

Encountering Jesus through the Gospel of Mark

Week 9: A God Who Can't Help Himself

Hi Small Group Leaders,

We see people bringing their friends and family in need to Jesus this week in the stories we read. I had a couple people sharing some heavy realities with me this week that makes me love the focus of these passages. As others bring their loved ones to Jesus he meets their deepest needs and cares for them in ways we are incapable of. Praise be to God! Who do you bring with you in your hearts to Small Group this week? How can we bring them to Jesus in prayer? In word? In action? Love to you all in Christ!

I. Catch Up (15 mins)

- Play a game, have fun, share some food, or catch up together

II. Dig In

- Seek Understanding
 - Read Mark 7:24-37
 - Compare the two stories of healing. What similarities and differences do you see? What questions arise?
 - What are your initial reactions to Jesus' comparison between Gentiles and dogs?
 - What were some of the options Scott gave in reading this? Which do you find persuasive?
 - i.e. read in light of what is clearer elsewhere (i.e. Jesus is compassionate and loving); we don't understand 1st c. texts fully; some form of banter happening.
 - Who are the children in Jesus response to this woman and why do they get the bread first? (cf. Gen 12:2-3; Rom 1:16)
 - Why does Jesus seem to change his mind in response to this woman? (for clarity check out Matthew's record of this story in Mt. 15:28)
 - Read Isaiah 35:5-6. What additional significance do Jesus' healings seem to hold in light of this passage? (*fulfilling the great day of redemption and restoration that Isaiah prophesied of*)
- Apply
 - In both of these stories others bring their loved ones to Jesus in their time of need. Who in your life would you love to bring to Jesus and what would you hope he does?
 - With those people in mind, discuss what some fitting ways may be to bring them to Jesus through word or action.

Marked

- What's difficult about bringing others to Jesus?
- Scott was suggesting some banter that Jesus potentially engaged in with this woman. Is it difficult for you to envision Jesus engaging in those types of dialogues? Why or why not?
- Pray
 - One of the ways we bring people to Jesus is in prayer. Let's spend some time praying for those around us who we'd love to experience Jesus' transforming power (this may be people in the group who would like prayer, or friends or family outside of the group).
- Upcoming Events
 - **Kingdom Come: A Night of Worship & Prayer**...coming up again on Monday March 12 from 7-8:30pm (coffee at 6:30) at Peace Portal. Instead of meeting in a home this week, join us for prayer and worship. All ages are encouraged to join!