



# Sermon Outlines



## Background – The Mission to Seafarers

### Who are we?

We are an international Christian organisation which provides help and support to 1.5 million seafarers across the world. We work in over 200 ports in 50 countries caring for seafarers of all ranks, nationalities and beliefs.

Through our Global Family of chaplains, staff and volunteers we offer practical, emotional and spiritual support to seafarers through ship visits, drop-in centres and a range of support services.

### What do we do?

**Ship-visiting:** Our chaplains visit hundreds of ships each day in ports around the world. They offer help, support and advice to thousands of seafarers every day in a spirit of true Christian unity and friendship.

**Flying Angel Centres:** We have centres in 121 ports around the world offering refreshments, recreational activities, internet, phone facilities, and the chance to spend time away from the ship. Harsh working conditions, tensions between crew members and isolation from friends and family can take their toll on seafarers, leading to depression, anxiety and loneliness. Our chaplains and volunteers are on hand to listen and to offer sympathy and advice.

**Justice and Welfare Services:** When a seafarer has not been paid, is working in substandard conditions, being bullied or has been a victim of wrongful arrest, we can intervene and put them in touch with professional support and legal advice.

**Communication:** Our centres provide Wi-Fi for email and Skype calls. We print and publish six editions of our international newspaper for seafarers, *The Sea*, each year. This newspaper features articles translated into Spanish, Russian, Chinese and other languages.

**Transport:** Many ports are located in industrial areas miles away from towns, shops and amenities. We provide transport so that seafarers can make the most of their brief time ashore.

**Care and Support:** In cases of pirate attack, shipwreck, abandonment, serious injury or bereavement, the Mission is on hand to offer whatever assistance a seafarer needs. This help may range from food to phone calls home. Our chaplains provide Christian worship services, spiritual support and opportunities for prayer and quiet reflection. They are trained to recognise and respond to signs of post-traumatic stress disorder. In the aftermath of pirate attack, shipwreck or industrial disaster they offer a caring response.

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# Outlines for Sermons and Talks

## Sermon Outline for Mark 6:1-13

- Our theme for Sea Sunday this year is abandonment. It is an opportunity for us to remember the human cost of shipping and what sometimes happens when shipping companies close down or when ship owners run into financial difficulties.
  - The majority of shipping companies and ship owners are honest and responsible employers. They make arrangements so that, if their business fails, then the seafarers on board the ship can be transported home.
  - Unfortunately, things sometimes go wrong, and the shipping company may not be able to afford to pay for seafarers to return to their homes or pay them what they are owed. When shipping companies run into trouble in this way, seafarers may be left to fend for themselves. They might not be paid and they might not have enough money to return home. In these situations, they find themselves abandoned and alone in foreign ports far away from their homes.
  - When seafarers are abandoned they may also find themselves without basic things such as food and water. They are without the means to get home to their families and in many cases unable to communicate with their families. This is what happens when seafarers are abandoned by unscrupulous employers and left to fend for themselves.
  - In our reading today, Jesus faces a kind of abandonment. He is rejected by people from his home town of Nazareth. Anyone would think that Jesus would be celebrated there especially after the way in which his ministry had developed with all the miracles and followers. Returning home should have been a joyful occasion but it wasn't.
  - Jesus taught in the synagogue in Nazareth. The people there knew him and they recognised that he had great wisdom and that he was doing miraculous acts. They witnessed these events with their own eyes but instead of being joyful and rejoicing, they criticised and rejected Jesus.
  - Jesus was met by resentment and rejection. This rejection is a kind of abandonment because Jesus simply wasn't accepted by people who knew him and his family. The very people who should have supported him and loved him actually abandoned him instead.
  - The bible tells us that despite this, Jesus continued to minister. He travelled to other villages teaching and he begins to send his disciples out two by two. He sends them to preach and pray for people, to cast out demons and cure people who are sick. The disciples have been sent by Jesus to bring life to others and to rescue them in their own abandonment.
  - By doing this Jesus shows us the answer to abandonment. The answer to rejection and abandonment is companionship, relationship and love. In this way the loneliness and estrangement that comes from being abandoned is overcome.
  - Jesus still does this today and responds to abandonment by sending Christians out to seek people in need. This is ministry in action and this is what we do through the work of The Mission to Seafarers. Jesus calls us to respond to people who have been abandoned. He sends us out to work in partnership with other people to respond to abandoned seafarers. Our response is Good News for seafarers.
  - The accompanying leaflet tells the story of a ship that was abandoned by its owners leaving the crew trapped for 4 years! Our team in the UAE became their literal lifeline bringing food, water and fuel as well as much needed support. Whilst supplying their needs our team started the long process of advocating on their behalf so that they could return home.
  - All over the world people partner with The Mission to Seafarers and respond to seafarers who have been abandoned or who are in need. They knit hats, visit seafarers on their ships, pray about our work and give towards the work of Mission to Seafarers.
  - In this way, in partnership with people from all over the world, we respond to abandoned and lonely seafarers by giving them companionship and support. We visit them on their ships giving them food, water and care. We also get involved in cases of abandonment and work with the relevant authorities so that seafarers can travel home.
  - Jesus who experienced abandonment himself, asks us today to respond to seafarers who have been abandoned. When we respond to them, the love of Jesus is brought to seafarers in desperate need of love and help.
  - Jesus calls us to help those seafarers who are abandoned. How can you help? What can you do today to bring love and life to others? How can you participate in bringing the Good News to seafarers who may be lonely or abandoned?
- We would like to thank you for supporting our vital work. Seafarers are the unseen keyworkers who have continued to keep the global economy afloat during the Covid pandemic – they deserve to be celebrated and thanked.**