

Thoughts on Mark 2

by Zac Poonen

This sermon delves into various stories from the Gospel of Mark, highlighting lessons on humility, faith, honesty, repentance, and the importance of forgiveness in prayer. It emphasizes the connection between humility and faith, the significance of being honest before God, and the need to let go of possessions to follow Jesus wholeheartedly. The sermon also touches on the value of a person's heart in giving, the role of a doorkeeper in churches, and the importance of evangelism and discipleship in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Scripture: Mark 7:24, Mark 8:22, Mark 10:17, Mark 11:24, Mark 12:41, Mark 13:34, Mark 14:3, Mark 16:15

Topics: "Humility", "Faith", "Forgiveness"

Description

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Transcript

Welcome to Words of Life. In our study through the Bible, we have reached the Gospel of Mark. And we looked at the first seven chapters in our last study.

We are trying to go quickly through the Bible so that we get the essential message. We are not studying each verse in depth. Here we read in Mark chapter 7 about Jesus going to the region of Tyre in verse 24.

Now, Jesus mostly all the time stayed within the boundaries of Israel. He almost never went outside the borders of Israel. This is one of the only times that he went.

He went to Samaria once. He went to Decapolis. And here he goes to Tyre.

And there he entered into a house and he didn't want anybody to know about it. But there was a woman who heard about it and came there and fell at his feet and said, Please heal my daughter. She was not a Jew.

She was a Canaanite. And she kept on saying, Please drive the demon out of my daughter. Look at Jesus' reply.

Verse 27, Let the children be satisfied first because we can't take children's bread and throw it to the dogs. Implying that she was a dog and she had no entitlement to children's bread. Now, most people would be terribly offended if they heard something like that.

They'd say, How dare he call me a dog? Who does he think he is? I have some sense of dignity too. And it's because of pride, such pride that many people never experience a miracle. Do you know why this woman experienced a miracle? Because she took that place.

She said, Yes Lord, I am only a dog. But even the dogs can eat the crumbs that fall from the table. I am not asking for the children's bread.

I am only asking for a crumb. What is casting out the demon from my daughter? That's not the children's bread. This is only a crumb.

And Jesus was so amazed again. And said, Verse 29, Because of what you have said, because of this answer, the demon has gone out of your daughter. Because of this word that you have spoken.

What was so special about this word she spoke? It was a word of humility. Just like the centurion, who said, I am not worthy for you to come to my house. You find in both these non-Jews, there was a tremendous humility.

And they had faith. What does this teach us? There is a very close connection between humility and faith. When a person doesn't have faith, it is probably because he doesn't have humility.

He is offended by something or the other. Jesus spoke some strong words to people. He called the Pharisees vipers.

But he called Peter Satan. Peter didn't get offended. He called this person a dog.

He didn't get offended. It's not that Jesus thought she was a dog. And I can prove that to you.

We read here, in Verse 24, that from Galilee he went to Tyre. If you look at a map that is 50 miles, and Jesus walked, that means it would have taken him 17 to 18 hours. That means if he started from Galilee at 4 o'clock in the morning, and he walked alone, in the sun, in the night, he reached Tyre at 10 o'clock at night.

Would you walk from one place to another for 18 hours to help one person? And then, at the end of it, it says in Verse 31, he came back to Galilee again. 18 hours back. So he was there just for maybe a day.

And as far as we know, he helped only one person. So, the Holy Spirit prompted Jesus to go to Tyre just to help one person. Did he love that person or not? He asked, why did he call her a dog? That was to test her humility.

But he had tremendous love for this sinful woman. To deliver her poor daughter from a demon. The proof is he walked 36 hours to help.

It's amazing. I'm challenged by the example of Jesus. Jesus spoke a word, and a couple of miles away, the demon goes out.

This teaches us that the demon doesn't have to be in front of you for you to cast out a demon. The demon may be in a person two miles away in a house. Demons can hear very well.

You don't have to shout at them. Jesus spoke softly, and two miles away, the demon heard and left the dog. In Mark 8, we read another story about a blind man in Bethsaida, Verse 22.

Another lesson we can learn here. They pleaded with him, Verse 22, to touch him. What did he do? Jesus healed people in different ways at different times.

Sometimes he'd ask a blind man, do you believe I can heal you? They said, yes, Lord. Okay, you're healed. Their eyes were open.

In another case, in John 9, he told the blind man after putting mud on his eyes, go and wash in the pool of Siloam. That was a completely different way. And here, notice something else.

The first thing he did was, he took the blind man out of Bethsaida. And at the end of it, after healing him, he told him, Verse 26, don't ever go back to that village anymore. The villages in India, if a man grows up in his village, that is his permanent home.

His father was there, his grandfather was there, his great grandfather was there. That's how it is in all of our villages. That's how it was in the villages in Palestine.

And Jesus said, don't ever go back there. This man had to find a completely different place to live. Why did Jesus say that? Why did Jesus take him out of Bethsaida completely? There's a reason for that.

Bethsaida was one of those places about which Jesus said, woe unto you. Woe unto you, Capernaum. Woe unto you, Bethsaida.

Because if the wonderful things that have been done in you were done in some other place, they would have repented. But you haven't repented. That's what he told them.

Sodom and Gomorrah would have repented. But you haven't. So, Bethsaida was a place of people who didn't repent.

So, he takes this man out of Bethsaida. And says, come, we got to go somewhere else. I want you to see that.

Let me read it to you. Matthew 11, 21. Woe unto you, Bethsaida.

For the miracles occurred in Tyre and Sidon had occurred in you, they would have repented. Woe unto you, Bethsaida. For the miracles occurred in you had occurred in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented.

And to Capernaum, he says in verse 23, if these miracles had occurred in Sodom, Sodom would have remained unto today. Imagine that the crime of Capernaum was worse than Sodom. And Bethsaida was the same.

What is their crime? They heard so much and they had not repented. The very serious thing when we hear in don't repent. The Lord said, don't ever have any fellowship with such people anymore.

That's the word for us today. Don't fellowship with people who are not serious about repenting. And then, he took the blind man out of the village, in verse 8.23. And this is the one place where Jesus, one touch did not heal him.

And that was the reason for it. To teach us a lesson. Jesus could have healed him in one moment.

But he said, have you been healed? Jesus knew very well he is not healed fully. And that, first of all, he wanted the man to be honest. He said, no Lord, I can't see clearly.

I don't see any difference between men and trees. I see men and trees just the same. What did Jesus say? Today a lot of preachers would have told him.

No, no, confess that you can see. That is fake. Say that you can see.

Then God will give you sight. How many millions of Christians are being deceived by such preachers? What, sick? And they are told to confess that they are healthy. Remember this my friend.

Jesus never asks you to tell a lie. He doesn't ask you to say you are healthy when you are sick. He will never ask you to confess that you are healthy when you are sick.

He wants you to speak the truth. If you are not fully healed, say I am not fully healed. That's what this man said.

If he had said, oh yeah, I can see. Jesus would have left him alone and he wouldn't have been healed. Thank God he was honest.

So this, I believe, this miracle was specially planned by the Holy Spirit to teach us a lesson in the 20th and 21st century. What is that? That when you are not healed, you don't have to say you are healed. What you need is to go back for prayer again.

Jesus laid hands on him a second time. Then he was healed. Let's learn a lesson from that.

And then we read in Mark 9.1 Jesus said, there are some standing here who will not taste of death until they see the kingdom of God come with power. Now, what does that mean? Some people say it refers to what is written in the next verse six days later, Peter and James John went to the Mount of Transfiguration. Very unlikely that in six days some of those people died.

See what it says in verse one. Some of you standing here will not die until the kingdom of God comes. Now, most of them didn't die in the next six days.

Very unlikely. So it cannot refer to the next verse. The Mount of Transfiguration was not the kingdom of God coming with power.

The kingdom of God comes through the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God we read in Romans 10.17 His righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit and that came with power on the day of Pentecost. So what he was saying is in a couple of years it will happen.

Within that some of you may die. But some of you will experience it. That's what he was referring to.

Then in Mark chapter 10 we read about this rich young ruler who came to Jesus. And he said I've kept all the commandments. And notice in verse 19 Jesus mentions only commandments number 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Commandments number 1, 2, 3 and 4 refer to God most people would have kept it.

You know in Israel almost everybody kept those. Not committing not having idols and not taking the Lord's name in vain. But these other ones 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 He asked him He said yeah I've kept those.

Now there's commandment number 10. That refers to covetousness. It refers to the love of money.

So finally Jesus comes to the love of money. He said what about the love of money? Are you willing to give away all your money to the poor? Then his words his face fell when he heard those words. And he went away.

What a fool he was. He had followed Jesus he may have been one of the apostles. He may have written a book of the Bible.

He may have had a glorious future in eternity. But he rejected it for the sake of money. And I don't know where he is today.

If you rejected Jesus he went to hell. And if that's where he is just ask him today in hell whether he's happy with his decision. I think he'd say yes I'm happy with my decision.

Remember this my friends. When the Lord tells you to do something if you don't do it you'll regret it throughout eternity. Jesus said there's one thing you still lack verse 21.

Give up your possessions. Take up the cross. Follow me.

That's what he needed me to reject. And then Jesus said it's very hard for a rich man verse 25 to go into the kingdom of God because rich people don't have a sense of need. Very difficult for them to be poor in spirit.

And then the disciples said hey then how can anybody be saved? Jesus said God has to do it. It is impossible with men. Chapter 10 verse 27 all things are possible with God.

This verse must be looked at along with Mark chapter 9 where Jesus told a demon possessed boy's father and that man asked Jesus can you do anything for us? Jesus said in Mark 9 verse 23 if you can believe all things are possible. Notice these two verses. Mark 10 verse 27 all things are possible with God.

Mark 9 verse 23 all things are possible to the one who believes. Have you thought of what Jesus said? Two things all things are possible with God. We can understand.

All things are possible for the one who believes. It's amazing what Jesus told. How important faith is.

It's not all things are possible for a holy man or a humble man. It's faith. Our faith is impossible to please God.

In Mark chapter 11 Jesus teaches us a very important lesson in praying with faith. He says in verse 24 whenever you pray and ask for something believe that you received them. Then you'll get it.

Now this is not confessing a lie. You have a witness in your heart that God has heard your prayer. When do you get it? You have to keep praying till you get the witness in your heart.

Till then you don't have an assurance. But at a certain point you have faith that God has heard my prayer. And then at that particular time we can believe we have received the answer.

And there's one important condition here. Make sure verse 25 you have forgiven anybody you got anything against. Forgiveness, lack of forgiveness is a big hindrance to faith.

In Mark chapter 12 verse 41 to 44 we have that beautiful story of the widow offering two little mites to God. And there we see that God values a person's heart more than the amount he gives. Whereas many preachers will give great value to a man who gives a lot of money.

But God gives preference to the person who has given his life. She gave all that she had it says. Verse 44 chapter 13 is somewhat similar to Matthew 24.

There's one thing Jesus said here that Jesus has gone away on a long journey and he's given everybody a job verse 34. And he's given a special job to the doorkeeper to be on the alert. The doorkeeper is like a porter who prevents wrong people from getting inside the house.

Every church needs a doorkeeper. And that's something that we need to bear in mind. We see something else here.

About a woman who anointed Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Leper Mark 14. And then some of the disciples said why this money could have been given to the poor verse 5. We know that Judas was one of those people who said that. And Jesus rebuked Judas.

So why leave her alone? She's done a good job. Small correction. But Judas got so offended that the next verse, verse 10, it says he went off to betray Jesus.

See, that was the difference between Judas and Peter. Peter was called Satan and didn't get offended. Judas, such a small correction, don't leave this woman alone.

Some people can't get a public correction even for a small thing. They are the followers of Judas. There are others who will accept even a big correction.

They are the followers of Peter. In Mark 16, after the resurrection, Jesus gives what is known as a great commission. And that is in Mark 16, 15 onwards.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. That is evangelism. This must be coupled with what we read in Matthew 28, that these people must be made disciples.

Some are called to do one and some are called to do the other. Some bring people to Christ and the others make them disciples and build them into the church. It's like some people go to the quarry and cut out the stones.

They are the evangelists. The others are the masons who put these stones together and build the house. Which is more important? Both are important.

Somebody has to cut the stones. Somebody has to build the house. There's no competition between the evangelist and the disciple maker.

But where a person is going into new areas to evangelize, the Lord gives them supernatural ability. He says you can cast out demons. You can speak with new languages.

You lay hands on the sick and they'll recover. This is the one place where Jesus spoke about the gift of tongues. Then it says that Jesus ascended to heaven.

And this beautiful verse, verse 20, the Lord worked with his apostles confirming the word which signs follow. We need the Lord working with us when we serve. That is most important.

The Lord bless you.

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