

April 1, 2017, Easter Sunday – Elmont Baptist Church

Message Series: The Gospel of Mark

Week 11: “Follow Me”

Text: Mark 2:13-17

We have launched into unpacking and understanding the Book of Mark. By the time we are done, we will have read every verse and unpacked every passage. Here’s a little background – the author is Mark, or John Mark. Mark served as Peter’s interpreter, and is giving us Peter’s account of the life and ministry of Jesus. This book was written about AD 53-57, making it the first of the four Gospels to be written and the fifth earliest book in the New Testament to be written.

Mark’s audience is Romans believers, and as theologian Danny Akin says, “he is telling them that Jesus is the Messiah King and suffering servant who actively ministers on our behalf and gives his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark records more miracles and actions of Jesus than direct teachings and parables, but, as we’ve see the last two weeks, whenever Jesus is doing anything, He is teaching us something.

The Call of Jesus...

✓ **Is Always Personal – v. 13-14**

- **He calls by name**
- **He calls into relationship**

By name – you, y-our name. Your past. Your experiences. Your frustrations. Your doubts. Your fears. Your insecurities.

Into relationship – not into rule keeping, but into a growing relationship. Not into a help-help strategy for avoiding problems, but purpose and empowering in the midst of pain.

✓ **Is Never Private – v. 15**

- **Knowing Jesus is a good thing**
- **Knowing Jesus changes us**

Good thing – knowing Jesus is something to celebrate. Not like having a rash and being worried how people will react if they find out.

Changes us – purpose, direction, and desires

✓ **Is Always Able – v. 16-17**

- **He knows you, loves you, and will forgive you**
- **Through His life, death, and resurrection** (1 Cor 15:3-5; Rom 10:9-10)

Knows you – Levi/Matthew’s occupation and social standing (same as a criminal). No one is beyond the love of Christ.

Religious leaders of that time, and often religious people today, look for every excuse for why they don’t have to love and minister to those who are different than they are. It’s this mentality of, “clean up your act and then come to Jesus”. Jesus’ ministry shows us that He comes to us because we cannot clean ourselves up. That’s why we need Him. It’s not that Jesus says your sin (rebellion against God and His ways) is OK, but that you can come to Him with your sin, and He will wash it away.

Life, death, resurrection – If you believe that Jesus came and lived a perfect life, died on the cross for your sin (in your place), and rose again, defeating sin and death, so that you could know and love God, then no matter what comes in life, one thing you never have to question is, “does God love me?” Jesus becoming your sin and absorbing God’s wrath for you says eternally, “YES, GOD LOVES YOU!”

Bottom line: Three groups I want to talk to.

1. You’re a believer, a follower of Jesus, but you’re making excuses for why you don’t have to love certain people or for another area of life in which you don’t want to walk in obedience to Christ. Will you confess that sin and trust Jesus to heal that that difficult area of your life?
2. You’re faithfully pursuing Christ. Not perfectly, but faithfully. Will you pray for the grace to keep serving and loving and for God to open your eyes to see and your heart to love more and more?
3. You’re not a Christ-follower. You’ve never trusted Jesus to forgive your sin and change your heart to know and love God. Will you do that today?

Thinking it Through...

- ✓ **Struggling Believer, will you confess and trust Jesus to heal the difficult area of your heart?**
- ✓ **Faithful Follower, will you boldly ask the Father to help you see and love more like Him?**
- ✓ **If you haven’t trusted Jesus, will you confess and give Him your mess and trust Him for mercy?**