



3 more studies from the Book of Mark (Part 2)

Please Note the following:

1. It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.
2. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP**

Study 1 – The Power of God’s Word

Mark 4:1-41

(Sermon on 6th July 2025)

Before we begin:

What/Who is God’s Word?

1. God’s Word is **God’s spoken message or revelation**

- a. We see this at Creation – “Let there be light...”
- b. We see this in Isaiah 55:11 – “So is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty...”
- c. We see this in Psalm 119:1-5 – “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”

2. God’s Word is the **Scriptures** (the Bible)

- a. That is God inspired the authors of scripture in the writings of the Old and New Testament
- b. As 2 Timothy 3:16 says “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness”
- c. As Hebrews 4:12 says “For the Word of God is alive and active”

3. **Jesus Himself** is called the **Word of God**

- a. John 1:1,14 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”
- b. As Revelation 19:13 says “He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God”

What is a parable?

*A parable is a **short relatable story** drawn from everyday life (like farming, family or business) which has **a deeper meaning**. Usually parables **use earthly situations to reveal heavenly meanings**. Jesus often said “The Kingdom of God is like...” and then told a parable to demonstrate what the Kingdom of God is like.*

Read Mark 4:1-20

1. What do the four types of soil represent?

The Farmer = The Lord (see Matthew 13:37) sowing His Word in us. By Extension it can be all preachers, teachers, evangelist or believers as they share the Word

The Seed = God's Word

*The **four soils represent the people hearing and receiving the Word of God**; and represent the different responses to hearing and receiving the Word of God – i.e., different hearts towards God and His Word*

1st Soil – The Path (v4, 15)

Meaning: People who hear the Word of God – but the birds (Satan) snatches it away

Symbolizes: Hardened hearts – no understanding of the Word or openness to really receive it

Key Trait: The Word doesn't even begin to take root

2nd Soil – Rocky Ground (vv5-6, 16-17)

Meaning: People who receive the Word with joy but fall away when trouble or persecution comes their way

Symbolizes: Shallow faith – it's an initial emotional response without deep roots

Key Trait: They fall away quickly under pressure

3rd Soil – Thorny Ground (v7, 18-19)

Meaning: People who hear the Word of God but are choked by worries, riches and pleasures of this World

Symbolizes – Distracted hearts – which when distracted, their spiritual growth is stifled

Key Trait: The Word is unfruitful because of competing priorities

4th Soil – People who hear the Word and genuinely accept it, and produce a harvest of 30, 60, 100 times what was sown!

Symbolizes – Receptive and faithful hearts – true disciples

Key Trait: They live fruitful lives in response to God's Word

2. What makes "good soil" in a person's heart?

- *A person who has **a listening heart** – they don't just listen with their ears but are willing to pause, consider and accept what God is saying – as verse 9 says "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear"*

- A person who has a **receptive and teachable spirit** – they welcome and accept God’s Word, even when it challenges or convicts them – they are willing to apply God’s Word to their lives
- A person who is **willing to persevere and be faithful** – as Luke’s version of the parable says in Luke 8:15 – “a noble and good heart” – one that produces a crop with perseverance
- A person who is **fruitful** – the Word they receive produces a crop – within the person themselves (changed character, deeper love for God and others, active in serving and evangelising) – which produces more and more disciples of Jesus

3. Why do you think Jesus used parables to teach?

There are a few reasons why Jesus used parables:

- a) Jesus is teaching in open air – not in the synagogue – Jesus uses a story people can relate to around them. Being in open air – people can walk away – so He needs to keep their interest – so if the story has suspense even better*
- b) Jewish teachers and Jewish people were used to parables. The Prophet Nathan told a parable to King David – to show David’s sin (Bathsheba/Uriah) – 2 Samuel 12:1-7*
- c) A parable makes something abstract into something concrete. For example if I tell a story about beauty – it makes more sense if I can give an example or picture of something beautiful – like a beautiful woman – then you have a better idea of beauty – than me just talking about it. In the NT – Hebrews chapter – talks about faith – and list a whole bunch of people as an example of faith – so we have a better idea of what faith looks like – e.g. having faith like Abraham*
- d) Most importantly – a parable – makes a person think for themselves! It forces a person to make their own deduction and to discover the truth for themselves. The worst way to help a child – is to do all the work for them. The people listening to the parable were meant to ask who am I in the parable?*
- e) By using parables – Jesus started with the here and now – like a farmer sowing seed in a field – which all the people could understand – in such an agricultural environment. Then from the here and now – the visible – Jesus then moved people’s thoughts to heavenly things – the invisible.*

*f) Remember also that a parable was often only heard – it was a story
So it wasn't something that you read and studied – you heard it, usually only
once – so what one thing would you get out of this parable?*

4. How can we ensure God's word grows deeply in us?

*By remembering what Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 – God's Word makes us **wise for salvation** and is **useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness** – so that we may be **thoroughly equipped for every good work**.*

Read Mark 4:21-25

5. What does this parable teach us about receiving and sharing God's Word?

God's Word must not be hidden – like putting a lamp under a bowl or under a bed. It must be shared. It would be very selfish of us to keep the Good News of Jesus to ourselves.

6. What does verse 24 mean: "With the measure you use, it will be measured to you..."?

Jesus is saying – "pay close attention to what you learn from God's Word – and how you respond. The effort and openness you bring will determine what you receive from God – and you may even receive more than you expect"

Put simply – "God will respond to us as we have responded to Him and His Word.

Spurgeon – "To the one with no interest in the Gospel, the preaching of the Gospel seems uninteresting. To the one who wants to find fault with the church or the preacher, they find plenty of faults. On the other hand – those who hunger find more spiritual food, and those who want the solid truth receive something from every faithful ministry"

7. **Ponder:** How does this relate to spiritual growth?

When we hear the Word of God, and receive it with gladness, more will be given to us from God's spiritual riches.

More what? More understanding of God's Word. More encouragement. More growing to be Christlike. More personal blessings.

Jesus reminds us that spiritual growth follows momentum, positive or negative. When we have godly habits of receiving the Word and living it, more is built on that. When we lose godly habits, they are extremely difficult to get back.

Read Mark 4:26-34

8. What do these two parables teach us about **how God's kingdom grows**?

In the growing seed parable – a farmer scatters seed and then waits. The seed grows on its own – even though the farmer doesn't know how.

God's Kingdom grows quietly and powerfully, even when we can't see or understand how. Our job is to plant the Word; God makes it grow (see 1 Corinthians 3:6)

Growth is gradual but certain – it leads to a sure and certain harvest.

In the Mustard seed parable – the Kingdom of God is like a tiny mustard seed which grows into a large plant that provides shelter. The point is God's Kingdom may start of small and unimpressive but it grows into something great and far-reaching. (like Mick Alley with the Samburu Tribe in Kenya – over 1000 disciples from one man's mission). God uses small beginnings to bring about a big impact. It becomes a place of blessing and refuge for many.

9. What is surprising or encouraging about the mustard seed image?

The mustard seed was known as one of the smallest seeds, yet it grew into a large plant (up to 3 metres high!). The surprise is that something so small could become so large and significant. This challenged expectations as many thought God's Kingdom would come with mighty power through an army and a political power; not in this humble hidden way – it was unexpected and counter-cultural.

10. How can we be patient when we don't see visible growth in God's work?

Just like the farmer does not know how things grow; but God knows. We must remember that God is at work, 24/7, even when we are asleep. We must live by faith, not by sight (1 Corinthians 5:7) – like the book/movie – Faith like potatoes. We must trust in God's perfect timing; not ours! We must keep sowing and praying faithfully; God brings about the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6-7; 15:58). And remember what God

did in the past. Scripture is full of people who WAITED – Abraham; Joseph; Moses; Anna; Paul). “The one who calls is faithful, and He will do it!” (1 Thessalonians 5:24) God will finish what He started (Philippians 1:6)

Read Mark 4:35-41

11. What does this miracle reveal about who Jesus is?

Jesus has DIVINE power over nature – only God can control the wind and waves (Psalm 107:28-29)

Jesus speaks and nature obeys – showing He is more than a teacher or prophet It shows that Jesus is fully human and fully divine (God). In this story, He both shows His humanness (asleep in the back of the boat because He’s tired) and His divine authority – He commands the storm to stop!

It shows Jesus cares deeply about His disciples.

12. Why were the disciples so afraid, even after all they had seen?

Before the miracle then were afraid and panicked because they thought they were done for. After the miracles, they had holy fear, they were in holy awe, not panic, of Jesus’ power and authority

13. How might we be like the disciples – **before** and **after** the miracle?

Like the disciples as we face “storms” in our lives, we might focus so much on the wind and the waves of life and forget that Jesus is in the boat with us, in and through our storms; and we make the “storm” bigger than Jesus; but Jesus is bigger than our storms! After the storm, we might be awestruck by Jesus’ amazing power.

14. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 4:1-41**?

Isaiah 55:8-11

In Isaiah, God’s Word does not return to Him empty but achieves His purposes like the good soil in the first parable, and in the growing seed parable and the mustard seed parable.

Psalm 1:1-3

The person who delights in God's Word is like a tree in good soil – stable, fruitful and enduring

Ezekiel 17:22-24

In Ezekiel, God speaks of planting a tiny shoot that becomes a mighty tree, echoing Jesus' image of the mustard seed.

Psalm 119:105

Psalm 119:105 says: "God's Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" relates to Mark 4:21-25 – the lamp under the bowl. Just like God's Word gives light and guidance; Jesus says God's truth from His Word, is meant to be revealed, not hidden

Psalm 107:28-30

A powerful similarity – in both cases, the Lord calms the storm and brings His people safely through. This shows that Jesus is doing what only God does in the Old Testament; a strong indication of Jesus' divine identity!

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 4:1-41

The Power of God's Word

OR

God's Kingdom grows powerfully through His Word – often quietly, but always purposefully – for those who truly listen and trust in Jesus!



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

What are we to make of v11 and v12 though?

It seems like – on face value – that Jesus taught in parables deliberately to hide the meaning of what he was saying

But we've just said that Jesus spoke in parables to make things clearer by using life examples people could understand – and to make people think – not to make people confused?

In verse 12 – Jesus is quoting from Isaiah 6:9-10

The best way to explain v11 and v12 is this:

It's like Jesus turns to his disciples and He said to them:

“Do you remember what Isaiah once said? He said that when he came with God's message to Israel in his day they were so dull in understanding that you would have thought that God had shut their minds instead of opening their minds. I feel like that today.

The MSG version is helpful here too:

10-12 When they were off by themselves, those who were close to him, along with the Twelve, asked about the stories. He told them, “You've been given insight into God's kingdom—you know how it works. But to those who can't see it yet, everything comes in stories, creating readiness, nudging them toward receptive insight. These are people—

Whose eyes are open but don't see a thing,

Whose ears are open but don't understand a word,

Who avoid making an about-face and getting forgiven.”

So it's not so much that God deliberately blinded the people and hid the truth from them; but that the people were so slow in understanding that it seemed no use even for God to try to penetrate the iron curtain of their lazy understanding.

May God save us all from hearing and listening like that!

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V20 – Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop –some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for sowing His Word into our hearts. Ask God to make our hearts good soil – ready to listen, receive and grow. Ask God to help us trust His

Kingdom is growing, even when we can't see it. Ask God to help us remember that Jesus is in the boat with us. Amen.

Study 2 – Power Over Chaos, Sickness, and Death

Mark 5:1-43

(Sermon on 13th July 2025)

Read Mark 5:1-20

1. What do you learn about the man's condition and the power of the demons?

The man's condition

- *The man was possessed by an impure spirit and lived in the tombs (v2)*
- *The man was impossible to contain – no one could bind or chain him – such was his strength from being possessed (v3)*
- *The man had supernatural strength – He broke chains and no one could subdue him (v4)*
- *The man was in despair – living among the tombs day and night – crying out and cutting himself with stones (v5)*
- *He was deeply tormented, both mentally and physically, with no peace.*

The power of demons

- *The demons had great control over the man's mind and body – so much so that he had lost his identity – and was called "Legion" because there were many demons.*
- *The demons recognised Jesus immediately and **knew His authority** — they begged Him not to torment them (v7)*
- *They were **numerous** (a "legion" could be thousands – 6000 in a Roman legion), which made the man's condition even more desperate*
- *They had enough destructive power to cause 2,000 pigs to rush down a steep bank and drown (v13).*

2. How does Jesus demonstrate authority in this story?

- *Jesus demonstrates **authority over the spiritual realm** – The demons recognize Jesus as the Son of the Most High (v7) – they also beg Jesus not to send them out of the region and ask permission to enter the pigs (vv10-13) and Jesus says "Go!" and they obey instantly*
- *Jesus demonstrates **authority to restore and transform people** – the man goes from a terrifying, violent, self-destructive state to being: "dressed and in his right mind" (v15). The man is so transformed by Jesus' healing that he wants to follow Jesus (v18)*

- Jesus demonstrates **authority to send and commission** – After healing the man, Jesus sends him on a mission – “Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you” (v19) – and the man went to the Decapolis (Ten Cities) which is a predominately Gentile region to tell people about Jesus!

3. Why do the people ask Jesus to leave their town?

*There were afraid (v15) of Jesus’ power. They also had experienced a loss of livelihood because the herd of pigs became possessed and then drowned. Whether the pigs were owned by Gentiles or by Jews breaking the food laws, the townspeople saw Jesus as a **threat to their financial stability**. They may have been thinking: If He stays, what else might we lose?*

4. What does Jesus tell the man to do afterward—and why is it important?

Jesus tells the man to go home and tell his story.

It’s important because a) the man can witness about Jesus; b) testimonies are powerful – no one can deny a person’s story and how Jesus changed their life; c) it shows Jesus’ mission goes beyond Jewish territory, into Gentile region; and d) it shows everyone can be part of Jesus’ Mission!

Read Mark 5:25-34

5. What made this woman’s situation so desperate?

- She had **ongoing physical suffering** – she had been bleeding for 12 years without any relief (v25)
- She was in **financial ruin** – all the money she had, had been spent on **medical treatment that didn’t work!**
- She was **ceremonially unclean**, according to Leviticus 15:25-27; this meant:
 - She could not go to the synagogue or temple
 - She couldn’t touch anyone without making them unclean
 - She lived life in isolation and shame – cut off from normal relationships and worship
 - She had emotional and spiritual despair – she is an outcast and unable to worship!

6. What does her faith look like?

- *The woman's faith was humble and secret – "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed" (v28) – she didn't speak to Jesus and ask for His help; a touch will do!*
- *The woman's faith was courageous despite her fear – "Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth" (v35)*
- *The woman's faith was full of hope/belief that Jesus could do what no doctors could do in the last 12 years*

7. Why does Jesus insist she come forward publicly?

It would clearly have been embarrassing for the woman to have to say what her sickness was in public, but by telling Jesus the WHOLE truth, in the long run it had greater benefits:

- *Her healing was public – which then meant she was no longer an outcast and everyone was then aware of it*
- *She had touched Jesus and felt healing – but there would also be the fear that her sickness might come back – but by Jesus bringing her forward publicly – He was able to confirm her restoration and healing was COMPLETE!*
- *To correct any superstition – she might have thought by touching Jesus garment she was healed – but it was her FAITH that healed her – Jesus tells her that*
- *It was also public for the crowd sake – to testify the power of God to heal a sickness that all doctors had failed to do*
- *To show that faith isn't meant to be hidden but declared publicly*

8. What do His words in v. 34 reveal about how Jesus sees her?

Jesus sees her as family; he shows her affection, acceptance, compassion – she has a new identity in God's family!

Also, Jesus sees the woman's faith

And He sees her need for peace – she's had 12 years of turmoil and despair.

And He sees her free from the burden she'd carried for so long.

Read Mark 5:21-24 and 35-43

9. How is Jairus's faith tested through delay?

- *Ironically the outcast woman is answered immediately but the respected synagogue leader is made to wait!*
- *Jairus has to wait – to show we can trust Jesus when He seems to be slow or distracted or delayed*
- *When Jairus hears the devastating news that his daughter is dead – it shows we can still trust Jesus even when things get worse not better*
- *The crowd is saying to Jairus “why bother?” – it questions whose voice are we going to listen; the crowd’s voice “why bother? She is dead” or Jesus’ voice “she is asleep”*
- *Jairus is tested by Jesus saying “Don’t be afraid; just believe” – can we still believe and have faith when there’s no evidence, only Jesus’ word?*
- *Jairus is tested so that he sees something greater – not just healing but resurrection – sometimes God is preparing us for something deeper and more glorious!*

10. What does Jesus mean when He says, “The child is not dead but asleep”? *Jesus isn’t denying the fact of death—the mourners know she’s dead (v. 40), and so does He. But from Jesus’ perspective, death is not final. He speaks of it as sleep, because He is about to wake her up. Just as sleep is temporary and reversible, so is death when Jesus is present. In Jesus’ hands, death is no longer something to fear—it’s like sleep, because He has power over it.*

Jesus often uses sleep as a metaphor for death (see John 11:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14). Jesus wants us to look at things through His perspective – and to see with “spiritual eyes” – not just “physical” ones.

Jesus is also foreshadowing His own resurrection – and to show that He has power even over death and He has the final victory (Acts 7:60; 1 Corinthians 15:6, 20)

11. How do people respond to Jesus' statement and then to the miracle?

- *Verse 40 – they laughed at Jesus when He said the child was asleep*
 - *Verse 42 – but when Jesus healed the girl – they were completely astonished!*
- When Jesus acts, even skeptics are silenced. His power speaks louder than mockery. This contrast highlights:*

- *The **difference between human analysis and divine power.***

- How **faith must sometimes endure ridicule** before God's glory is revealed.
- That Jesus was/is often **underestimated**—until He shows His undeniable power.

12. What does this story teach us about faith and Jesus' timing?

This story teaches us a few things about faith and Jesus' timing

- *Jesus' time often seems delayed but it's NEVER wrong. His delays are never wasted – they are part of a greater plan*
- *Faith is trusting even when it seems too late – faith means holding on to Jesus' words even when the situation looks hopeless*
- *Jesus is never in a hurry – He is always right on time. He gave undivided attention to the woman – and then continued to Jairus' home. Jesus' compassion and power are not limited by time – He doesn't run out of energy or options.*
- *We gain deeper faith by waiting – and God will often do something greater than we first imagined – because we have had to wait!*

13. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 5:1-43**?

Isaiah 61:1-3

Isaiah 61:1–3 is fulfilled in Mark 5:1–43 as Jesus brings freedom to the demon-possessed man, healing and peace to the bleeding woman, and comfort and life to Jairus and his daughter—showing He is the Spirit-anointed one who restores the broken, frees the captive, and turns mourning into joy. That's what Isaiah's promised Messiah comes to do!

Psalms 107:10-16

Psalms 107:10-16 speaks of those in darkness and chains being rescued by God's word and power. The Connection: The demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1–20) was in spiritual bondage—Jesus sets him free, breaking his "chains" and bringing him into light.

2 Kings 4:8-37 (short version vv32-37)

The prophet Elisha raises a child from the dead through prayer and physical contact. Connection: Like Elisha, Jesus raises Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:35–43), showing even greater authority—He speaks, and she rises.

Psalm 56:3-4

Psalm 56:3-4 say: “When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

Both Jairus and the woman with a bleed, were afraid – but they trusted Jesus – and Jesus called them to have faith over their fear (verses 33 and 36)

Deuteronomy 31:6

Deuteronomy 31:6 says: Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

*Jesus’ presence brings courage and hope to those in desperate situations—reminding us **God is near us and never leaves us nor forsakes us** in any trial.*

Daniel 3:17-18

In Daniel 3:17-18 it says: ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego trust God to save/deliver them – but even if He doesn’t, they will not lose faith.

*The bleeding woman reaches out **in faith**, not certainty; Jairus must keep believing even after his daughter dies. True faith trusts Jesus no matter the outcome.*

What’s the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 5:1-43

Jesus has complete authority over evil, sickness, and death—and He responds to desperate faith with mercy, healing, and restoration.



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V36 - Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

Finish in prayer: Lord Jesus, You see the outcast, you hear the desperate cry and raise the hopeless. Thank You that no one is too far, too broken, or too unclean for Your touch. Help us to have the faith to reach out to You, the courage to trust You when things delay, and the hope to believe even when all seems lost. You are the Lord who restores—make us whole again.

Amen.

Study 3 – The Mission and the Martyr

Mark 6:1-29

(Jason Forbes: Sermon on 20th July 2025)

Read Mark 6:1-6

1. Why are the people in Jesus' hometown offended by Him?

There are several reasons:

- a) **Familiarity breeds contempt** – they knew him, his family and his background and they've made the assumption that He could teach them anything!*
- b) **Ordinary background** – In their eyes, He has no religious training*
- c) **Pride** - they couldn't accept that someone from an ordinary background could have bettered himself. They took offence because He was a "working man" and not a real Rabbi or scholar! Or so they thought!*
- d) **Unbelief** – their hearts are hard and so they are closed to the idea that God could be working through Jesus, a man from their own town! "Nothing good ever came out of Nazareth" (John 1:46)*

2. What does this teach us about the danger of familiarity in spiritual life?

Familiarity breeds contempt.

The people of Nazareth thought they knew Jesus — "the carpenter," "Mary's son." Because they thought they had Him figured out, they refused to see Him for who He really was. Their hearts were closed. Their minds were made up. As a result: "He could not do any miracles there...He was amazed at their lack of faith." (vv. 5–6)

This could lead us to stop expecting God to speak or act through familiar people

Our assumptions can limit our faith and put God in boxes or compartments that put limitations on God, which simply not true!

3. How does this passage challenge our assumptions about who can or should respond to Jesus?

We expect that the people who know Jesus best—His hometown, His neighbours, His childhood acquaintances—would be the first to believe in Him. But this passage turns that assumption upside down. Instead of responding with faith, they respond with rejection!

For us, it means: a) we don't write anyone off – God works in surprising ways with surprising people; b) family connections or background are irrelevant – everyone must have a personal faith; c) be aware of our own assumptions and pride – we might miss Jesus or things about Him, if we think we already know everything about Him!

4. Ponder: Do you find it difficult to share the Gospel with your non-believing family and friends? Yes/No/Maybe? Why/Why not?

Possible reasons why it might be difficult to share the Gospel with non-believing family and/or friends:

- a. It's hard to bring it up without feeling awkward*
- b. Fear of rejection or they might feel judged*
- c. They've already made up their mind about Christianity*
- d. Fearful of damaging the relationship*

Possible reasons why it might NOT be difficult to share the Gospel with non-believing family and/or friends:

- a. Having a close relationship with them makes it easy to speak honestly*
- b. They often ask questions about faith/Jesus, so it gives natural Gospel opportunities*
- c. With prayer, God can open up doors of opportunity for the Gospel*

Read Mark 6:7-13

5. What do you notice about how Jesus prepares His disciples to go out?

- a. Jesus sends them out in pairs (verse 7)*
- b. Jesus gives them authority over evil spirits (verse 7). This gives the disciples spiritual protection*
- c. Jesus instructs them to travel light (verses 7 and 8).*
- d. Jesus tells them to stay in one place in a town and not look for other places more comfortable or convenient.*
- e. Jesus tells them to expect rejection (verse 11). If they are not welcomed they are to shake the dust off their feet and move on! This shaking the dust was symbolic showing that responsibility was not on them but on the person who refused to listen*

6. Why does He send them in pairs, and with so little?

So that they have support, encouragement, and to strengthen their witness (In Jewish Law, two or more witnesses are needed). Ministry is not to be done ALONE. They are to take nothing with them, except a staff; no bread, no bag or money. They are to rely on God to provide all their needs for the journey and on the hospitality of the folk of each town they visit.

7. What does this teach us about reliance on God in ministry?

God's work must be done in God's strength, not in the disciples' own strength. We must rely on God to supply all our needs for ministry. Just like the Lord's Prayer, we need to rely on God's "daily bread" Even when we are rejected, we are to trust God.

8. How should **we** respond when our delivery of the Gospel message is rejected?

- a. We are not to take rejection personally; ultimately, it's a rejection of Jesus, not us.*
- b. Shaking off the dust from our feet – is moving on without resentment. It was a way of saying: "We've done our part. Now it's between them and God."*
- c. We are to keep trusting God and keep sharing the Gospel; i.e., go to the next place/person!*
- d. Pray for the people who have rejected Jesus, that their hearts might soften towards Him!*

Read Mark 6:14-29

9. What does this passage show us about how the world receives truth?

- a. Truth is often resisted; especially when it confronts sin. John told Herod "it's unlawful for you to have your brother's wife" (verse 18). Herod didn't want to hear it. People reject the truth when it threatens their lifestyle, authority or comfort*
- b. Truth-tellers maybe feared but they are often still silenced, because of pride, self-preservation or even peer-pressure*
- c. Truth can be sacrificed for the sake of pride and appearances. Public image can matter more than doing what's right.*

d. *The world may like or entertain the truth but not necessarily obey it. Herod “liked to listen to him (John)” (verse 20) but it didn’t lead to repentance. Many people today like to hear the truth but never let it change their hearts.*

10. What do we learn from John’s courage and Herod’s fear?

John’s courage means he spoke the truth no matter how costly it would be. John was committed to telling the truth because He was a faithful servant of God and could not compromise with the truth. Sometimes telling the truth brings suffering and not necessarily success!

Herod’s fear of people leads to compromise. Herod cared more about his image than doing what was right!

Fear without faith leads to a trapped life. Even though he is a king, he was a slave to fear and sin!

Herod’s fear made him feel hunted. Even though John had been beheaded, Herod thought that Jesus was John, raised from the dead!

11. **Ponder:** Why does Mark place John’s death right after the disciples are sent out?

*This is deliberate by Mark to show that **following Jesus comes with a cost** and to foreshadow what lies ahead for Jesus and His followers. **Following Jesus is the path to suffering but leads to the Kingdom of Heaven!** There is **also a contrast between two kingdoms** – the Kingdom of God which is about truth, holiness and repentance – and the Kingdom of Herod which is about power, pride, pleasure and political games.*

12. What warning and/or encouragement can we take for our own witness today?

Warning: *Don’t expect the Gospel to always be popular, sometimes it’s rejected.*

Don’t be surprised when speaking the truth is costly!

Encouragement: *We are not alone; God sees our faithfulness. Even when the world rejects, God remembers and is with us! God uses ordinary people (like the disciples) to do extraordinary things.*

14. How do the following Old Testament passages relate to **Mark 6:1-29**?

Jeremiah 1:4–10

Both passages teach that God calls, equips, and sends His messengers, who must be faithful despite rejection or danger, trusting God's presence and power.

1 Kings 19:1-18

In 1 Kings 19, Elijah feels discouraged and threatened after boldly confronting evil, but God reassures him by showing His presence in gentle ways and renewing his mission.

In Mark 6:1–29, Jesus, His disciples, and John the Baptist face rejection and danger as they proclaim God's truth.

Both passages highlight that faithful servants of God often face opposition and discouragement, but God encourages, sustains, and sends them on to continue His work.

Ezekiel 2:1-7

In Ezekiel 2:1–7, God calls Ezekiel to be a prophet to a rebellious people, warning him they will resist his message, but commanding him to speak regardless.

In Mark 6:1–29, Jesus, His disciples, and John the Baptist face rejection and opposition as they boldly proclaim God's truth.

Both passages show that God calls His messengers to speak faithfully even when people reject or resist the message, emphasizing obedience over popularity.

Psalms 69:7-9

Both passages highlight that faithfulness to God's truth often brings suffering and rejection, but this suffering is linked to zeal for God's kingdom and righteousness.

Amos 7:10-13

In Amos 7:10–13, the prophet Amos is rejected and threatened by the priest Amaziah because his message condemns the people's sin and calls for repentance.

In Mark 6:1–29, John the Baptist, Jesus, and His disciples face rejection and opposition for boldly proclaiming God's truth.

Both passages show that God's messengers often face hostility from religious or political authorities when confronting sin, yet they are called to remain faithful despite opposition.

Isaiah 6:8-13

In Isaiah 6:8–13, God sends Isaiah to preach to a people who will hear but not understand, see but not perceive — a mission marked by rejection.

In Mark 6:1–29, Jesus, His disciples, and John the Baptist all face rejection and resistance as they proclaim God's message.

Both passages show that God's messengers are often sent to people who will reject the truth, yet they are still called to speak boldly and faithfully.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of Mark 6:1-29

Faithful proclamation of God's truth will often be met with rejection, resistance, and even suffering—but God calls us to speak boldly and trust Him with the results.
OR

Preaching the truth brings rejection but God still calls us to speak!
God's truth brings rejection, but speak boldly.



What light globe moment did you have?

What **questions** do you have about the passages in this study?

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

Mark 6:11

"If any place will not welcome you or listen to you, leave that place and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

Finish in prayer: Lord Jesus, You were rejected by those who knew You best, Yet You still spoke truth and sent Your followers with power and purpose. Give us courage to follow You when it's hard, faith to obey You when we feel weak, and boldness to speak truth even when it costs. Help us not be discouraged by

rejection, but trust that You are at work, even in small and quiet places. Help us to stand firm for what is right, like John the Baptist and to go out trusting You, like the disciples. Enable us to be faithful, fearless, and fruitful as we live and speak in Your name. Amen.

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Resources:

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

The Gospel of Mark (William Barclay)

The Gospel of St. Mark Commentary by C.E.B. Cranfield

Preaching Mark by Phil Crowter

The Gospel of Mark by Ben Witherington III

Matthew Henry's Commentary