

WHO IS JESUS?

Seeing and Hearing Jesus

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



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KINGDOM PARABLES



Getting into the Word

1. Have a few people have a go at explaining the parables in their own words, including an interpretation.
 - In the first parable (v1-9) most of Jesus' words are dedicated to the wasted unfruitful seed and yet the conclusion emphasises a healthy harvest. What tension does this establish? What is Jesus getting at?
 - In the lampstand parable, what does light have to do with hearing? And what is the measure referring to?
 - In the parable of the growing seed (v26-29) there is an emphasis on the growth (now) and the certainty of the sickle (future). What do you make of this?
 - In the final parable there is a tension between the smallness of the seed and the size of the tree. What does Jesus want the crowd to see? Think of Jesus' journey so far.
2. Look at the prominence of the words "listen" and "hear" in the passage.
3. Why does Mark place these parables here after what has happened so far in Jesus' journey? This is the one of the largest blocks of teaching that Mark records... he wants us to notice something.

4. What does truly listening to Jesus look like?

Before going on to 'Responding to Jesus' read Isaiah 6:9-10 (which Jesus quotes in v12). In this chapter Isaiah has been atoned for and sent out by God. God is the same, yesterday, today and forever; but Israel had rejected God and his word would be a word of judgement until "her sin had been paid for". Only then would they be comforted (Is 40:1-2).



Responding to Jesus

1. How would you describe Jesus from this passage?
 - Does he want to forgive or not? (v12)
 - How is Jesus' parables simultaneously a word of judgement and grace?
2. How do Jesus' parables (and his word to the waves) reveal the "good news" of the kingdom?
 - What about this do we long for?
 - What are you unsure about?
3. How might we respond to him?
 - What does Jesus say about "discipleship"?
 - How do the disciples fair in listening and responding to the word (v35-41)?



Proclaiming Jesus to the World

1. Think of some people and describe where they might be with respect to the crowd by the sea shore. What might cause them to “lean in”? What reasons do they have to not listen any further.
2. How might you help them see more of and listen to Jesus? A big factor in this might be how you are seeing more of and listening to Jesus!

DEMONS, DEATH AND DISEASE



Getting into the Word

1. Have a go at drawing Jesus' interaction with the Gerasene demoniac. As you draw, discuss why Jesus involved innocent pigs?!? (Mark 5:1-20)



2. What is a major difference between this encounter with an unclean spirit and the earlier description of Jesus casting out demons in Mark 1:32-34? Also consider Mark 5:43 in your discussion.

3. How would you explain this word which Jesus declared to the woman healed from her disease - "your faith has made you well"?

4. In this section of Mark, fear and faith are often mentioned together. How do we hold these two realities in tension? See Mark 4:40 'afraid', 5:10 'begged', 5:33 'fear & trembling' and 5:36 'Don't be afraid, only believe' and consider 1 John 4:17-18, particularly considering the context there as the day of judgment.

5. How might the events in Mark 5 begin to address the 3 sets of questions posed in Mark 4:38-41? What do we begin to see about Jesus' character here?



Responding to Jesus

1. How would you describe Jesus from this passage?
2. How do Jesus' words and actions reveal the "good news" of the kingdom?
 - What about this do we long for?
 - What are you unsure about?
3. How might we respond to him?
 - What does Jesus say about "discipleship"?
 - How do others respond to him in the passage?



Proclaiming Jesus to the World

1. What might it look like to share with your friends what the Lord has done for you and the mercy he's had on you? (v19)
2. How might you begin a conversation with the sensitive topics of death, demons and disease and move towards the gospel of Jesus?

MURDER AND MIRACLES



Getting into the Word

1. Why do you think Jesus was unable to do any miracles in his hometown of Nazareth?
2. How did Jesus prepare the twelve apostles for their mission?
3. We first meet the Herodians (followers of King Herod) in Mark 3:6. What's the significance of Mark fleshing out more about Herod in vv.14-29?
4. In Mark 6:30-44, Mark 6:45-52 and Mark 6:53-56, we see different miraculous events. What is the response of those around Jesus in each case?



Responding to Jesus

1. How would you describe Jesus from this passage?
 - Sometimes Jesus is described as “fully man and fully God”. What elements of Jesus’ manhood and Godhood are evident in Mark 6?
2. How do Jesus’ words and actions reveal the “good news” of the kingdom?

- What about this do we long for?
 - What are you unsure about?
3. How might we respond to him?
- What does Jesus say about “discipleship”? What can we learn from how Jesus develops the apostles? See also Mark 1:16-20 and 3:7-19.
 - How do others respond to him in the passage? Can you personally relate to some of these responses? What responses do you find surprising?



Proclaiming Jesus to the World

1. Are miracles a thing of the past? When we are talking to people about Jesus how helpful are the miracles as part of that narrative?
2. In verse 11 Jesus instructs his apostles to reject those that do not listen to their message. Does this apply to us? How much should we persist trying to share Jesus with someone who is resistant to hearing the good news?

THE HEART OF THINGS



Getting into the Word

1. What did the Jewish leaders object to? (v1-5)
2. How were the Jewish leaders trying to make themselves acceptable to God (that is, 'clean')? (v1-5)
3. What are the Jewish leaders doing that makes them hypocrites? (v6-13)
4. Jesus calls the disciples 'dull' (some translations have 'lacking in understanding'). What is it they don't understand and why is this such an important teaching for the Jewish people?
5. What is significant about where Jesus ministers and who he ministers to in vs 24-37?



Responding to Jesus

1. How would you describe Jesus from this passage?
 - What is it that Jesus values as he speaks to the Jewish leaders and disciples?

- How does he relate to the Gentile women and the deaf man?
2. How do Jesus' words and actions reveal the "good news" of the kingdom?
- What about this do we long for?
 - What are you unsure about?
3. How might we respond to him?
- What does Jesus say about "discipleship"?
 - How do others respond to him in the passage?



Proclaiming Jesus to the World

1. Jesus focuses on how people respond to him in their heart, rather than just with their lips. How do we live in a way that shows we are not just 'religious', that we don't just talk the talk, but that we truly love Jesus with our heart?



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