



Skeptics and critics claim the Bible is full of contradictions, and, therefore, can't be trusted. One of these is that the gospels contradict about the disciples carrying a staff.

The Staff “Contradiction” Examined

Here is the “contradiction”:

Did Jesus allow his disciples to carry a staff on their journey?

(a) Yes ([Mark 6: 8](#))

(b) No ([Matthew 10:9](#); [Luke 9:3](#))

A cursory reading of the parallel accounts in the gospels makes it appear that there is a contradiction between the gospels of Mark and Luke about whether Jesus wanted his disciples to carry a staff on their journey.

“He instructed them that they were to take nothing for *their* journey, except a mere staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belt”—[Mark 6:8](#) NASB

“And He said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece”—[Luke 9:3](#) NASB

Matthew's gospel, however, helps to clear up the seeming discrepancy.

“Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, or a bag for your journey, or even two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is deserving of his support.”—[Matthew 10:9,10](#) NASB

Since it was Jewish custom for men traveling to always carry a staff, [Mark 6:8](#) refers to that. Jesus told them not “acquire” extra supplies, clothes, etc. They were to simply ‘go forth’ in full reliance on God to supply their needs, not going out of their way to acquire anything in addition to what they already had. Since they each had a staff, carrying the one they already

had didn't deviate from Jesus' direction.

Conclusion

No, the gospels do not contradict about the disciples carrying a staff. The gospels are historical documents, largely based on eyewitness accounts (**Luke 1:1-3; 2 Peter 1:16**), **"inspired by God" (2 Timothy 3:16)**, which ensures accuracy.