



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

### Mark 6:1-13 Jesus visits Nazareth and sends out the twelve (4 July)

Jesus returns to his home town, Nazareth. The people there know him as the local carpenter, and are unable to think of him in any other way. They are amazed at the wisdom of his message and his mighty deeds, which are at odds, they think, with his humble, simple origins. So they do not arrive at the obvious conclusion, but instead they “take offence” at his astonishing authority – they find him too much to take. He is a prophet without honour. Their lack of faith results in an absence of miracles. (v.1-6).

In spite of increasing opposition, Jesus continues to preach from village to village. So far, the twelve have been travelling with Jesus, observing everything he does; but now he intensifies his mission by sending them out, with his authority, to do the same as him – preaching, healing and casting out evil. His travel instructions are unique and specific to them. They are to go about their mission as simply as possible: they are to travel light, and if they are rejected in one place, they should simply move on to another rather than wasting time and energy by preaching a message that falls on deaf ears. People who reject them will be rejecting God’s message and will be accountable to God. (v.7-13).

1. How many different reactions to Jesus can you see in v.1-6a?
2. Put yourself in the shoes of Jesus’ immediate family. How might you have reacted to what he was doing?
3. What is it about Jesus or about his disciples that may prove to be a stumbling block or offence to people today?
4. Put yourself in the shoes of the twelve. Describe what it might have been like to be sent out on this mission.
5. Why do you think Jesus sent the disciples out in pairs?
6. What kind of response should the disciples expect?
7. This mission, like Jesus’ ministry, showed a balance between word and deed. How can we display that balance today?
8. What do Jesus’ instructions to the twelve tell us about the kind of ministry they were to have?
9. Read v.8-13. Which parts of Jesus’ commission and instructions to the twelve would apply to evangelism and world missions today? Which parts seem irrelevant or unpractical. Why?