

ORCHARD ROAD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Small Group Bible Study

SERIES INTRODUCTION

During His Galilean ministry Jesus performed many of His greatest miracles. These demonstrated His power over earthly elements, the forces of evil, sickness of body and spirit, and even death. As you study Mark 4–6, look for what Jesus taught about the power of faith and compassion. Look also for what these chapters teach about handling sorrow and rejection.

3 Sep

Calm After the Storm

Mark 4:35 - 5:20

10 Sep

What Are We Waiting For?

Mark 5:21-43

17 Sep

Dealing with Rejection

Mark 6:1-6

24 Sep

Feeding with the Bread of Heaven

Mark 6:30-44

Calm After The Storm

MARK 4:35 - 5:20

GENERAL SURVEY

TOPIC

KEY VERSE

MAIN PERSON/S

KEY IDEAS & QUESTIONS

Introduction

his passage records two miracles which clearly demonstrated Jesus' power and authority over nature and the demonic world. The calm (on the sea and in the man's behaviour) after the storm (caused by wind and demon possession) foreshadows the everlasting peace that can be found in the kingdom of God. Yet the people and demons who glimpsed Jesus' true identity were filled with great fear. Can it be that one who evoked such fear is also the one who will bring about the greatest peace?

For Study and Discussion

- 1) Context: Mark's narrative of these events begins with "That day," (4:35) suggesting that these two incidents happened immediately after Jesus had taught them and the crowd by the lake (Sea of Galilee) starting in Mark 4:1.
 - a) Review and summarize in your own words Jesus' key teaching to the disciples as recorded in 4:1-34.

 - b) Based on Jesus' teaching and actions up to this point, how much do you think the disciples know about Jesus' power and identity?

- 2) Mark 4:35-41. Jesus Calms The Storm.
 - a) What did the disciples do and say to Jesus when the storm threatened to sink the boat? What did their words reveal about what they expected Jesus to do for them?

 - b) What was Jesus' response to the disciples? According to Jesus' reply, how is fear and faith related?

 - c) Discuss how Jesus might have expected the disciples to act in response to the life-threatening storm if they indeed have faith. What might this faith be based on?

- d) Read also Matthew and Luke's account of this same incident (Matt 8:23-27, Luke 8:22-25). How did the disciples respond to Jesus's miraculous act of calming the storm? What does this reveal about their understanding of who Jesus is, before and after Jesus had calmed the storm? Consider Psalms 89:9, 93:4, Exodus 33:20, Judges 13:21-22.
- 3) Mark 5:1-20. Jesus Heals A Demon-Possessed Man.
- a) Describe the mental and physical state of the man possessed by the unclean spirit (read also Luke 8:26-29). Contrast this with how the man behaved after Jesus healed him.
- b) How did the people respond to Jesus' act of healing the demon-possessed man? What might they be afraid of? Consider that the people living in this area were likely gentiles, given the location east of the Sea of Galilee and that they were keeping pigs, considered unclean by the Jews, as livestock. Do you think this is the same kind of fear that the disciples felt in Mark 4:41?
- c) What did the man who was possessed and now healed ask of Jesus? What did Jesus tell him to do instead and what was the result of the man obeying Jesus' instructions?
- d) Why would the possessed man who was healed beg to stay with Jesus while the rest of his countrymen begged Jesus to leave? What is the difference in their knowledge, experience, and understanding of who Jesus is?

Discipleship Pointers

- Fear is our response when we have no control over a situation.
 - Faith in God is the antidote to fear because:
 - God is the one we should rightly fear (Deuteronomy 10:12, Ecclesiastes 12:13).
 - God is mightier than anyone or anything that we may fear.
 - Peace is often elusive because we have not accepted in our hearts what we know in our minds. We need to know the difference between:
 - being amazed at Jesus' power versus having faith in Jesus' power.
 - knowing who Jesus is versus knowing Jesus as our personal saviour.
 - "The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else."
- from *The Highest Good—The Pilgrim's Song Book* by Oswald Chambers.

Family/Group Moments

- Think about the times when you went through "storms" in your life. What did you expect Jesus to do and what did you ask him to do? What did Jesus do through those "storms" and what did you learn about Jesus?
- How has your behaviour or lifestyle changed after you had experienced salvation by the grace of God? How has your testimony allowed others to know, experience, and understand who Jesus is?
- Make a list of 3 things, situations, or people that you fear the most today. How can faith in Jesus Christ help you to overcome these fears in practice?

- c) Why do you think the lady came to Jesus trembling with fear even though she had been healed?
- d) Although the woman was healed immediately when she touched Jesus' clothes, what was it that brought about her healing according to Jesus? What did Jesus tell her to do?
- 3) The raising of the daughter vv5:35-43.
- a) What would have been in Jairus' mind when some people told him "Your daughter is dead!"? v35
- b) What happened next? vv36-43
- c) In both cases, what attribute did Jairus and the woman demonstrate through their actions? v28 and v36

Discipleship Pointers

- Sometimes our lives are a series of interruptions and we question God's wisdom because of them. Perhaps we should challenge our own limited knowledge instead. Just like the disciples who questions Jesus when He asked "Who touched my clothes?" likewise, we might want to rethink some of these questions we pose to the Lord.
- Jesus didn't just perform miracles on the woman, but also allowed testimony from her. It is a complete restoration, physically as well ceremonially.
- Faith is ultimately the ingredient both Jairus and the woman demonstrated. Would we also be found likewise?

Family/Group Moments

- Like Jairus, we become anxious when we don't see the Lord acting according to our plans and wishes. Even during a short dramatic interruption, our faith might waver. Discuss how in times of anxiety we would stay faithful and trust in God's timing and wisdom.
- There is too much noise in life, much like Jairus' experience in getting Jesus to his daughter. Discuss how you could stay focus on the Lord and stay obedient. What are the challenges that you need prayer for?

Dealing with Rejection

MARK 6:1-6

GENERAL SURVEY

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The first half of Mark's Gospel focuses on Jesus and his ministry of preaching, teaching, healing, and casting out demons. Mark sees Jesus as a man with a message and a purpose. People who heard him preach and saw him heal were astounded because they had never seen or heard anyone like him. However, while many people responded positively to him others rejected him because he didn't live up to their expectations of what the Messiah should be like or because he didn't come from a background that they respected. While in earlier chapters Mark has mentioned some individuals and groups who didn't accept Jesus, beginning in this passage he highlights rejection on a broader scale—people attending a synagogue service in his home town and his own family. This may be anticipating his final rejection when he got to Jerusalem. Why did the people in the synagogue reject him and how did it effect his ministry? That is what we want to consider from today's passage.

For Study and Discussion

- 1) Read Mark 6:1-6. What seems to have been Jesus' main purpose for returning to his home town? What did he come to do? What kind of reception did he receive?

- 2) What set this synagogue service attended by Jesus apart from other Sabbath services?

- 3) While the word translated "amazed" or "astonished" can be used in positive settings (cf. Mark 7:37), there are reasons to think that the word here takes on its more basic meaning of "struck down" or "struck with amazement" with its negative connotations (cf. Mark 10:26; Luke 2:48).
 - a) What was there about Jesus that caused some people to respond with negative amazement?

 - b) Is the testimony given about Jesus consistent or do people seem to be unsure about who he is?

- c) What could you say to help them get a right perspective of who Jesus was? Note that the Greek word translated “carpenter” in v3 can be used to refer to any craftsman and not only those who work with wood. As Jews did not look down on manual labour (cf. Paul who worked as a tent maker) the issue could be not that he was so low, but that he was so normal.
- 4) What does Jesus mean when he says: “A prophet is not without honour, except in his hometown and among his relatives and in his own household?” (Cf. Mark 3:21, 31-35.) Where is Jesus honoured? By whom? Who dishonours him? Why?
- 5) How did Jesus respond to the disbelief of the people of his home town? How did it impact his ongoing ministry? Does disbelief make it impossible for Jesus to perform miracles? When the early Christians read what Mark says about Jesus’ reaction to being rejected, how should they have responded? How should we respond when people reject our witness about Jesus?

Discipleship Pointers

Though Jesus’ teaching and preaching ministry fulfilled Scripture and gave many people good reason to believe that he was the promised Messiah, not everyone was convinced. The lack of faith shown by these people caused Jesus to be amazed (note that this is a different word than the one found in v 2 and could be translated “he marvelled”). When this was Jesus’ experience when he was present, we should not be surprised when people are not convinced when we tell them about what Jesus did from a second-hand perspective. But though we may marvel that certain people don’t turn to Jesus after hearing the gospel, and these people might be offended by what we say, we should not give up. Just as Jesus turned to the other towns around him when those who met in his local synagogue rejected him, we should also turn to bring his good news to others when our witness is rejected.

Family/Group Moments

- Does unbelief ever hinder God’s work in your own life?
- How is our walk and our partnership with God today?

Feeding with the Bread of Heaven

MARK 6:30-44

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In Mark 6:7-13, Jesus sent out the disciples “two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits”, instructing them to “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belts... They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.” When they returned to Jesus and faced with a hungry crowd of five thousand men (besides women and children), the disciples raised their concerns to Jesus. Jesus told the hungry and tired disciples “You give them something to eat.” The disciples were about to learn a great deal about themselves and about their Master.

For Study and Discussion

- 1) Needs of Disciples (Mark 6:30-32)
 - a) In v31, what real human needs were Jesus concerned with?

 - b) Share what you have learnt from vv30-32 about sharing, work, and rest.

- 2) Needs of the Crowd (Mark 6:32-34)
 - a) Jesus and the disciples were trying to get away for some rest, but the crowd interrupted them. What does Jesus’ response (v34) demonstrate about His character?

 - b) What deeper human need is referred to in v34?

Daily Prayer Guide

Sunday: The Church

Church members & families
Visitors
Pastor & church leaders
Sunday School teachers
Worship leaders
Small group leaders
Other churches
Outreach efforts

Monday: The Workplace

Supervisor
Co-workers
Subordinates
Customers & suppliers
Difficult situations
Work attitude
Work performance

Tuesday: Acquaintances

Mentors & mentorees
Accountability partners
Friends
Neighbours
Merchants
Public servants
Teachers & other school Workers
Children's friends & their families

Wednesday: My Country

Public officials - executive, legislative,
& judicial
Armed forces
Public morality
The media
The economy

Thursday: The World

International peace & understanding
Missions and missionaries
Persecuted churches
Hunger, sickness, & disaster relief

Friday: My Spiritual Growth

Maturity
Understanding
Faith
Love toward God
Love toward others
Servanthood

Saturday: My Family

Spouse
Children
Grandchildren
Parents
Brothers & sisters
Extended family
Unsaved loved ones

*"Call to me and I will answer you and
tell you great and unsearchable things
you do not know."-Jeremiah 33:3*

Little Steps To Great Learning!

Preparation:

- Attempt all questions in the relevant Bible study before your group meeting.
- Expect spiritual growth by thoughtfully working on the Bible study questions (and the suggested reading, if any) throughout the week.
- Seek the Holy Spirit's insight and guidance by praying daily in reflection of what you have learned through the Bible study.

Group Time:

- On the following Sunday, take notes during sermon to assist in focusing your thoughts.
- Be punctual for your group meeting.
- Share the insight gained through the sermon with your group.
- Be frank in sharing your response to the questions in the discipleship pointers.
- Encourage others by attesting to God's goodness and reality by sharing to the group (and others) how the Word has changed your thinking and action in response to your study in the past week.
- Using the front sheet, summarise how the lessons have helped you to understand God's revelation in the Bible through Jesus Christ, and your response to the revelation.

THE BIBLE is to be...

Read through...

Reflected in...

Lived out...

Given away...

