

# SHAKE OFF THE DUST WHEN YOU LEAVE

*The Ministry of the Twelve Apostles*

- By Pastor Greg Hooker

**Mark 12:7-13 (see also Matthew 10:5-15; Luke 9:1-6)**

*“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. And they went out, and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.”*

After the resurrection of Christ, He instructed His Apostles to go out among the people, into their cities and houses and preach the ‘Brand-New-Gospel’ of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The Apostles were given special powers by the Jesus to cast out unclean spirits as an ‘authentication’, or seal of approval and proof of the power of God upon them. They were also instructed in what they should and should not take with them on their evangelistic journey. Included in the list were the following:

- 1) “a staff” – Used as a walking aid and to ward off beastly predators.
- 2) “no bread” – God was going to provide for His servants and support them through the giving of the people – the “workman is worthy of his hire”, for the man of God is worthy of “double honor”.
- 3) “no money in their purse” – Again, the Lord was going to provide even their financial needs (apart from a secular job) through those they were called to minister to.
- 4) “be shod with sandals” – Sandals have always been a picture of spreading the Gospel from door to door, “*And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace*” (Ephesians 6:15).
- 5) “not put on two coats” – One coat was all they needed. No use taking non-essentials that serves only to weigh and slow them down.

Jesus went on to instruct His Apostle’s to go into the houses, accept their eastern hospitality (food, room and board, etc.) and preach the Gospel. Unlike our modern-day society, hospitality was taken very serious in the East. If a traveler were to arrive at a stranger’s house, in most cases they were taken in

and cared for as a special guest, *“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares”* (Hebrews 13:2). Thus, the Lord told His disciples not to be concerned about food and clothing, for the families they were called to visit would most certainly take care of them.

That brings us to verse 11, *“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.”*

Future instructions from Jesus to His Apostles were as follows: Whenever they came upon a house that refused to show them hospitality and ultimately rejected their message of salvation; they were to literally *“shake off the dust under their feet”*. That naturally brings up the question of ‘why would they shake off the dust from their sandals simply because they would not receive them or their message’?

The Greek word, τὸν χοῦν, for “dust” literally means “soil”. This action was very symbolic and carried a lot of significance. Whenever one of the Apostles shook the “soil” from the soles of their sandals, it was hard evidence of the deliberate rejection of Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice. Remember what I pointed out above about sandals being a picture of spreading the Gospel from house to house? When the people rejected Christ, the dust was shaken off as a confirmation of the toil and labor exerted by the Apostles to travel long distances to share something to the people that would change their eternal destinies.

Because the people were defiant and refused the Apostles testimonies and even the mighty miracles they performed by God’s power to authenticate their message, the Lord said *“It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.”* Even the dust shaken from the Apostles feet will rise in judgment as a witness of their rejection during the Great White Throne Judgment.

My friends, this is a solemn warning to those who are rejecting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Every time a person rejects the message and person of Christ, the flames of hell become hotter and hotter for them. It would be far better to have never heard the Good News that Jesus saves, than to hear and reject it! Moreover, rejection upon rejection ‘hardens’ the heart of the sinner until the *“Spirit will not always strive with them”!* A person can reach a point in which God says ‘that’s enough’! I have given you ample opportunity to accept my Son’s sacrifice for your sins, but you repeatedly rejected the witness of my Spirit. *“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient”* (Romans 1:28).

A “reprobate mind” is one that has intentionally erased all thoughts and convictions of God. This is a person who has ‘washed his mind as Pontius Pilate washed his hands of Jesus’. They have made every possible effort to eradicate all considerations of Divine Presence from their hearts and minds, closing the door to any future attempts of the Holy Spirit to deliver the Gospel Message.

God gave them over to a reprobate mind; a vain empty mind, worthless, good for nothing devoid of all true knowledge and judgment; incapable of approving what is truly good or of disapproving that which is evil; a mind that has lost all conscience of things, and is disapproved of by God, and all good men.

This is the worse sin a person can commit – the continual rejecting of Jesus Christ! *“All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy [or rejecting the Spirit’s message of Christ] against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men”* (Matthew 12:21). This is the only sin that will not be forgiven man, neither in this life, nor in the one to come – the Unpardonable Sin!

When you stand before God, He is going to ask, ‘what did you do with my Son, Jesus?’ For everyone who says ‘I rejected Him’, the Almighty Judge will say, ‘that is unforgivable – depart from me I never knew you!’ What sad words indeed, ‘depart, I never knew you’!

So my friends, if you don’t know Christ as your personal Savior, I beg of you to accept Him today. Whatever you do, don’t reject His ‘Gift’ of His Son, Jesus. Reach out by faith and receive salvation by faith. Let not the sandals be shaken off because you have refused the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

**Would you take a moment and pray this prayer from your heart:**

‘Dear Heavenly Father, I know I’m a sinner and need your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus died for my sins on the cross. I believe Jesus was buried and rose from the grave to give me victory over death and hell. I am willing to turn from my sins with your help. I now ask you, Jesus, to come into my heart and life and be my personal Savior. I am willing, by God’s grace, to follow and obey Jesus Christ as the Savior of my heart and Lord of my life – Amen!’

If you prayed this prayer believing it in your heart, then on the authority of God’s Word you are saved from going to Hell and will go to Heaven someday when you die! *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* (Romans 10:13).