

Mark 1:16-28 | Jesus: The True Authority

Tyler Velin | September 12th, 2014

We are going through the gospel of Mark here at GCF this year, and when we say the gospel, the word literally means, “The Good News.”

We all receive good news at certain parts of our life. The good news of a high curve on a Chemistry test, the good news of a relative’s health becoming better, the good news of a girlfriend willing to go out with you, the good news of a promotion at work.

But when the gospel writers used the term gospel, they weren’t speaking of another aspect of good news, they were speaking of the definitive good news. The gospel.

But what makes this gospel so good? What makes this gospel so enduring? Throughout the centuries, people have been killed for this gospel, in Iraq right now people are being ran out of the country for this gospel. In North Korea babies of parents who believe that gospel are being murdered as punishment for their parent’s hope in the gospel.

How can this gospel be good? Here on the University of Montana, this gospel needs to be good. If we do not cherish this good news, we will have no reason to hold onto it. Already in California, Christian student groups are being derecognized by the University systems because of their commitment to the gospel.

If you do not see the gospel as truly good news, you will not hold on to it. It will not be valuable to you. And in this series we really want to answer the question of “who is Jesus?” Because it all comes down to Jesus. Last week our final point was: Jesus is the gospel.

For Mark the gospel is not dogma, the gospel is the person and work of Christ, so as we continue to look at the gospel of Mark, tonight we are going to see three responses to the gospel. **Let’s pray.**

So I want to read the last couple verses from last week in order to set the table for where we are today: **Mark 1:14-15.**

So following Jesus’ baptism and validation by God himself, Jesus begins to preach the gospel. This is important, because the book of Mark records the smallest amount of Jesus’ preaching in the four Gospels. That’s because, you will hear this a lot, Mark is tying the gospel to Christ himself, not just his message, but his person. Jesus stands at the center of our salvation.

Let’s pick it up: **Mark 1:16-20**

So here we have Jesus going for a leisurely stroll by the sea of Galilee and he sees a couple dudes, Simon who is also called Peter, and his brother Andrew. And Jesus calls them.

Now remember what we looked at last week: Our response to someone is directly proportional to their perceived authority in our lives. Mark highlights that innate authority of Jesus. These men didn’t know who Jesus was, they had no idea of his authority, and yet the words of Jesus were enough authority in themselves that they responded immediately.

Here we see the first response to the gospel: **Response of the Called**

If Jesus is the gospel, as Mark is arguing, what is the first thing Jesus came to do, Jesus came to call men to himself.

This story is recorded in the gospel of Matthew and Luke as well. Matthews account is almost synonymous with Mark's but Luke records a miracle that the other two gospels do not. Check this out: **Luke 5:4-8**.

So here we see Jesus causing the biggest fish feed these guys have ever seen. We also see Peter respond to Jesus by saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." You see the miracle Jesus performed brought an awareness to these guys. They knew Jesus was unique, but what happened. Nothing. Luke 5:9 tells us that everyone who was with the brothers was amazed at what Jesus did, but amazement isn't grounds for fellowship.

Why is it that such a huge miracle seemed less important to Mark and Matthew, because they recognized the weight of Peter and Andrew's following was not in the miracle of Christ, but the call of Christ. You see even in Luke's account, it wasn't until Jesus said to them; "Do not be afraid from now on you will be catching men," that the men followed Jesus.

You see the response of the first four disciples is not unimportant to us.

While we may not receive a verbal call like the disciples did, Jesus always calls his followers into a relationship with him.

Look at what Jesus said in **Luke 5:31-32**. Jesus came to call sinners into salvation. Again in **John 10:3**. Jesus calls his sheep. Paul reflects on this in **Romans 1:1-6**. What does it mean to be called, well Peter, the first disciple who was called, reflects on this in **1 Peter 2:9-10**.

The defining moment of these men's lives was Jesus call on their life. The God of the universe was calling them into relationship with him. Jesus could have walked by these men and said nothing, they would have remained as they were. But Jesus called them, and Jesus' call is efficacious. It always accomplishes what it set out to do. This was the beginning of Jesus ministry.

Jesus has come to call us out of darkness and into light. This is the gospel. The gospel isn't that we found Jesus, the gospel is that Jesus found us, and called us to be with him.

He called us out of the ordinary and into the extraordinary. He called out of death and into light.

Has Jesus called you? Maybe this is his way of calling you right now? Maybe this is the first time you have heard the gospel, and my word to you is follow Jesus. Jesus is merciful in calling his disciples, and Jesus is merciful in calling his believers into relationship with himself.

What marks this relationship? Two things: Following, and becoming fishers of men.

The true identity of Jesus is written on his back, you must follow him to know him. You can't claim to know Jesus and not follow him. You can't claim to love him and not serve with him. You can't claim to worship him and be separate from him.

Jesus isn't simply a creed you believe, but he is a person and a lifestyle to be followed. If you claim you know him, yet you do not live like him, you deceive yourself.

Secondly Jesus makes his followers to become fishers of men. I love how Mark puts it here. Because I grew up in the church, and I always remember it being, "I will make you fishers of men."

And indeed that is how some of the gospels record it. But Mark records another word which is often left out. Look at it: **Mark 1:17**. I will make you become fishers of men.

You see in one sense Jesus was building his disciples here. Jesus wanted to surround himself with men who saved men through the gospel. What good is Jesus' message if it dies with him? Jesus wanted men who would cast the net of the gospel into the sea of death and pull men into the salvation of God.

But in another sense this is true of all who are called by Jesus. Jesus wants us to become fishers of men. And what I love about that word become, which is actually there in the greek, is that it is not a completed and final act that happens with our calling. Jesus doesn't call us and automatically we become the world's greatest evangelist.

It takes work to be a fisher of men. It takes a right view of the gospel, it takes a heart which breaks over the lost, it takes men and women who are not ashamed of the gospel, it takes followers of Jesus, not acquaintances of religion. But this is what Jesus has called us to. This is what GCF is about. Look back at the **1 Peter 2:9**. He has called us, so that we may call men.

Are you actively engaging people around you with the gospel of Jesus? If not, you have work to do. I have work to do. But this is what Jesus has called us to. Jesus' church will not grow by sitting, it will grow by sending.

The response of those who have tasted the good news of the gospel is to follow Christ immediately, and proclaim his gospel to the ends of the earth.

Now for the next two responses, I want to read the last 7 verses and I want you to pay attention to the responses of both the crowd, and of the demon. **Mark 1:21-28**

The first thing I want us to look at here is the response of the demon. **Mark 1:23-26**. Response number two: **The Response of Evil**

You see isn't it interesting that Jesus is in synagogue. A place where the Old Testament is read and taught, a place filled with scribes and scholars, and yet they hear Jesus and they say "Who is this man who teaches with such authority?" Yet the demon sees Jesus and he knows exactly who he is.

And not only does the demon know who Jesus is, but he responds in fear, saying "Have you come to destroy us?" Here we see a demon, an evil spirit, controlling a man, recognizing Jesus as the son of God, and asking if he had come to destroy him. Why? Because even the demons know that God was going to destroy sin.

In Ephesians we see Paul naming off a list of sins, and in the end he says for these things the wrath of God is coming. The demons know that. The demons, know it, and James says they shudder. God hates evil, God hates sin. And humanity is sinful. Romans says all have sinned, Jeremiah **17:9** says it even stronger.

The demons know the power and wrath of God is coming, and they know that all sin will be destroyed, and so he asks, is this when you destroy everything. Then Jesus speaks to him: Be silent and come out of him."

And the unclean spirit came out of him. Do you see what Jesus has displayed here. We have now seen that Jesus has all authority over man, and he also has all authority over the spiritual realm.

But the greater story comes in Luke **4:35**. You see, while the demon was destroyed, the man was saved. It would have been just for Jesus to destroy the man and the demon, but Jesus saved the man, and killed the demon. That's because on the cross Jesus was going to kill sin so that those who believe in him might live.

In closing I want to look at the last response: **The Response of the Crowds**

Look at Mark **1:21-22, 27-28**

We see two things here. One we see that those who were in the synagogue were amazed at Jesus' teachings. Why, they had the best scholars and scribes in the synagogue. Why would this uneducated man be able to come in and teach the Old Testament with a different authority, because Jesus was what the OT pointed towards. Jesus was God himself. A new teaching had come, because Christ had come.

So the crowds were amazed at Jesus' words, but they were also amazed at Jesus' works. They say the demon cast out of the man, but in a moment of great clarity they weren't amazed at what happened to the man, they were amazed at what Jesus had done to the demon.

You see it would have been easy to be amazed at the event, but they were amazed at the person.

And Jesus' fame spread like wildfire. That's because Jesus is amazing. But you know what. As Jesus continued his climb to the cross, his crowd became smaller, and smaller.

That's because excitement about Christ is not a substitute for a relationship with him. Who endured to the end of Jesus' life? It wasn't the crowds, it was the small group of believers who Jesus had called into a relationship with him.

You see people will know Jesus through his fame, but they will only belong to him through his call.

How will you respond to Jesus? Are you caught up in excitement of church, maybe you like the preacher, or you like the music, or the people, but you are luke-warm to the person of Jesus?

You see Jesus came as the true authority. The one who has authority over humanity, and spirits. And he hasn't come to be a side show, he has come to be a savior.

Is Jesus at the bottom of your joy? Are you so captivated by the mercy of the one who has called you out of darkness and into light that you joyfully follow him, and you labor to bring others into that joy? Do you see the authority of Jesus and does it give you hope, and peace amid the trials of life?

Or are you like the demon, you know who Jesus is, but you refuse to see him as your personal savior. In the same way excitement is not substitute for relationship, neither is knowledge. To know Jesus and not respond to him is equally wrong. Do you worship him.

I want to leave you with a quote and a question: The quote is from Martin Luther: "The life of Christianity consists in possessive pronouns. It is one thing to say Christ is Savior, it is quite another to say he is my Savior and Lord. The devil can say the first. The true Christian alone can say the second."

So, How will you respond? Will you respond in faith, will you respond on following, will you respond in proclamation? Let's pray.