

## THE GO GOSPEL

Tradition has it that Mark's Gospel was written to the Romans. The Romans were a Type-A culture. They were a quick paced people who placed a premium on performance. Mark depicts Jesus as a man on the move - but a man who never loses touch with His priorities.

Look at how Mark opens his Gospel, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Matthew and Luke elaborate on Jesus' birth and genealogy. John opens His Gospel with a discourse on Jesus' preincarnate rela-

tionship with His Father.

Those three writers seek to nail down Jesus' deity, and substantiate His claim as Messiah. But Mark sums up His deity and Messianic claims in a single sentence, "*Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*" Then, Mark jumps straight into the action... And true to form, Mark chapter 1 reels off events that take Matthew eight chapters to cover.

Mark is the "Go Gospel"! If you're a busy person, Jesus is the Savior for you.

### Devotion Box - Fill Up , Focus In... Don't Fizzle Out

Here's the picture of the Messiah that Mark reveals...His ministry is a whirlwind of activity - but that ministry always revolves around a calm and peaceful center.

*Jesus got things done without becoming undone* - and there are 2 reasons...

First, Jesus regularly spent time with God. According to 1:35, Jesus rose early in the morning, found a private place, and spent time in prayer. He refueled His spiritual tank. Jesus filled up in the morning, and ran off high-octane fellowship all day long. Guys, we run down because we don't take time to fill up.

Second, Jesus refused to let others dictate His schedule. Divine priorities, not public pressure, guided Him. Rather than cater to the crowds, He avoided them.

Here are the two lessons for us: *Fill up* and *focus in* and you won't *fizzle out*.

## JESUS AND CROWD CONTROL

But Jesus' growing popularity created a serious problem with crowd control.

In verse 43 when Jesus heals a leper, "He strictly warned him... 'See that you say nothing to anyone...'" What a tough command! You've just been healed and can't tell anyone? You want to climb on the rooftop and shout God's praise!

But look what happened, verse 45, "he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every quarter."

For the rest of His ministry Jesus has to be aware of and manage the crowds.

### Devotion Box - Intercessory Faith

In chapter 2, a paralytic is brought to Jesus. The house is so crowded the entry-way is barred, so the man's friends lower their buddy through the roof. *We all need friends with intercessory faith - who'll bring us to Jesus even when we're too weak to come ourselves.* The faith of this man's friends get him to Jesus, but it's his own faith that causes him to be healed.

And the real miracle is not just that the man walked... but that his sins were forgiven. In verse 12 the people say, "We never saw anything like this!"

### Devotion Box - A Friend Of Sinners

Jesus walked along the seashore and saw a man despised by others - a hated tax-collector. He challenged Levi, "Follow Me." He left all and followed.

Tax-collectors hang out with pretty shady people. That night, Levi (or Matthew) throws a party and invites his shady friends to meet the Light of the world. As it turns out, *any friend of Levi's is a friend of Jesus!*

Guys, never forget: to be like Jesus is to be a friend of sinners. Our Lord Jesus is interested, not in the so-called "*well and righteous*", but in the "*sick and sinners*".

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Jesus' ministry is a whirlwind of activity, but that ministry always revolves  
around a calm and peaceful center.**

## A SHOWDOWN IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Chapter 3 records a showdown in the synagogue.

On this particular Sabbath, a man with a withered hand had come to worship. Jewish leaders knew it was Jesus' habit to heal - and the synagogue scrutinizers were more interested in hanging Jesus on a technicality than rejoicing over a man set free from a physical infirmity. Guys, take note, *you have missed the heart of God when you're more interested in doctrinal details than Divine deliverance.*

Verse 5 tells us, Jesus got mad at the hard-hearted

Jews. He "looked around at them in anger". Hey, "*gentle Jesus, meek and mild*", is not the Jesus of the Bible. *The blood that would be shed in mercy on the cross now boils in anger.*

Jesus tells the man to stretch out his hand - an impossible command for a crippled hand. His healing depends on his faith. As soon as the mental impulses go from brain to appendage, the withered hand begins to work.

A miracle occurs.

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In Mark 4, the mysteries of the kingdom are revealed...

According to the parable of the sower, what's needed for God's kingdom to grow is the seed of His Word, and the fertile soil of a repentant heart. Growth is the result of spiritual life in the seed - not the skill of the man tossing it out.

When seed lands by the street, Satan steals it away - or on stony ground, it never takes root - or among the thorns it gets choked out. *Satan, superficiality, and secular pursuits* will all keep God's Word from bearing fruit in your life.

Verse 31 says the Kingdom is also like a mustard seed,

small and insignificant. It keeps a low profile. It grows beneath the surface - under the radar screen of the world's attention. But one day it'll grow into a great tree, and shelter the nations.

The Kingdom of God is, for now, an invisible kingdom. The King reigns in the hearts of men. *God's spiritual kingdom affects human institutions only as it affects humans in those institutions.* The King will establish His own institutions when He returns to earth. For now, *His goal is to save men, not salvage the world.*

## Devotion Box - Crossing Over To The Other Side

At the end of chapter 4, Jesus proves He's King over all the universe. He calms a fierce storm.

Notice verse 35, Jesus tells His disciples, "Let us cross over to the other side." Jesus promised that they would *cross over*, not *go under*. He makes the same promise to us. *Are you trusting Him to calm the storm in your life?*

## TAMING A WILD MAN

In chapter 5, Jesus arrives on the shore of the Gadarenes and is welcomed by a wild man. The man's body is home for a den of demons. But even demons are obedient to the Son of God. One word from Jesus and the demons are evicted.

Apparently, demons desire a body to inhabit. Humans are preferable, but pork chops will do. Satan wants to be like God. Your body was made to be inhabited by the Holy Spirit, but evil spirits will take up residence, if you spurn God's salvation.

The delivered demoniac wants to tag along with Jesus, but his witness will be more powerful among those who know his past. The same is true for us. Guys, *the first place to shine your light is among those who shared your darkness.*

## MIRACLES AND DESPERATE PEOPLE

In Mark 5, miracles occur on both sides of the sea...

Jesus pushes through the throngs of people on His way to work more mercy, when a woman, who's been hemorrhaging for years, reaches up with a fist full of faith and touches the hem of His garment. Virtue flows, and healing takes place.

Jesus calls this woman out of the crowd. He challenges her to go public with her faith. When Jesus has His way, secret saints become public witnesses.

Jesus continues to the home of a desperate dad with a deceased daughter. Even death is but a minor technicality, for a miracle working God. Jesus raises the dead girl. *Can you muster the faith to believe Jesus for your miracle?*

Perhaps the greatest miracle though was what Jesus expects of the girl's dad. In verse 43... "But He commanded them strictly that no one should know it..."

## Devotion Box - Come Aside And Rest A While

When the disciples return to Jesus from their missionary endeavors, in Mark 6:31 He tells them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat."

Jesus knew how to handle the stress of the hustle and bustle. He made time to get alone with God. Taking time to rest rejuvenates the juices. The *revived person* can accomplish more than the *perpetually pushed*. *What kind of person are you?*

## Devotion Box - Don't Agonize, Organize

To appeal to the Roman mind, Mark points out Jesus' organizational skills.

In Mark 6:39 tells us, before Jesus feeds the 5000, he subdivides the masses into smaller groups for easier distribution. Jesus feeds 5000 with 5 loaves and 2 fish, but His power to work miracles doesn't exclude our responsibility to be organized. Never assume God is against organization...

"Don't agonize, organize."

### A CROSS IN YOUR FUTURE

Peter and the disciples know that Jesus is the Messiah, but they don't like to hear Him talk about sacrifice, death, a cross. But Jesus tells them at the end of Mark 8, not only is a cross in His future - there's a cross in their future as well!

The terms of discipleship are tough. You've got to deny your selfish interests, and learn to give yourself away. Agree to God's dominance and take up your cross.

We must be willing to follow where and when He leads. What good is it to climb society's scaffold - gain the world's accolades - then lose your own soul?

### DIVORCE

The Law regulated divorce. Moses gave instructions concerning divorce, not to encourage it, but to discourage it. God's concession was not a command.

Mark 10:6-9 teach that God's *ideal* for marriage is a lifetime commitment. Verse 5 says our *ordeal* is caused by the stubbornness of our hearts.

Soften your heart toward your spouse. Here's an vital piece of advice, "Every marriage is made up of two sinners. A *good* marriage is made up of two forgivers."

10:11-12 tell us plainly, divorce a spouse for an unbiblical reason and marry another, and you've committed adultery. Recall Malachi 2:16: "the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce." *Marriage vows are serious business.*

## DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

Jesus healed in different ways. At times His methods were bizarre... In 7:33, He heals a hearing loss and a speech impediment by sticking His fingers in a man's ears and spitting on his tongue. God's methods are as varied as the people He heals. *Just about the time you think you've reduced Divine power to a formula, God will find another way.* The only common denominator is our faith.

On one occasion Jesus healed a blind man by just speaking the word. Another was healed when He smeared mud into His eyes. In 8:22-25 He heals with some spit and a touch. Again, Jesus used different techniques with different people. Our mistake is assuming that the way Jesus works in me, is the way He always works. Guys, this is how denominations get started...

### A TUNE UP FOR BATTLE

In chapter 9 Jesus is transfigured. His flesh is peeled back so the glory of His deity can shine through. On the mountain top, Jesus appears in all His glory.

Peter, James, and John - want to pitch tents. *Tune out* the world and *tune in* to God. But God's purpose for granting this experience was not to "tune out", or "tune in" - rather it was a "tune up" for the battle below.

### RICHES

In 10:21 Jesus informs an ambitious, prosperous, religious young man that he has a idol in his life. The guy *keeps the commands*, but *won't relinquish control*. Jesus peers through his religious veneer and sees what separates him from God. Money is his idol. The man walked away with his hands full, but his heart empty.

Riches are a barrier to some people - maybe most people - but not all people. Each one of us have barrels that God must help us jump over. But take heart, even the impossible becomes possible when we repent and believe...

### THE OBJECT OF OUR FAITH

Make no mistake about it, Satan's only purpose for your life is its destruction. That was his plan for the young boy who was brought to Jesus. The father asks the Lord if He can help his son... Jesus asks the father if he can believe.

The question is never *can the Lord do it?* - it's always, *do we have the faith?*

In 9:24, the father shouts his honest confession, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" This is proof that the power is not in the strength of our faith, but in the strength of it's object. Jesus drove out the demon... and lifted up the boy.

### PERSISTENCE

At the end of chapter 10 we find old Bartimaeus, begging beside the road.

He lives in darkness, for his eyes are blind; but he hears that the Master is walking his way. He fights through the crowd. He screams for mercy. The crowd tells him to "Shut up!"... but he refuses to *give up*. Jesus rewards his persistence.

*Please, whatever your need, don't let them shut you up. Jesus hears your cry.*

## Devotion Box - Prayer, Faith, Forgiveness

In Mark 11, Jesus curses a fig tree, and teaches the power of prayer. Verse 23...whoever prays, and "does not doubt in his heart", will receive. The key is faith.

The one thing that can interfere with your prayer is unforgiveness. Jesus says in verse 25, "whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."

# Bible Scan - Mark 1-16

Calvary Chapel

If you have questions on tonight's study email Pastor Sandy - [sandyadams@calvarychapel.org](mailto:sandyadams@calvarychapel.org)  
For back issues of Bible Scan study guides: [www.calvarychapelstonemountain.com/biblescan.htm](http://www.calvarychapelstonemountain.com/biblescan.htm)

Calvary Chapel Announcements - November 4, 2001 - High School Youth Meltdown with Small Town Poets, this Friday from 10:00 pm—12:00 am at Red, White, and Brew; Next Sunday, November 11, "Small Town Poets" concert at 6:30 pm ; Please pray for our trip to Haiti, December 1-6, Sandy and James will be hosting a pastors conference; Women's Ministry presents Ladies' Christmas Tea: offered on Friday, Dec 7 and Saturday December 8— tickets on sale November 11th. Next Bible Scan - November 18, 2001 - Luke 1-6

"Jesus said to him, If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." - Mark 9:23

Bible Scan Memory Verse

## Devotion Box - The Measure Of An Offering

Jesus is between firing salvos with the chief priests when He sees a widow dropping her meager offering into the money box. She gave all that she had!

Jesus compares her pennies with the lavish offerings given by the rich folks. He surprises everyone in verse 43. Jesus says, "this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury."

Guys, the size of an offering is not measured by the amount that's given, but by the amount that's left.

## Devotion Box - Why A Cross ?

The cross was the cruelest form of punishment ever imagined by man. We wonder why the cross was chosen as the atoning altar. Why not a more humane form of execution? Something to do the job, but without the pain?

God chose the cross... for on the cross Jesus got what we deserved.

## IN THE END

But the destruction of the temple was just the beginning of Jacob's trouble... World wars, earthquakes in various places, famines, plagues, and persecution will be followed by an onslaught of judgment, on a scale the world has never seen.

When the Antichrist stands in the rebuilt temple and deifies Himself, he'll push God's patience beyond the brink. Divine rage falls fast and furious. Jews living in Jerusalem will flee to the wilderness. The Antichrist will seek their extermination.

Celestial signs signal Jesus' second coming. He'll come in great power and glory. The angels gather scattered Jews, and bring them home to Israel.

When you see the fig tree blossom it's a sign summer is near. Likewise, the generation that sees these signs will be the last generation of the present age.

Make no mistake about it, we're living in the last days. God will *persecute the world*, and *purify the Jews*. For now the church is being persecuted and purified. But before God's wrath is poured out, we'll be airlifted from planet earth.

Are you ready? No one knows departure time. *Wake up, or miss lift off!*

## THE RESURRECTION

Jesus was buried in a rich man's tomb. The women attending didn't consider it a decent burial. Their preparations had been rushed to beat the Sabbath deadline. That's why they return on Sunday morning.

Mark 16 opens as the day breaks. On the way to the tomb, the women worry if they can move the tombstone, and finish the job. *How often do we worry about problems God has already solved?*

When the women arrive, an angel tells them the news that changes the world - *Jesus is risen!* Christianity is not a mere moral code, or a philosophy. It's foremost a man who conquered death - bounced back from the grave - lives today. The price for our pardon was paid on the cross, but the power that carries the news to the ends of the earth is the power of the empty tomb.

## SIGNS THAT FOLLOW

Jesus commissioned them to spread the Gospel. In 16:17-18 He lists some miraculous signs that should follow believers. "In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them."

Each of these signs occurred either in the book of Acts - or in the missionary activities of the early church. Now, do I believe in deliberately handling snakes? Absolutely not! But if I'm on a mission trip - in the jungle - and I get bitten by a snake the first thing I'm going to do is remind the Lord of this verse!

These miracles, and more, still occur. But miracles are no substitute for God's Word. Jesus says, these signs will follow the message, not replace it.

Verse 20 tells us, when Jesus *ascended into heaven* the disciples *descended on the world* - going everywhere preaching the Gospel. Mark writes, "the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs".

It's one thing to *work for the Lord* - what's exciting is to *work with Him*.