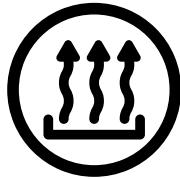




The Gospel of Mark



WARM-UP

Have you ever gone to another place where something was significantly different and you realized you had taken that thing for granted? What and where?

Example: no toilet seats in the subway bathrooms in London. Toilet seats = important.

Read out loud as a group

MARK CHAPTER 5 RECAP

In Mark Chapter 5, we have three stories of Jesus conquering death. He heals a man possessed by many demons, a woman living with a physical bleeding affliction, and actually raises a little girl from the dead. In doing so, Jesus reveals his power, authority, and ultimately his purpose: the Conqueror of sin and death. Not with sweeping judgement but with tenderness, care, and relationship.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 6:1-13 (NIV)

1 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. 2 When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? 3 Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.

4 Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home." 5 He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. 6 He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. 7 Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.

8 These were his instructions: "Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts. 9 Wear sandals but not an extra shirt. 10 Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave that town. 11 And if any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

12 They went out and preached that people should repent. 13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.



What stands out to you?

Possible Answers: Answers will vary.



It seems like the people of Nazareth took offense because they were familiar with Jesus. Familiar enough that they couldn't look beyond what they expected. What assumptions do you make about God or how God should work? How might those assumptions cause you to miss God or how God is working?

Possible Answers: Answers may vary. Looking for the miracle but missing the everyday provision, so focused on what is to come that you miss what God could be teaching you in the moment or the waiting for a thing. So focused on what you think you need God to provide that you miss his gentle pull in a new direction. etc.



Why does the gospel so often provoke offense before it brings healing?

Possible Answers: you need to see your need before you can see it being joyfully fulfilled.



In verse 5, Jesus withholds his miracles. What does this show in regards to the role that faith plays in experience with God?

Possible Answers: it shows that God often responds to our faith. Throughout the OT God responds when people repent, turn away from sin, and believe that He'll do what He says He'll do (punish the guilty and save the faithful). Jesus is showing a physical representation of the spiritual truth: You will be healed if you believe in Jesus and you cannot be healed/saved if you do not believe.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 6:14-29 (NIV)

14 King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "He is Elijah." And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago." 16 But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!"

17 For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. 18 For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, 20 because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

Read out loud as a group

MARK 6:14-29 (NIV) CONTINUED...

21 Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. 22 When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you." 23 And he promised her with an oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom."

24 She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptist," she answered.

25 At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter."

26 The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. 27 So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, 28 and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. 29 On hearing of this, John's disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.



Compare and contrast. How is John the Baptist a shadow of Jesus?

Possible Answers: both killed because of what they preached, both offended with their truthful message, killed because a leader felt political pressure to appear in control, both political leaders were reluctant but ultimately gave into pressure from the crowds around them, both had friends bury them. But Jesus rose from the dead!



What role does the fear of others play in your decision making? How can we look to Jesus in those moments?

Possible Answers: Answers may vary. Stop and pray before acting. Ask wise counsel. Look to the bible. Look to Jesus as the example: He didn't come to "please" us for he gave us the offensive truth, we cannot do it ourselves. But in the midst of that He provided the only way out of sin and death. Jesus preached the offensive truth to the point of death.



Herod was distracted by the daughter of Herodias. What causes you to be distracted from truth/gospel/faith?

Possible Answers: Answers may vary. Worldly pleasures, pain, grief, anger, unmet desires, evil, hard questions, fun, people, work, family, etc.

DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- Where is it easy to respond to the Lord in faith?
Where is it hard?
- Where are you resisting God's truth because it
threatens your comfort, your image, or your control?