

April 29, 2017 – Elmont Baptist Church
Message Series: The Gospel of Mark
Week 15: “...Those Whom He Desired...”
Text: Mark 3:7-21, 31-35

We have launched into unpacking and understanding the Book of Mark. 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.” Last week we took a high level look at where we’ve been and how Mark, the writer, is putting this all together in a very strategic way. Today, we’re going to come back and land in a part of the passage we flew over last week. Ministry – meeting the needs of people around us. What can we learn from Jesus in this passage that will help us be more effective?

We Must Remember...

- ✓ **The Pressure of Ministry is Real – v 7-12, 20**
 - **To meet needs – v 7-12, 20**
 - **To face opposition – v 19, 21-30** (not tackling 22-30 this week)

Ministry – loving people by sharing Jesus and meeting needs – can be dangerous, draining, and difficult. Not talking about just a ministry team within the church. You are the church in your home, job, play etc. You cannot do it very long in your own strength. You will have to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit. Ministry pressure is a great way to quickly see how the fruit of the Spirit is growing or not in your life. People will come just to get and never participate in the mission. If we’re not careful, we will get cynical and frustrated. The complaints will outnumber the compliments because the messes cloud the mission. In order to deal with the pressure of ministry, we must keep refocusing our ADD heart and minds to the reality of our mission.

- ✓ **The Purpose of Ministry is Clear – v 12-15, 35**
 - **To make Jesus known**
 - **To do the will of God**

We alone have been entrusted to make Jesus’ name known. It’s not just doing nice things and meeting needs. God’s will IS that we care for the needs of people around us, but even more so that they hear the Good News of Jesus and understand their need for Him. This is truth in love. Meeting needs without proclaiming the Gospel isn’t ministry. Doing God’s will doesn’t mean that you will have to do things you hate doing. God has given you certain passions, gifts, and resources and it’s His desire that you use them to make His name known.

The only way to stay focused on the mission of ministry is to stay intimately connected to the Person it is all about, Jesus.

✓ **The Person of Ministry is Jesus – v 13, 32-34**

- **Know & love Him**
- **Spend time with Him**

These phrases in here should do something in your heart. “He called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him.” “And looking about at those who sat with Him”. If you’re not growing in loving Jesus and walking in relationships with those who love Jesus as much or more than you, you won’t be able to help others effectively. When you are spending time with Jesus and engaged in disciple-making relationships that both help keep you focused on the goal and mission, then ministry is a joy, not a burden. But if you are not spending time with Jesus and unplugged from relationships that sharpen you, you will either not be involved in ministry or you will not enjoy being involved in ministry.

The goal of ministry is never drawing a crowd. The goal is growing to love and obey Jesus more and help others to as well. The goal is disciple-making. That doesn’t mean crowds are evil or large churches are wrong. Crowds may be a by-product of effective ministry, but are never the measurement of effective ministry.

Bottom line:

Because the pressure of ministry is real – and if you’re going to obey Jesus, you will deal with it – we have to stay focused on the purpose of ministry – to make Jesus known and serve others. The only way to stay focused on the purpose of ministry is to spend time with Jesus – the only one who can truly meet the needs of people.

Thinking it Through...

- ✓ **How is God using you to make Jesus known and meet the needs of people?**
- ✓ **What ministry pressure are you facing?**
- ✓ **What things are you doing regularly to grow your love for and enjoyment of Jesus?**

Storying Mark 3:7-21, 31-35

We're beginning the process of digging into the passage that we took a high-level look at last week. My hope is that we can encourage each person in our group to look at their habits and determine if they are growing in Jesus relationally, engaged in ministry that makes Him known regularly, and dealing the pressure of ministry patiently.

- **Questions**

- **Observation:** (emphasize that these are rather obvious answers)
 - What was Jesus trying to do in verse 7?
 - What happened instead?
 - What are all the things that Jesus had been doing for people?
- **Interpretation:**
 - What are the pressures that Jesus faced in this passage? (from the crowds, family, eventually from Judas)
 - If Jesus had a huge crowd following Him, why is he so interested in spending time with a few?
 - How does Jesus define family in v 33-35?
- **Application:** Use the "Thinking it Through" questions as needed
 - What are the ministry pressures/expectations that you have faced and/or ministry leaders face?
 - How do you think of, or define, success in ministry?
 - What would our churches be like if we defined "family" like Jesus does?
 - If you could do anything to make Jesus known and know you could not fail, what would it be?
 - How does Jesus' statement about His spiritual family being those who the will of God function as motivation for world missions?*

*Taken directly or paraphrased from *Christ-Centered Exposition* by Daniel Akin

Review:

Remember and look for:

Mark is presenting Jesus as the Servant King – the Messiah who serves others and will ultimately give His life for others.

- 1:9-13 – Jesus is commissioned and tested into public ministry
- 1:14-15 – His mission is laser-focused: to call people to repent and believe in the Gospel
- 1:16-20 – Repentance and belief – turning from our old way of life to Jesus – are illustrated by the call of Andrew, Peter, James, & John.
- 1:21-29 – The message of the Good News – freedom from bondage – is illustrated by demons being cast out and disease being healed
- 1:40-2:17 – *We see Jesus being sovereign (all-powerful) over our sin* – no matter whether it's a result of your past or your pride
- 2:18-22 – *We see Jesus being all-powerful over our piety* – all our religious acts and disciplines. They are meant to increase your enjoyment of Him, not to try to appease Him.
- 2:23-27-3:6 – *We see Jesus being all-powerful over the whole system of religion* – The goal is to grow in relationship with Jesus, and love others and meet needs like Him, not to serve a religious schedule and just attend a gathering. If it doesn't point us to loving and becoming more like Jesus, then we are misusing or abusing it.