

The Gospel According to Mark The Crowds and the Called

Mark 3:7-19

Sunday, May 10, 2020

Introduction

As we move through the Gospel of Mark Jesus continues to grow in popularity. While the Pharisees and others are trying to silence Him, crowds of people continue to flock to Jesus and follow Him wherever He goes. Jesus is getting a lot of attention, but we are also beginning to see that while many are attracted to Jesus for what He is doing, far fewer are coming to Him as true followers.

This is something that is true today, especially in America. There are many people who are attracted to Jesus and who believe true things about Him, but who have never truly trusted Him, they have never submitted to Him as Lord. In this section of the Gospel, Mark helps us see that Jesus didn't come simply to draw crowds; He didn't come to attract fans, He came to call disciples.

The Crowds – The Growing Popularity of Jesus (3:7-12)

- **The Popularity of Jesus (vv. 7a)** – After being opposed by the Pharisees Jesus goes out of the city with His disciples, but as He goes a large crowd follows Him. Even when He goes to a secluded place the crowds continue to flock to Him.
- **The Diversity of the Crowd (vv. 7b-8a)** – Mark describes the diversity of the crowd – people came from all over, both Jews and Gentiles! While many are not true followers of Jesus, this passage certainly provides a glimpse of the reach of Jesus' ministry; He came to save people from every tribe, tongue and nation (Is. 49:6; Rev. 5:9-10).
- **The Threat of the Crowd (vv. 9-10)** – As the crowd grew, more and more people were eager to get close to Jesus to be healed. As they crowded around Jesus began to take precautions, recognizing that in their desire to get close to Him, He may be crushed (John 6:54-56).
- **Lessons from the Crowd (vv. 9-12)**
 - **Not all who are attracted to Jesus become followers of Jesus** – Mark describes many people who recognize what Jesus can do for their bodies, but who fail to recognize their greater need for spiritual healing (John 6:26, 35-36). The same is true today; many people are attracted to Jesus for what they can gain, but have no concept of their need to submit to Him as Lord.

- **Not all who speak the name of Jesus are believers in Jesus** – Among the crowd were people possessed by demons that hailed Jesus as the Son of God. They identified Jesus rightly, but they didn't believe in Him. In the same way we recognize that it's not enough to say true things about Jesus, we must repent and believe in Him.

The Called – The High Call of Discipleship (3:13-19)

- After healing many Jesus leaves the crowds and goes into the mountains, calling some to come with Him. It's here that we see a distinct difference between the crowds and the called.
- **Understanding the Call of Jesus (vv. 13-14a)** – Mark makes it clear that the call of Jesus is both sovereign and effective. Jesus chose those whom He would call as disciples, and all whom He called came. From the larger group that He called, He appointed Twelve that would serve as Apostles.
- **The Nature of the Call (vv.14-15)** – The calling of Jesus was twofold: they were called to be with Him and to go out.
 - **A disciple is called to be in relationship with Jesus and to learn from Him (discipleship)** – The first part of being a disciple was to be with Jesus. The same is true for us today. As followers of Jesus we must know Him and live in fellowship with Him (John 15:4-5).
 - **A disciple is sent out on behalf of Jesus (mission/evangelism)** – The Apostles were sent out with the message and the authority of Jesus. This is the mission that Jesus gave to His disciples, and this is the mission that we have been given – to take the message of the Jesus to the world (Matthew 28:18-20).
- **Lessons from the Called (vv. 16-19)** – As we read the list of men whom Jesus called, we should be in awe of the plan of God. He didn't choose powerful or proven leaders. He didn't choose the religious elite. Jesus chose a small number of unimpressive men – and through these men He accomplished great things (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Final Thoughts: We live in a place where the name of Jesus is well known and where (among many) there is a general acceptance of Jesus. Because of this we can be susceptible to thinking good thoughts of Jesus and yet never truly answering the call to follow and submit to Him.

We should strive to ensure that we are more than fans of Jesus. We must step out of the crowd and answer the call to discipleship. We should give our lives to knowing Jesus, living in fellowship with Him and proclaiming Him and His message of salvation to the world.