

3. Carry on the Mission of Jesus

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. - Matthew 28:18 NIV

*1 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.
- Matthew 10:1 NIV*

Jesus had been given all authority (Mat 28:18) and He passed that authority to His disciples so they might carry on His mission. Luke tells us that includes driving out impure spirits and healing disease and sickness. It is easier for us to relate to healing sickness than casting out demons. But there are forces of evil exerting influence around us today. The influence of an unclean spirit can defile the one they inhabit making a person behave in ways that are untrue to their calling as a human being. And Jesus has given His followers power and authority to break the hold of the spirits that defile us.

Pause to reflect on behaviors you recognize are not pleasing to God. What causes a sincerer follower of Jesus to continue in unforgiveness, gossip, addiction, pride or sexual immorality? If there are forces at work, drawing you away from God, you have the authority to break that hold. Pray that God will open your eyes to enemy's plans to steal, kill and destroy, and call on His authority to overcome any temptation to turn from God's true calling on your life.

WRAP-UP

When we give our lives to Jesus, we commit to following Him closely, developing a relationship with Him so that we both know Him and become more like Him. Jesus wants His disciples to share the Good News with the world. And that includes giving them the authority to set people free from sickness, disease, and demonic oppression. The evidence that we are being transformed into His image is in how we live as His ambassadors, bringing the Good News of Jesus to the world.

MEMORY VERSE

14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons. - Mark 3:14-15 NIV

Challenge – The place to begin deepening your walk with Jesus is spending time with Him. Find a quiet place to focus on God's presence, pray, worship and listen for His voice.

What Does It Mean to Follow Jesus? Gospel of Mark ch. 3 - Week 1

INTRODUCTION

As we study the Gospel of Mark, we are finding out who Jesus is and how He becomes the Messiah King. As word of Jesus' miracles spread throughout the region of Galilee crowds swelled with people in search of healing. They may not have known much about Jesus, but they heard that He could heal them and so they came in droves. Some in the crowd came with "unclean spirits" or demons who recognized Jesus, not only as a healer, but as one with spiritual authority and power that threatened them. And although Jesus was ready to exercise his authority over their demonic power, it was not yet time to announce His royal lineage and challenge King Herod, and so He told them to be quiet. It was time to call apprentices to follow Jesus, to learn from Him, and to join Him in ministry.

Ice Breaker

Share about any encounters you may have had with someone who could be considered famous?

Key Passages

14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons. - Mark 3:14-15 NIV

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Followers Stay Close to Jesus

9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. ... He appointed twelve that they might be with him ...

- Mark 3:9, 14a NIV

There was a significant difference in how Jesus responded to the crowd and to the twelve. He kept the crowd at a distance because they threatened to crush Him, but He called the twelve Apostles to be with Him. Twelve was not a random number nor were the individuals randomly selected. The Bible says the twelve were wanted. There are numbers with special significance to the people of Israel. Twelve represents the number of tribes that descended from the sons of Jacob (who was renamed Israel). The number 12 was an important part of their identity. Although many records of those tribes were lost during their years in captivity, the prophets had promised a restoration. As Jesus demonstrated physical and spiritual healing, and chose 12 individuals from very different backgrounds, the people would also be anticipating a complete restoration of Israel was coming.

13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. - Mark 3:13 NIV

The promised Messiah had always been the hope of Israel. After countless generations had experienced struggles and oppression, what would it be like to stand in the crowd as Jesus healed the sick, commanded the demons and selected 12 disciples to follow Him? What kind of hope, fears and expectations would you have? When Jesus called the twelve, they all came to Him. What do you think they gave up to follow Jesus? What things might we be reluctant, or unwilling to give up to follow of Jesus?

In the culture of Jesus' day following a teacher meant you stayed close and learned everything He taught. They knew how popular rabbis taught their followers to understand the Jewish writings, the Torah. But Jesus was not focused on having people follow the Torah, He called people to Himself.

How would you explain the difference between following the Bible and following Jesus? Do you think it is possible to study and understand the Bible without following Jesus?

20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. - 2 Corinthians 5:20 NIV

Both Matthew and Luke use the word Apostle (Gr. Apostolos) to describe the 12. That word means a sent one, or delegate. Paul says those who follow Jesus are His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20). What do you think it means to represent Jesus to the world?

As Christ's followers, our priority should be to stay near Jesus and develop an authentic relationship with Him. We want that knowledge of Jesus to shape our lives and form us into His image. We do that through knowing the scriptures, but also through prayer and worship.

2. Sent to Preach

14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach - Mark 3:9, 14 NIV

Mark tells us why the 12 were appointed or selected, first to be with Jesus, but also to preach. That word for preach means to be an official messenger of the news. In this case, the Good News of Jesus. And the more time they spent in Jesus' presence, the more Good News they had to share.

15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" - Mark 1:15 NIV

10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." - Mark 2:10-11 NIV

The disciples had witnessed Jesus as He ministered and preached among the people. Consider the passages above as two of the many statements Jesus declared to the people. What is the Good News contained in these statements that the disciples could preach about? Each of us has personal experiences with Jesus that make up our unique Gospel Story. Share a little about how Jesus has been Good News in your life.

Not many of us will be preaching before a congregation. And we might be quick to point out that preaching isn't our gifting. But as followers of Jesus, our lives become the "Gospels" that tell the story of Jesus to the world. We are His ambassadors, bringing Good News by the lives we live. If you are willing, God will give you opportunities to share your Gospel story.