

Sermon: Jesus blows my mind

Reading: Mark 5:21 end

Introduction

Mark's gospel is a remarkable account of the life and ministry of Our Lord Jesus. From Mark's opening statement about the Divinity of Jesus, Mark takes us of a breathtaking introduction to Jesus and within 45 verses of chapter one we have seen Jesus affirmed by the father in heaven as God's Son. Jesus has battled with Satan in the wilderness through a series of temptations over 40 days. Upon Jesus return, He comes preaching a message of repentance and teaches about the Kingdom. He drives out a demon in the synagogue, heals Peters mother-in-law of a fever and heals many of their illnesses, diseases, infirmities and disabilities including a man with leprosy .

Jesus has shown He has authority over all things..

Authority to teach with power. Authority over demons. Authority over fevers and illnesses. Authority over disabilities and diseases. By the time we get to the end of chapter 4 we discover Jesus demonstrates His authority and power over nature as He commands the storm to be quiet and be still **(Mark 4:39)**. The wind and waves obey Him.

As we get into chapter 5 we are probably thinking, surely there is nothing else remaining that Jesus can now do which will astound us any further!

Context:

Chapter 5 opens with Jesus encountering a demon possessed man who lives amongst the graves. No one was strong enough to subdue this poor wretched man, no chains could hold him and he was completely out of his mind. We discover the demons have possessed him, This was not one demon but a legion of demons.

Was Jesus intimidated or fearful, definitely not. Jesus speaks and the demon replies. Jesus casts out and the demons are gone. The man is now restored, back to his right mind and for the first time free. The man seeks to go on with Jesus as a disciple but Jesus tells him to go home and be the witness in your home town, making your confession of faith and sharing your testimony of the mercy God has had on you. **(Mark 5:19)**. This remarkable incident paves the way for the importance of confessing our faith and sharing our testimony to God's grace and mercy.

Jesus continues to confound us and even now we are probably thinking, there is nothing now that Jesus can do to astound us further, and yet there is still so much more to come. Mark's gospel of Jesus life and ministry is absolutely breathtaking in its brilliance.

Is God too busy to hear my prayers?

Jesus had just returned from the other side of the lake having had the encounter with the man possessed with legion of demons. The news of Jesus is spreading quickly. Large crowds gather at the waters edge to meet Jesus as they see Him approaching their town. At the waters edge the crowds are waiting and at the front of the crowd is a man by the name of Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue in Capernaum.

Its probable Jairus met Jesus in the synagogue when He drove out the demon during the service in chapter one. Jairus knew Jesus was extraordinary man of authority and power. Jairus is now desperate and knows his little girl who is just twelve years old is gravely ill. No doctor or physician has been able to keep her from death, God is now his only hope.

As Jairus greets Jesus he humbles himself acknowledging Jesus as Lord, falling on his knees before Jesus and asks Him for His help. Jesus showing compassion didn't hesitate to go with Jairus. I have often heard people say that they don't want to bother God with their prayers and petitions as God must be busy and have enough to do! Surely God doesn't want me bothering Him with all of my problems and concerns. I can understand this sentiment if we are speaking of a human person but God is God. He neither slumbers nor sleeps (**Ps 46**). We can call out to Him at any time day or night and in faith we know He will hear our prayers. This encounter with Jairus and watching how Jesus responds should shatter this false notion once and for all. Why? because when Paul writes about the Supremacy of Christ he writes these words, 'For God was pleased to have all His fulness dwell in Him' (**Col 1:19**). If we want to know what the Father is like in nature, personality and character, then we need look no further than Jesus, in whom God's fulness dwells.

Consider this, when something is full, there is nothing else that can be added to it for it is full. Nothing is missing. God's fulness is revealed in Christ Jesus and God is pleased for us to see this in Jesus. God is indeed a compassionate and merciful God, as Jesus so wonderfully and practically demonstrates for us.

Jesus went with Jairus. Remember we don't have to tell God what He already knows, we don't have to twist His arm to get him to be merciful, no bribery or trickery is needed to pay Him. Again think on Jairus, Jesus hears his plea and is not too busy for him. Notice Jairus didn't have to make an appointment, there was no diary setting to find a convenient time slot! Jesus went straight away with Jairus home to heal his daughter.

As Jesus sets off with Jairus the crowds which had gathered at the river bank are also following and the people are surrounding Jesus on all sides. It must be getting oppressively hot now as the crowds press in.

The Crowds

How different are the motivations and feelings of the people who are in the crowds. Jesus the celebrity miracle worker attracting large numbers of people, onlookers and the curious. It's so sad to think many people claim to follow Jesus but they will come no nearer to Him as to touch Him by faith. They press in, enjoy being in the crowd, but will demonstrate no faith. Their lives remain distant from Him. Oh if this is you, humble yourself and reach out in faith, for Jesus longs for your faith to be made real.

Over the years churches have been filled with many people from the crowds.....

The curious

The onlookers

Music lovers and hymn singers

Sermon tasters and

Pew fillers

but very few actually live out the teachings of Jesus and live their life by faith in Him.

Walking by Faith

I have heard on more than one occasion people saying of themselves, 'I don't have faith! Faith is not a feeling which gives us confidence like a caffeine fix when we feel like a pick up. We don't wake upon morning and say, Oh now I have faith, now I can feel it so now will follow?

Faith is not a feeling, nor is it blind. Faith is a decision of trust in God our Father, in Jesus as His Son, and in the Holy Spirit who Jesus promised to send to us when we repent and believe. Faith is a decision with conviction in the God of Scripture, revealed in Jesus.

Look at it this way, many will put their faith in many things.....

Some put their faith in the NHS and the medical profession.

Some put their faith in their wealth and self sufficiency

Some place their faith in other people, systems or governments

If you have ever been abroad on holiday, you place your faith in a metal can, and a pilot who will fly hundreds of miles, through the skies and we believe the pilot and can will land safely at the other side. So we sit back and relax gazing out of the window. Our faith is in the God revealed in Scripture and He is Sovereign over all things.

Our God has made promises to us and we trust the God of scripture to fulfil those promises. So faith is not blind, nor is it a feeling, but is 'A confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see' (**Heb 11:1**).

The woman's faith

Mark now introduces us to the woman who stops Jesus in His tracks on the road to Jairus' house. We are told she had a medical condition which meant she was constantly bleeding menstrual blood. This was a problematic condition which according to the Leviticus codes would have made it difficult for her to function within her culture. Her condition had.....

Broken her financially, as she spent all her wealth on doctors

Broken her socially, as she would have to live a life outside of the communities touch

Broken physically, as the constant bleed would have left her weak

Desperate this poor woman suddenly has a spark of hope as she hears about Jesus being in town. This spark of an idea was no bigger than a spark, smaller than even a mustard grain. She ponders this seed thought and how it soon took root in her mind. I don't even have to ask Jesus face to face, He is going to be far too busy with more important things than speak to me! All I need to do is to touch the hem of His cloak, that will be enough for healing from this great man. This is faith. Confidence in what is hoped for and the assurance it will be granted even when we cant work out how all this is going to happen!

She sees Jesus walking by. Now is her chance, it's not hard to miss Him, the crowds are always around Him. So with her mustard seed sized faith, she inches her way through the crowd getting ever closer with every step. Its hard work pushing through the crowds, she is tired and exhausted but in faith she presses on and on. She knows Jesus is here somewhere, so keeps inching forward until she reaches the centre of the crowd and then her eyes behold Our Lord, but only His back, but this is enough.

Falling to her knees she reaches out her hand and manages to just touch the hem of his cloak. She just manages to touch it before Jesus had moved further than her touch could reach. Suddenly it happened. She did it, she knew it, she felt it, her healing take place.

Owning up to declare our faith

Shock, the woman hadn't expected Jesus to stop and turn around, She slinks back into the crowd, embarrassed and frightened. What has she done! Jesus stops and turns to the crowd and asks who touched me? The disciples must have thought Jesus had lost the plot! Everyone is pressing in on You and touching You, how can you say, 'Who touched my clothes?' (**Mark 5:30**). Everyone is touching you!

The difference here however is this, Jesus knew the touch of a casual onlooker, a good luck seeker, a curious thrill seeker but this touch was different. This touch had faith and Jesus felt it. He felt power going from Him. Jesus noticed when a woman who thought she was so insignificant touched Him. As Jesus stood still, the procession stopped with Him, All were now standing still, wandering, what is going on? Jails must have been frustrated by the crowds, there was no time to stop, his daughter is about to die and if we don't get there soon, it will be too late!

Tearful the woman knows she can't simply hide in the crowd, she realises Jairus' daughter should be the priority and she knows unless she owns up Jesus is not going to give up. The longer she hides, the longer it will take for Jesus to continue on His mercies call. So this unnamed woman steps forward and confesses her faith to Jesus.

Interestingly the woman has been ill the same length of time as Jairus daughter had been living, which was twelve years. After twelve long years which broke her financially, mentally and spiritually she now stands before Jesus her healer and restorer and Jesus prompts her to make her profession of faith and share her testimony of faith before the crowds. In fear and trembling she tells her story.

Notice what Jesus says here, for this is truly amazing, "Daughter your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease" (**Mark 5:34**). Did you notice Jesus did not call her woman but called her daughter -

She demonstrated her faith in Jesus

Walked forward in Faith

Confessed in Faith

Making her faith confession

Our Confession of faith

How important it is for us to confess our faith in Jesus. This is something we cannot hide or should ever want to hide. Many people are blessed by a testimony of a changed life. We should not hide the light under a basket. Speaking our faith in Jesus is important if we are to grow in faith. No confession/witness/demonstration of faith, no growing in faith, it's a spiritual law. Jesus says, 'Whoever is ashamed of me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels' (**Luke 9:26**). Now that is a scary thought for any person who is too embarrassed to ever tell the world they belong to Jesus!

As hard as it is, our faith grows by placing our trust in Him and in what we speak about Him. It's the foolishness of the gospel which is the power of God, as it astounds others, it brings to naught the wisdom of the wise when they see the foolishness of what we proclaim it truly has power - it's the way God designed it.

Jairus need not be worried, maintaining his faith in Jesus demonstrated even when it seems they had arrived too late as he received news his daughter had in fact now passed away, Jesus astounds us once again by a greater miracle yet, He raises a sick girl who had died of her illness or disease and reissues her to life and restores her to full health, as Jesus tells them to give her something to eat. (**Mark 5:43**).

Summary

St. Augustine once said, 'Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe. The question for us to ponder now having heard all that Jesus has done is this, how much faith do we have in Jesus?'