by staying where you should, leaving when you must*. How has the Holy Spirit used this passage to help you pinpoint the importance of discernment in your current ministry?

Travel Light, Think Right, Talk Straight

Mark 6:7–13

Where you should stay, hang in there. When you sense it is no longer right or best for you to stay, then you must leave. Leave and never look back. You served and you were faithful in serving. It's now time to move on. It takes discernment. So pray, seek the counsel of those you respect, wait. Ponder, "What are the benefits? What are the liabilities?" As those weigh out, you make your decision.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Third, *talk straight by telling the truth*. Think of all the good God has done through you. Praise Him for His grace at work in and through your life.

Just admit the truth that if there's anything good that comes, it's going to come from the Lord Himself and often in spite of me. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



A FINAL PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word that lives and abides forever. Thank You for the radical transformation that I can experience through the simple obedience to Your directives. Help me to travel light, think right, and talk straight as I cherish the honor to have intimacy with my Master, Your Son, Jesus. In His name, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](https://www.insight.org/how-does-pastor-chuck-swindoll-study-the-bible)" at [insight.org](https://www.insight.org).

For the 2026 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2010, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

[insight.org](https://www.insight.org)

Insight for Living
Study 20 • Page 7

[illegible]