

Mark Bible Study

Study 3 (week of Sept. 29th - Oct. 1)

Mark 1:29-2:22 Jesus Heals Many

Leader's Preparation

To prepare to lead this study read the passages over at least three times, noting what you feel might be some of the main points. Using your UCM Leader's Guide (pp. 22-23 or pp. 27-33), ask observation and interpretation questions of the passages.

You will also find it very helpful to read the parallel passages in the other 3 gospels.

- For Mk. 1:29-34 read Mt. 8:14-17, Lk. 4:38-41
- for Mk. 1:35-38 read Lk. 4:42, 43
- for Mk. 1:40-44 read Mt. 8:2-4; Lk. 5:12-14
- for Mk. 2:3-17 read Mt. 9:2-17, Lk. 5:18-38

For more information refer to a good commentary by: William Lane, N.T. Wright.

Observation:

Ask the who, why, what, where questions.

Who are the main characters in these verses?

What is going on in these verses?

Key words or phrases: Are there any words you don't understand that may be important to the overall understanding of the passages?

Why did people wait until sunset to come to Jesus in order to be healed? (1:32)

The Pharisees had many man made laws to help people keep God's Laws. God gave humankind the Sabbath, meant to be a day of rest from the daily routine of work. The Pharisees believed that healing a person was work and therefore insisted, unless the person was going to die, that healing be done only on non-Sabbath days. The Jewish day ended at sunset and so people felt free to bring their sick family members to Jesus once the Sabbath was over.

Why did Jesus tell the leper to show himself to the priest and what did it mean for him to offer the sacrifice that Moses commanded (verse 43-44)?

In Leviticus 13 and 14:1-32 we can read that anything that might show signs of infection or contamination must be shown to a priest. The priest would verify whether the contamination was infectious and if so the person must be separated from the rest of the community until the infection was healed and the leper show himself once again to the priest. 'The leper who has the disease shall cover his lip and cry, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean; he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp.' (Lev. 13:45ff). Leprosy brought with it deep physical and mental anguish for both the individual affected and the whole

community. Jesus touched the leper showing that his concern for the person outweighed any prohibitions to his own 'cleanliness'.

What does the term, 'Son of Man' mean? (2:10) This was Jesus' most common title for himself. In Daniel 7:13-14 the Son of Man is pictured as a heavenly figure who in the end times is entrusted by God with authority, glory and sovereign power. Jesus later links this title with the title 'Messiah' (God's anointed one) in Mark 8:39-31. But, in chapter 8 Jesus points his disciples to a different Son of Man and Messiah than they had envisioned. This Son of Man will also be the suffering servant of God written about in Isaiah 52. No one had anticipated that God Himself would come to suffer and die. It would take time for Jesus' disciples, let alone others, to understand this kind of a Messiah. Therefore the need for Jesus to keep his full identity secret until later.

From the gospel of Mark it appears that the disciples followed Jesus immediately after meeting him (1:16, 17; 2:14). But this was not the case. Mark's writing style is fast moving. He does not fill us in on some of the details, as John does in his gospel, that the disciples meet Jesus several times before finally leaving their nets and tax booth to follow Jesus.

Why were tax collectors grouped together with "sinners" by religious leaders of Jesus' day (2:15)? Tax collectors would have been Jews who had agreed to collaborate with the foreign rulers (Romans). Matthew may have been at a toll booth on a major road collecting taxes for "Caesar". Tax collectors were considered as outcasts. They could not serve as witnesses or as judges and were expelled from the synagogue. In the eyes of the Jewish community their disgrace extended even to their families. Sinners were known evil people and were grouped together with anyone who refused to follow the Mosaic law as interpreted by the teachers of the law.

INTRODUCTION

Ice Breaker and or an introductory question.

Depending on how comfortable the members of your Core feel, ask each person to read a portion of the passage until you have read the whole passage. If some members don't feel comfortable reading in front of others, you offer to read more of the passage.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Look at verses 34 and 40-45. Why did Jesus not allow the demons to speak? Why did Jesus strongly warn the leper he had healed not to tell anyone about what he had done? Why was it important that Jesus keep his true identity secret at this particular time?** (Refer back to the notes given last week concerning the Messianic Secret and people's expectations surrounding the Kingdom Of God and deliverance from foreign rule).
- 2. In verse 35 we read that Jesus got up early in the morning to pray.**

Why, if Jesus is God incarnate, did he need to pray?

3. What do you think he prayed about in light of his response to the disciples in verse 38? Jesus did not come for just one people group. Nor did he come to only meet people's physical needs nor his disciples' expectations. The people and the disciples expected Jesus to stay. But, Jesus had spent the early morning speaking with the Father. He knew that he was to go so that all might hear the Good News - that the Kingdom of God had come to earth.

What lessons can we learn from Jesus' daily need to meet with and hear from the Father?

4. What is the significance of Jesus' words in 2:5 "Son, your SINS are forgiven."?

Why do you think Jesus choose to declare his true identity here while elsewhere he hid his identity form people?

(Jesus both hid his true identity as the Son of God (would not let the demons speak and forbid the leper from telling of his healing), but revealed himself at times as none other than God Himself - only God can forgive sins.)

5. What did Jesus mean when he said he had come to call sinners but not the righteous (2:17)?

If to be righteous means to be in right relationship with God, did Jesus come only for some (those not right with God), while not for others? Can a person truly be made righteous apart form being made righteous through faith in

Jesus and what he has done? (For ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); For Christ died once for ALL, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God (1 Peter 3:18))

Jesus has come for everyone, but only those who recognize their need for a doctor, who recognize their sin and their need for God's forgiveness, will be healed. A sick person can only be healed if they first recognize their need for treatment and then come to be treated by a physician. The Pharisees saw no need for Jesus. They were self-righteous and failed to recognize their own sin and their need for God's forgiveness. No one can be made righteous through their own religious efforts.

APPLICATION QUESTION

Summarize the Study . You may want to set aside time in the following Core to answer any remaining questions people may have.

6. If Jesus needed to meet with God the Father to pray, we need to meet with God even more so. Do you have a regular devotion plan? Ask someone in Core to keep you accountable to a regular meeting time with God.