



bits from bob....

The Servant Lord Who Touches Lives

April 27, 2020

The Gospel of Mark summarized by questions: Who is Jesus? Who can be a disciple of Jesus? Who wants to be a disciple of Jesus? Who can see? Who will follow to the end?

Personal questions: Can you see? Is your faith clearly focused? Are you learning to walk in the way of Jesus, the way of discipleship?

More personal questions: what must I know about Jesus? Do I want to be a disciple of Jesus? How can I focus my faith? What does it mean to live out Jesus' discipleship in my life?

The first part of Mark answers two important questions: who is Jesus? Can I be a disciple of Jesus? No doubt about question #1—Jesus' identity. Check out 1:1.

With prophecy fulfilled, God's stamp of approval in baptism, power over temptation, disciples who follow gladly, Mark introduces his case.

With amazing stories—amazing works and amazing words, the case is strengthened. Jesus has power over illness, leprosy, paralysis; power over evil spirits, demons, even over nature. After four chapters of marveling at and admiring Jesus' amazing, astounding, astonishing, actions, the disciples' question echoes across the centuries: Who is this one? But we already know: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Question #2 – Jesus is so special, so unique, so divine, so capable, so separate from our frail human experience, can I ever be a faithful follower? Can he accept me? Can he accept you? Can it really be the case that we can come just as we are?

The gospel is good news, the answer is "yes"! Not just yes, but YES.

Notice how Mark answers the second question. Seven truths related to discipleship.

- 4:40-41. Having little faith or weak faith will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. Our desire often precedes our ability to put it into practice.
- 5:1-20. An unsavory past will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. Bad people become good disciples.
- 5:21-43. Fear and hopelessness will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. A fearful woman with an issue of blood, hope gone, has the audacity to touch Jesus. When others have given up hope, Jesus takes a dead girl by the hand and raises her.
- 7:24-37. Being a religious outsider will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus seeks those whom others have rejected.
- 8:21. Lack of understanding will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. Time and again, Mark reminds us that Jesus' closest followers did not "get it."
- 9:14-29. A heart filled with both unbelief and belief will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. Jesus does not reject a father who is honest about his struggles with faith.
- 16:9-16, failure will not keep you from being a disciple of Jesus. The disciples Jesus had chosen did not follow him to the end, but he sends them forth as his witnesses to preach the gospel!

The study of Mark is rich, rewarding. Building faith, developing disciples! I am excited about a new 10-video study that unpacks the message of Mark's Gospel, helping us learn the ways of discipleship (available in early May, 2020).