

SERVANT/SAVIOR :: The Gospel According to Mark
growing in gospel community, for the community

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One can't read the gospel of Mark and not notice the incredible speed at which events take place. In fact, one of Mark's most used descriptions of how things are happening is by using the word immediately. People are being drawn to this Jesus. Even if they don't rightly always understand His true identity, they find him compelling, confusing, and challenging. People can't get enough, or at least for awhile. But then this Jesus starts talking about what He came to do ...

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- Mark 10:45

Give his life? How could that be? These are more than the questions the people back then pondered, they are the questions we have to wrestle with as well. Because if this Jesus died for us, and we say we're followers of Him, then what does that mean for how we live? Jesus sums this up by saying,

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?

- Mark 8:34-36

It is against this backdrop of who Jesus is and what He accomplished, that we find our calling as His followers, as His disciples. For us as CrossPointe Winter Park to live this out, we are going to need a radically growing worship and affection for Jesus. To find our identity daily in what He accomplished and is accomplishing for us. The more we get that, the more that reality sinks in and saturates us, the more we will be able to deny ourselves and really live for the community. We will find the calling then one of joy and not burden.

So you are invited to take a journey with us to explore this Servant/Savior we get to behold in the gospel of Mark. You will find that the best way to do this is by actively engaging in the full life of CrossPointe Winter Park. To gather on Sunday mornings to celebrate who Jesus is in the larger gathering of the church. To scatter weekly into smaller community groups to work through what has been preached on and to wrestle through the implications on your life. Here you will be known and cared for. Lastly, to not just talk about these things, but to put what you are learning into practice. To consistently serve out in the community. To individually and collectively, exist for the community. It is in this area, CrossPointe Winter Park, that we need to grow the most. This will be frightening and invigorating at the same time.

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Will you join us in regularly, intentionally praying for the following objectives. Though some of these could look like simple “number” goals, we need to see them as something much, much more. These goals represent REAL PEOPLE, with REAL STORIES. People both inside and outside of the church who need Jesus to radically transform their lives.

OBJECTIVES

- Replanting CrossPointe Winter Park September 2011 with core group of 125
- Launching of SERVANT/SAVIOR series
- Increased emphasis on FOR THE COMMUNITY
- Understanding our growth seasons :: September - November; January - April
- 200 people this Fall gathering on Sunday mornings for our Celebration Service
- 250 people at our Easter Celebration Service
- 20 baptisms by Easter
- Max out YMCA
- Expanded age groups for CrossPointe KIDS
- Prayer gathering on Sunday mornings - 9:30 am
- Begin thinking about 2 services for Fall 2012
- Bring Zach Simons on full-time by Summer 2012
- Increased Congregational Giving
- All groups engaged in serving in a specific area
- 3 new Community Groups in January
- Redemption Groups this fall

Remember in all of this, it's GOD'S MISSION, but WE GET TO PARTICIPATE. God desires to USE YOU to fulfill His purposes. Through the power of the Gospel we get to point our community to Jesus.

For the Glory of God and Your Joy,

the Elders of CrossPointe Winter Park

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Features



INTRODUCTION

Each session begins with a brief article designed to point you in the direction the session will lead you. Read the scripture reference found near the top of the page and the article. Then pray that God will use His Word to transform your faith as you move through the rest of the session.



OPENING QUESTION

This study was written with the Connection environment in mind. The Relationship Builder will help move you and your group into greater familiarity with one another and toward growth in your relationships. Relationships are vital to our ongoing spiritual growth and development.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The questions are designed with the purpose of moving you deeper into God's Word through one another's personal insights and to a place of personal application which will ultimately lead to the transformation.



PRAYER

Prayer precedes life change. We can be a part of a community group and read God's Word but prayer is what taps the power necessary to actually be changed by it all.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Something powerful happens when we hide God's Word in our hearts and minds. Each session will highlight one verse.

Recommended Resources



ESV Study Bible, Crossway Books



The King's Cross, Tim Keller

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Week 1 Gathering



Introduce yourself to the group :: Where are you from? About your family? How did you connect at CrossPointe? What is your spiritual background?



In what ways do you hope to grow this year in regards to ::

Growing in the Gospel :: Understanding who Jesus is and what he accomplished through his life, death, resurrection and the implications for your life.

Growing in community :: How can the group benefit you? How can you benefit the group?

Being for the Community :: What will it look like for you and your group to seek to live out the mission of Jesus which we see in the book of Mark in the everyday rhythms of life?



How can your group be for the community?

Discuss as a group what it will look like for you to join CrossPointe in serving our city. Two main avenues with different opportunities at each ::

Beta Center ::

- Monthly Meals
- Mentoring
- Areas of Service (maintenance, social media, education, childcare, etc.)

Dover Shores Elementary School ::

- Morning Reading
- Mentoring
- Teacher's Helper
- Events (clothes drives, food pantry, work days, neighborhood clean-up)

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Study One

Read :: Mark 1:1-15

Opening Question :: When you think of someone as a King who most naturally comes to mind and why?

Introduction

“Mark’s Gospel is about “the gospel of the kingdom” which consists of these principles: The healing, all-renewing presence of the kingdom of God that has come back into the world and history because Christ is that true King. However, this King comes in a way that reverses the values of the world — in weakness and service, not strength and force — to die as a ransom for us. Therefore we enter this kingdom through the “upside-down” pattern of the King who went to the cross. We are accepted not because of our ability or merit, but through sheer grace and repentance. We “live out” this kingdom by following the “upside-down” pattern of the King who went to the cross. We live lives of sacrifice and service.”

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What does this passage reveal about who God is?

2. How are we called to respond to who God is? What has/does that look like in your life?

growing in community

1. What is the significance of the “Kingdom of God” being at hand? (quote above)

2. How does Jesus use the church (institution and individuals) in bringing the Kingdom of God? (see John the baptizer, Jesus’ life, vs. 14-15, etc..) What does that mean for you?

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for the community

1. Scan through the book of Mark. What are ways Jesus' Kingdom priorities are being worked out in lives and in the world?

2. How are/can you (and your group) bring Jesus' Kingdom priorities about in your community?

Connecting Questions

1. How did this passage help you in your understanding of who God is and what Jesus has accomplished?

2. What did this passage reveal to you about what God is doing in you and wants to do through you?

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PRAYER for INTENTIONAL LIVING

In light of this passage, this week ::

How can you **INTERCEDE** for your city and specific people you know? How can the group intercede for you?

How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel.” Mark 1:15

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Study Two

Read :: Mark 1:16-34

Opening Question :: What are some of your hobbies and why do you find enjoyment in them?

Introduction

"Jesus (verses 14-15) has just announced that "the kingdom was near." We said last week that this statement leaves a couple of things very mysterious. First there is the mystery of "who is this king?" There can be no kingdom without a king. To say that the "kingdom of God is coming" is to say that the divine God-King is coming. But who is he and where is he?... We, the readers, are introduced to the identity of the divine king immediately, in Mark 1:1-4, where Jesus is identified as the Divine King. Then we watch as Jesus reveals himself slowly to the people around him. As he does so, we get to know Jesus personally and learn much of his unique self-understanding.

The second mystery, however, is the nature of this kingdom itself. If Jesus is the King, why is the kingdom only "near" (v. 15)? Why doesn't he say, "I am here — so the kingdom of God is here?" Evidently, something must happen for it to be "set up." What is that? What is the nature of it — will it mean a military victory for God's people? If not, what kind of kingdom is it? How do we "enter" it? This second mystery is a mystery for the readers as well! Immediately after the announcement of verse 15, we see Mark beginning to reveal to us what the kingdom of God is all about."

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What is the main idea of these passages and what does it reveal about who God is?

2. What is the significance of Jesus 'teaching with Authority' (22), being the 'Holy One of God' (24), demons obeying (27), sick healed (34) etc.? What does that mean for you?

growing in community

1. What does this passage reveal about how Jesus builds his community and who the community is made up of?

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2. What is the significance of Jesus calling particular people to himself and what does he command them (17)? What has/does that look like in your life?

for the community

1. What does this passage teach about what the Kingdom of God is all about and what it accomplishes?

2. We see Jesus proclaiming the Gospel and healing the sick. In Mark 6:12-13 we see Jesus sends out his disciples to do the same. How can you fulfill this call in the everyday rhythms of your life?

Connecting Questions

1. What did you learn about Jesus as King and God's Kingdom through this passage/study?

2. Briefly lay out what it has looked like for Jesus to call you and to follow him or seek out what that means?

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How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Mark 1:1

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Study Three

Read :: Mark 1:35-2:12

Opening Question :: Who are some of your favorite people to spend time with and why?

Introduction

"Jesus was a man of authority. His words were commanding and his commands were irresistible. Jesus has authority to heal and forgive — something to be understood to be the prerogative of God alone. We also see Jesus' authority to sit down and eat with sinners — something which, the teachers of the law believed, was forbidden. In contrast to the Scribes, Jesus needed no authority other than His own person."

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What functions/attributes of God does Jesus demonstrate in this passage? How can Jesus say he has power to forgive sins (see 2 Corinthians 5:16-21)?

2. What is the difference in response to Jesus offer of forgiveness and healing between the scribes (ie the religious people) (2:6-11) and those in need (1:37, 40; 2:4, 12, etc..)?

growing in community

1. What are attributes/posture of the people who respond and follow Jesus? Those who reject?

2. What can we learn from Jesus' rhythm of life :: praying, engaging with people, solitude, teaching the gospel, helping people, leaving people, etc. What would that look like in your life?

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for the community

1. Who were the people that were around and coming to Jesus? How does he respond to the different groups? If you were to follow Jesus in that, who would you be spending time with?

2. Dwell on what people do in response to their encounter with Jesus (vs. 1:45, 2:2, 12)? Do you encounter the grace of Jesus in a way that compels you to be amazed, worship, speak about his impact on your life to others, etc..?

Connecting Questions

1. How is the paralytic (2:1-12) a picture of someone trusting in the Gospel of Jesus? What does that look like for you daily?

2. Take some time to think and pray about the people in your life. Is it a reflection of the people Jesus is with? If not, who are people you can stop and be with who need hope, healing, forgiveness, care, etc..?

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PRAYER for INTENTIONAL LIVING

In light of this passage, this week ::

How can you **INTERCEDE** for your city and specific people you know? How can the group intercede for you?

How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘My son, your sins are forgiven.’ Mark 2:5

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Study Four

Read :: Mark 2:13-3:6

Opening Question :: Describe a time when you felt like an outcast but someone invited you in or made you feel welcome.

Introduction

"In 2:15-17, we see that the religious and moral type persons are not attracted to Jesus as are the non-religious and the moral outsiders. Jesus says: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." He uses both terms ironically. He is saying that the word "righteous" here means self-righteous, and the word "sinners" here means people who know they are sinful and in need of a Savior. Jesus is turning normal religion on its head. He does not congratulate those who have attained a high degree of theological precision and moral discipline. Instead he warns them that they might be the farthest from him. In the next few incidents, Jesus challenges all sorts of expectations and practices of the religious and moral establishment."

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What do we learn about the ways and purposes of God in these accounts of Jesus?

2. How does the encounters with Jesus radically change the direction of peoples lives? In what ways can the gospel of grace change you? (think about how you use your time, talent and treasure)?

growing in community

1. How did Jesus uproot or disturb the religious of his day? What is their posture toward Jesus and what did it result in (3:6)? What was Jesus' posture toward them?

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2. What is the significance of Jesus calling Levi (tax collectors were despised)? What can you learn about what community should look like from verses 2:15-17? (where were they? who was there? what were they doing? etc.)

for the community

1. What is inviting/engaging about the message of Jesus who 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners.'? What is it offensive?

2. What is your posture both towards those who culture would consider "tax collectors and sinners" and the self-righteous? What is the importance of communicating the good news of the gospel to both?

Connecting Questions

1. Do you have a tendency towards not believing the gospel and functioning as a pharisee (legalism) or tax collector (license)? How can the gospel shape your life to joyfully follow Jesus?

2. We see Jesus entering in to the brokenness of lives and situations around him. What are some situations you know of where there is brokenness? How can you move toward it with the gospel?

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How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” Mark 2:17

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Study Five

Read :: Mark 3:7-35

Opening Question :: Describe a time when you were asked to be a part of something in spite of feeling completely out of your league.

Introduction

“Each section of Mark contains a series of incidents in the life of Jesus. Each one shows us something about who Jesus is, His power, His purpose, and His self-understanding. It is as if the gospel writer is pulling a cover off of Jesus inch by inch. Each story reveals a little more of who He is. Now we seem to enter a new series of stories. Some have called Chapter 1 ‘Authority stories’ because they show His authority. Some have called Chapter 2 ‘Conflict stories’ because they show the wisdom of His grace over against the world’s thinking and mindset. Beginning in Chapter 3, we see Jesus beginning the creation of a new community, a new people of God who will embody the kingdom of God. He builds this community through serving people, teaching, preaching, training, counseling, healing, and liberating. Since we continually will be watching Him minister to others, we can always read with two practical questions in mind. 1) How can Jesus carry out this ministry in my life? 2) How can I carry out this ministry in the lives of others?”

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. If the gospel writer is pulling a cover off of Jesus inch by inch, revealing a little more of who He is, what is being revealed about who Jesus is in this particular passage?

2. In watching Jesus in this passage :: 1) How can Jesus carry out this ministry in your life? 2) How can you carry out this ministry in the lives of others? (see quote above)

growing in community

1. What does this passage reveal about the way in which Jesus builds his community? What does he call his community to be and be about?

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2. What is the significance/encouraging about Jesus appointing twelve ordinary men to be his apostles (3:14-19)? In what ways have you seen the local church act as a family in your life?

for the community

1. What does it look like for you to tangibly play a role in the expansion of the kingdom of God (3:14)? (church, city, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) What does it often result in?

2. In what ways can your group display the family of God to the world? How might this play out in regard to those within your community group and those who are disconnected from the church?

Connecting Questions

1. How does what this passage reveals about Jesus affect the way you think about him (head), feel about him (heart), and respond to him (hands)?

2. The Christian life is one of continual steps of repentance and faith. Of what thoughts/feelings/behaviors is God calling you to repent in light of this passage? In what areas do you need to put more faith in the gospel, recognizing that your identity is rooted in the person and work of Jesus?

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PRAYER for INTENTIONAL LIVING

In light of this passage, this week ::

How can you **INTERCEDE** for your city and specific people you know? How can the group intercede for you?

How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: "Whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother." Mark 3:35

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Study Six

Read :: Mark 4:1-34

Opening Question :: What is something you have seen tangibly grow or change?

Introduction

*"This is the first place in the book of Mark where we meet Jesus' teaching method of using "parables." Unlike the other gospels, Mark does not include long passages of Christ's teaching. Thus there are relatively few parables in Mark. The Greek word translated "parable" meant literally "to set one thing beside another" — to draw a comparison between two things and show an analogy. Thus parables begin, "this is like that." The parables of Jesus seek to teach us about the kingdom of God by comparing it with vivid and concrete situations in our world. Parables teach nearly endless new insights. If Jesus asks: "how is the church like a 'city on a hill?'" (Matthew 5:14) The answers are endless. Parables invite deep meditation and reflection. It's helpful to again remind ourselves what Jesus means by "the kingdom of God." Many people think of a "kingdom" as the physical place which is ruled — for example when we hear of the "Kingdom of Gondor" we usually have to think of a definite geographical "realm." The Greek word *basilea* (kingdom) that Jesus uses refers more to the "ruling power" of the sovereign than to the "realm."
—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC*

growing in the gospel

1. What are the basic ideas behind Jesus' parables in this text? What do they tell us about God?

2. What imagery do you see Jesus use (even repeatedly) in these parables? What does the imagery teach us about the Kingdom of God and the spreading of the gospel?

growing in community

1. What are differences between those who hear and accept the gospel and those who hear but do not believe or accept the gospel? What allows growth?

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2. Which of the four soils do you identify with now? Why? Which of the four soils have you identified more with in the past? Why?

for the community

1. With regard to the spread of the gospel, how do these parables encourage, discourage and challenge you? What do they teach you about your role in the kingdom of God?

2. Identify those in your community who need the gospel sown to them (vs. 3, 26, 31, 32). How can you bring the light of truth (vs. 21-22) into their lives (specifically)?

Connecting Questions

1. Are you daily aware of the kingdom of God and its growth? What does it mean to live with a kingdom perspective? What would that look like in your life?

2. How have/do you experience the sowing of the word of truth in your life (who, when, how, etc.)? What effect has/does it have on you and how does it shape your understanding of Jesus?

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How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” Mark 4:20

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Study Seven

Read :: Mark 4:35-5:20

Opening Question :: How do you tend to respond to 'storms' in your life and why?

Introduction

"Man's response in this passage is that of fear as opposed to mere amazement, and faith (verses 6:6, 9:23, 10:52, 11:22). Fear is generally opposed to faith: if the disciples had had faith, they would not have feared the storm. The demons feared Jesus and the Gerasene people wrongly feared Jesus' presence. Yet the disciples were not wrong to tremble at the power of Jesus' Word. He is revealing himself as Christ and God. The faith he demands is a faith that acknowledges and relies on his power, even during terrible the circumstances. In view of His power, our faith also carries with it a sense of awe."

—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What does this passage teach us about who Christ is (person and work) and trusting in Christ?

2. *'The juxtaposition of Jesus' divinity and humanity reminds us of the uniqueness of Jesus. If he had not been human, he could not have come as our representative, he could not have really suffered in our place. If he had not been divine, he could not have truly revealed God to us, he could not have faced the temptations and opposition of evil successfully.'*—Mark Study, Redeemer

How does this passage reveal Jesus' being fully God and fully man? What is the importance of it?

growing in community

1. How do Jesus' followers respond to the storm? In what ways do you currently relate to them crying out to Jesus 'do you not care'? What can you learn from Jesus response?

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2. Where have you seen Jesus prove to be faithful and present in your life (lives of others) through challenging circumstances/struggles? How does that allow you to trust him regardless of your circumstances/struggles?

for the community

1. How does Jesus interact with 'the man with the unclean spirit' (5:1-13) What is the result of the man's life-changing encounter with Jesus (vs. 18-20)?

2. Dwell on 'how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you' in all areas of your life. What does it look like for you to 'proclaim' that in the everyday rhythms of your life?

Connecting Questions

1. What causes you to lack faith in Jesus?

2. What are the implications of this passage for your life? Why is it significant to encounter and know the presence of Jesus daily to grow in the Gospel?

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How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” Mark 5:19

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Study Eight

Read :: Mark 5:21-43

Opening Question :: Where do you see brokenness in the world that saddens you?

Introduction

"These miracles show us that Jesus is truly "omnipotent"— all powerful. Dick Lucas says that the theme of these four stories is "Jesus' authority over the impossible". The forces that bow down to Jesus (without even a struggle) are those forces completely outside of our human control. Last week we saw Jesus' power over a) the hurricane, the forces of nature (4:35-41), and b) the demoniac, the forces of supernatural evil (5:1-20). This week, we see Jesus conquering disease (5:25-34) and death itself (5:35-43). Notice the statement that the sick woman had completely exhausted human resources (v. 26). The second theme running through them all is the theme of faith. Jairus is told to "just believe" (v. 36) and the sick woman is also given instruction on the centrality of faith (v. 34). The woman's faith connects to Jesus' "power" (v. 30). So the theme(s) running through all four incidents could be put like this. a) Jesus has power of a divine magnitude. b) Jesus brings down barriers that human resources cannot touch. c) It is through faith that we connect to this power. d) Nothing in the universe can separate those who believe from the love of Christ (cf. Romans 8:31 ff.) –Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What do we learn about Jesus in this passage that allows our faith to grow? How can that impact your life/circumstances?

2. These passages point to Jesus bringing ultimate healing and power over death which He accomplished on the Cross (Mark 15-16). How has/is the Cross brought you freedom?

growing in community

1. What are similarities and differences between Jairus and the woman (circumstances, economic, spiritual, etc.)? What can we learn about the diversity and unity of those who follow Jesus?

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2. What is the posture of those who come to Jesus and receive healing? What can you learn from them?

for the community

1. Read 5:31-34. What is the importance of sharing the ways Jesus has brought and is bringing you peace, freedom and healing with others?

2. What is challenging/important about sharing the ways Jesus has brought you peace, freedom and healing with others?

Connecting Questions

1. What has been challenging for you about these accounts of Jesus? Encouraging?

2. Who do you know that fit the backgrounds of Jairus and the woman? How can/would you help them connect their story to God's story?

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How can you **INVEST** in your community and specific people you know (time, talent, treasure)?

How can you **INVITE** them in to community (church/group) and to Christ (share the gospel)?

Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “And he said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.’” Mark 5:34

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Study Nine

Read :: Mark 6:1-29

Opening Question :: When was a time you were rejected for something or someone? How did you feel?

Introduction

"The theme of these incidents all have to do with rejection of the Word of God. Even in Jesus' commission to the disciples he assumes a lot of refusal and resistance to the message of the gospel (6:11). Another theme of the section is "who is this?" Each section shows people's varied responses to Jesus, all falling short of the truth."—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What astonishes and amazes you about Jesus as you see his works, wisdom, claims, etc.? How does/can that shape your life?

2. What questions do you have about Jesus and understanding the gospel/it's implications? How can the group encourage/help you to seek and find answers?

growing in community

1. What can be the result of speaking the truth in love and following Jesus (vs. 1-4 11, 18-28)? How is that challenging?

2. *'When we look closely at vv. 7-13, we see a remarkably balanced picture. On the one hand we must be servants, living transparently among people who don't believe, trusting and respecting them and sacrificing for them. On the other hand, we must have the courage to tell the truth about Christ' —Mark Study, Redeemer*

What can this look like for your group? What is challenging about this?

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for the community

1. What is the mission Jesus gives his followers (7-13)? What does he give them and how does he tell them to go (why is that significant)?

2. In your relational connections, what are reasons people resist/refuse the message of the Gospel? How can you engage those with patience, truth and love? (see 1 Peter 3:15)

Connecting Questions

1. What is encouraging about what Jesus experienced and his warnings about what it will be like to follow him? Challenging?

2. In what ways do you feel ill-equipped to be 'sent out' by Jesus on His mission? What can you learn from this passage?

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PRAYER for INTENTIONAL LIVING

In light of this passage, this week ::

How can you **INTERCEDE** for your city and specific people you know? How can the group intercede for you?

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Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. And they cast out demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.” Mark 6:12-13

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Study Ten

Read :: Mark 6:30-56

Opening Question :: Tell about a time when you were in need. How did others provide?

Introduction

“Here’s the best way to summarize the meaning of the two incidents: “Cast all your anxiety upon him, for he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). Since he is a shepherd — he cares, and it is his job to endlessly heal the broken, find the lost, and support the weak. Since he is also God (an omnipotent shepherd), he cannot fail to be successful in these endeavors. Therefore we will be as anxiety-free as we are disciplined to remember and apply his identity to our current situations. He loves you more than you love yourself. He knows your needs better than you know your own needs. See John 10. He lays down his life for his sheep — that’s how much he cares. So cast all your anxiety upon him. Mark is showing us that these two things are not separate. He can meet our needs because he is the King of the universe. Therefore we cannot seek to have Jesus meet our needs as shepherd if we won’t acknowledge him as King.”—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What do we learn about Jesus in these passages? What do the titles of King and Shepherd teach us about Him (quote above)?

2. How would your life be different if you fully trusted and believed that Jesus is the powerful King and the compassionate Shepherd? (your care for others, control, anxiety, going to God, etc.)

growing in community

1. How do we see Jesus care for his followers in this passage? How has Jesus cared and provided for you?

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2. What common character quality prevented the disciples from understanding the meaning of both the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus' walking on water (51-52)? How can we avoid that?

for the community

1. How do the people respond to Jesus' arrival in these passages and what does it tell us about Jesus' reputation in the community? What is your reputation in your neighborhood, office, school? How do/can you reflect Jesus?

2. Who were the people that were around and coming to Jesus? How does he respond to them? If you were to follow Jesus in that, who and how would you be interacting with?

Connection Questions:

1. In what ways are you living in fear and concern that God will not provide and care for you? How can believing gospel bring freedom and satisfaction?

2. Take some time to think and pray about the people in your life and how you interact with them. Is it a reflection of the people Jesus is with and how he interacts? If not, who are people you can stop and be with who need hope, compassion, rest, healing, forgiveness, care, etc...?

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Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: "Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid." Mark 6:50

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Study Eleven

Read :: Mark 7:1-23

Opening Question

Describe a time when you felt like no matter how hard you tried you simply couldn't live up to someone else's expectations of you.

Introduction

"Jesus here refutes the Pharisees argument in the most thorough way. He shows them that he takes the law and the need for holiness far more seriously than they do. He shows that the problem of defilement is not an 'outside' job that can be dealt with by self-improvement, but an 'inside condition' that can only be dealt with by radical intervention and grace."—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. What do we learn about the ways and purposes of God in these accounts of Jesus?

2. Jesus clearly gets at issues of the heart rather than rebuking in the name of behavior modification. In what ways do you seek to honor God outwardly but 'your heart is far from him'?

growing in community

1. In what ways were the pharisee's being stricter than God (adding traditions of men-legalism)? What does that look like today and how does that destroy the church?

2. How did the Pharisee's respond to Jesus? Are you open to being corrected or are you quick to dismiss criticism (do you rebel or repent)?

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for the community

1. What do we learn about sin in verses 14-23? How is sin and being a Christian often misunderstood by those in the church and outside the church? How does Jesus bring hope and how can you bring the hope of Jesus to others who are in sin?

2. What is the significance in Jesus teaching 'there is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him' for seeking to engage the world you live in with the Gospel? (how does that speak to where you go, who you interact with, how you interact with people, etc..)

Connecting Questions

1. In what areas of life do you lean towards legalism and focusing on self-improvement? How does the Gospel free you to deal with issues of the heart?

2. We see Jesus entering in to the lives and situations around him, speaking truth and exposing sin. Who is speaking truth in to your life? Who's life are you speaking truth in to? What does it look like?

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Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”
Mark 7:6b

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Study Twelve

Read :: Mark 7:24-37

Opening Question :: When was a time you had to exercise faith in the people around you?

Introduction

"We must see the first of these incidents — at least — as having a very direct connection to the teaching of Jesus about the nature of sin in Mark 7:1-23. The Mosaic law required that worshippers be 'ritually clean,' physically healthy, have no contact with dead animals or people, abstain from a list of prohibited foods, and so on. The purpose of these rules were to act as a 'visual aid' to show us that we needed to be holy before God. Disease, decay, and dirt symbolize sin. The religious leaders, however, saw ritual purity not as a symbolizing holiness, but as constituting holiness. As a result, they added even more rules and regulations, the 'tradition of the elders,' on top of the Biblical laws. They believed that you could make yourself acceptable to God by scrupulously staying separate from profane and unclean people, places, and practices. Jesus says that they completely missed the point of the Old Testament regulations. Sin is first of all internal, a matter of the heart. Sin can't be dealt with by external washing but only through internal spiritual intervention."—Mark Study, Redeemer Presbyterian Church, NYC

growing in the gospel

1. In these passages, Jesus reveals Himself as Lord over the spiritual and physical realms. In what ways does Jesus' Lordship bring comfort to you?

2. In both sections of this passage, the faith of those involved played a huge role in Jesus' response. What can we learn from these individuals regarding approaching Christ by faith?

growing in community

1. How could Jesus' situation in vs. 24-30 be seen as "unclean" by the religious people of His day? What does this show us about how we are to interact with others?

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2. In vs. 31-37 we are told that a group of people brought this man to Jesus. What would it have meant for Jesus to touch him?

for the community

1. *'On the other hand, his going to Tyre is 'missiologically significant'. This is the only recorded time that Jesus ever left the territory of Israel. He was going out into 'unclean' Gentile turf. The most 'religiously-correct' did not associate with Gentiles at all.'* What can we learn from Jesus about his mission in this passage?

2. How can these verses about Jesus healing and revealing Himself to the unclean and outcast influence how you view yourself and the people around you? When have you failed in this area by your own sinfulness? When have you succeeded in this area by God's grace?

Connection Questions:

1. How can you relate to the syrophoenician woman and the deaf man? What about Jesus and the Cross makes you "astonished beyond measure"? (vs. 37)

2. What role does your faith play in the context of your personal relationships, family relationships and community, etc.? How can you communicate who Jesus is in these areas?

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Prayer Requests ::

Memory Verse :: "And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." Mark 7:37