

# HEALING INSIGHTS FROM *THE GOSPEL OF MARK*

## LESSON 4 – CHAPTERS 4 TO 6

### Overview

A. **Jesus' Threefold Work.** In Mark 4- 6 we see Jesus doing His threefold work as described in Matthew 4:23: “And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.” (See also Matthew 9:35.)

1. Preaching (to the crowds)
2. Teaching (personal instruction to individuals or smaller groups)
3. Healing (spiritually, mentally, physically, etc.)
4. Note how Jesus goes back and forth between these aspects of His ministry in these three chapters.

B. **Jesus Begins to Teach in Parables.** Why parables?

1. The implication was that the teachings of Jesus could not be understood by human reason alone—only those who were illumined by God who could comprehend His instructions: “And he said to them, ‘To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.’” (Mk 4:11–12, ESV)
2. We can scoff at God’s Word, we can criticize and analyze, but the implication is that we need to “come to Jesus” in order to understand—and benefit from His words. As we will see, this was is key lesson from the parable of the sower: only those who received the Word from God would have true understanding and would “bear fruit.”

### Insights from the Sower and the Seed - Mark 4:1-20

A. As we have already noted, beginning with Mark 4:1 we are introduced to Jesus teaching in parables. Of note, the context indicates this first parable was the preeminent one. If it could not be understood there was no hope of understanding the others: “And he said to them, ‘Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?’” (Mark 4:13, ESV) Why was this the case?

B. The parable of the sower reveals our need to unreservedly receive God’s Word. Only by such a reception of His Word do we have any hope of understanding spiritual things: “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14, NKJV)

1. Some have thought this parable might most aptly be referred to “the parable of the soil” since the soil is the only variable in the parable. The seed and the sower/farmer are the constants.
    - a. Seed = the word of God which brings life (v.14).
    - b. Note that the Word brings life, just as God’s Word spoke life onto our planet in the beginning (see Genesis 1).
  
  2. One of Mark’s favorite words, *euthus* (“immediately”) again occurs in the interpretation of this parable—in contrasting ways
    - Just as the word can bring *immediate* joy if received (v.16),
    - so Satan is ready *immediately* upon sowing of the word to try to snatch it away (v. 15),
    - on the other hand, tribulation on account of the Word, results in an *immediate* rejection of the Word by the stony ground hearers (v.17).
- C. Many have also seen this parable as dealing with our need for repentance and conversion. In other words, if we are allowing the Word to have first place in our lives, we will turn from anything we are, think, or do that is contrary to that Word. Isn’t this what conversion and repentance are all about?
1. In the parable there are several things that block or hinder the Word from exerting its intrinsic life-changing power.
  2. Can you relate to any of these?
    - a. tribulation or persecution on account of the word (v.17)
    - b. the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things (v.19)
- D. It is not always easy to tell if we are allowing God’s Word to have full “root” in our lives. Sometimes we deceive ourselves into thinking we are wholeheartedly following God when we are not. However, when it comes to the Holy Spirit’s convictions regarding lifestyle changes, it is often harder to remain self-deceived. (For example of God is speaking to my heart about giving up smoking, it is hard to convince myself I’m a non-smoker if I am still going through a carton a week.)
1. In view of this, might there be a connection between germination of the seed in this parable and implementing lifestyle changes?
  2. After all, the gospel calls us to repent and change our lives—doesn’t the message of a healthy lifestyle do the same? Could the parallels be as follows?
    - a. Those whose hearts are represented by hard, trampled ground on the “beaten path” or “way side” are resistant to changing lifestyle at all. When they hear the message of lifestyle change, they resist it, refusing to accept their need to make changes.

- b. Those whose hearts are represented by “stony ground” seem to respond to the message of change. They overtly embrace a new lifestyle, but when challenges come, they return to their old ways. It is as if they are willing to try a “quick fix,” but when that doesn’t remove all their problems, they abandon their changes. Time reveals they had no real or lasting commitment to change. In other words, their behavior suggests that, instead of having a changed heart, they were only giving the new lifestyle a try.
- c. Those whose hearts are represented as being among thorns, seem to reveal a true desire to embrace a new lifestyle. This takes root in their lives and flourishes for a time. Their problem, however, is that they don’t address the weeds—the old bad habits—that have plagued them. Ultimately, these bad habits choke out the new lifestyle, and they ultimately return to their old ways.
- d. Those whose hearts are represented by good ground are the ones who reap lasting benefits. They demonstrate full acceptance of the lifestyle message, embracing positive change as a life-long commitment, and allow that message to completely change their lives. Shouldn’t we pray that we will be like the good ground in every phase of our lives?

### **Insights from Candles and Seeds: An Appendix to the Parable of the Soil? - Mark 4:21-29**

Possible implications:

- A promise that all essential “hidden” things would be revealed in the teachings of Jesus
- A charge to not be ashamed of the light that you’ve been given
- A call to be attentive to Jesus’ teaching in parables
- A reiteration of the promise that the Word heard and received will bear fruit
- Some see the parable of the lamp as a call to regular Bible study. After all, one emphasis of the parable is the importance of hearing aright: “If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear... Pay attention to what you hear” (v. 23-24, ESV). It can be argued that one of the main ways in which we “hear” God today is through an unbiased study of His Word.

### **Insight from the Mustard Seed - Mark 4:30-32**

- A. The mustard seed is among the most insignificant of all seeds but if given the opportunity to grow, it produces more than all the others!
- B. DISCUSSION - Often that considered the least significant is of the greatest value.
  - Why do people often overlook the importance of spiritual life?
  - Why is it so important in relation to all other aspects of one’s life?
  - Does it seem like a little thing to make time with God?
  - Are we letting the “urgent” crowd out that which is most important?

## Christ's Confidence in the Storm - Mark 4:35-41

- A. The situation was critical - experienced fisherman feared for their lives.
- B. However, Jesus is sleeping! Why was Jesus able to be so calm?
- C. Jesus consistently said He only did what the Father instructed Him to do. Consider the following examples...
  1. John 5:30, ESV: "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me."
  2. John 8:29, KJV - "And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him."
  3. Therefore Jesus' life was the simple outworking of the Father's will. Was it in this confidence that He rested?
- D. Might there have been other reasons why Jesus felt there was no risk of His dying?
  1. Did He know His "time" had not yet come?
  2. Could it be that Jesus understood the prophecy of Daniel chapter 9 which specified when He would die?
  3. Note that Jesus knew where He was in the stream of history. His words in Mark 1:14-15 are illustrative: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."
- E. Anxiety is at the root of many physical problems. What does this story have to tell us about dealing with our fears and worries?
  1. Hadn't Jesus already demonstrated His supernatural powers? Weren't the disciples responding to His bidding?
  2. Could my inability to sleep have to do with anxiety? Does Jesus offer help for this problem today?

## Mark 5 Overview: Healing Three "Hopeless" Cases

After quelling the storm that presented a humanly hopeless situation, Mark shares Jesus responses to three more hopeless cases...

- A. The Demoniac
- B. Jarius' daughter
- C. The woman with a bloody discharge
- D. DISCUSSION - Compare or contrast these three situations and Jesus' approach to them. For each, ask
  - What aspect of health is at issue?
  - How does Jesus approach the situation?
  - How does this relate to anything you might currently be facing?

## Mark 5 in more detail...

### Jesus Heals a Man Possessed by a Demon – Mark 5:1-20

- A. In verses 1-5, Jesus is confronted by a man who is hopelessly out of control mentally. He is described in inspiration as being demon possessed.
1. In biblical times, people were open to the idea that there were demons and people were possessed. Today, many people are skeptical of such a concept. Does that make the account any less reliable?
  2. If Satan were possessing people today is it possible he would have the possession manifest differently? After all, if possession means Satan is in charge of the life, can't he manifest his control however he pleases—to best suit his evil purposes?
  3. In other words, just because demon possession does not often manifest itself in Western society as we see it here in Mark 5 does not necessarily mean that it is rare today.
- B. In verse 6 it appears the possessed man still has enough will power to fall at Jesus' feet as if to worship Him. However, another finds expression through his voice.
1. Jesus apparently recognizes the man's approach as an implicit request for freedom from possession. In the ensuing dialogue we learn more about the possessing spirit(s).
  2. The possessing spirits say their name is "Legion." Kittel's *Theological Dictionary* gives the significance of this name: "In the imperial period a Roman legion consisted of about 6000 men on foot and 120 on horse, to which the *auxilia* should be added, i.e., technical branches and special troops." (Kittel, et al. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume 4. Eerdmans 1964.)
  3. The same source provides further commentary: "It is to be noted that λεγιών [legion] as a military unit is used in the NT only of nonhuman beings, whether demons (Mk. 5:9, 15 == Lk. 8:30), or angels (Mt. 26:53). That is to say, it is used only of beings which represent something powerful, unparalleled and extraordinary which can force man. These beings may be angels which belong to the world of God and which point to God's goodness. But they may also be demons which come from the world of darkness and which remind us of the dark oppression and confusion of the world."
- C. What did Jesus do for this man?
1. Jesus fully healed him, so that he ends up "clothed and in his right mind"
  2. The drama played out in this man's life demonstrates what many have called the "Great Controversy Theme."
    - a. Satan is trying to gain the victory over every individual, actively battling against Jesus' lordship.
    - b. Satan's aim is to entice us to choose his leadership over God's; thus he calls God's love and government into question.
    - c. Specifically, Satan often works to paint a pretty picture of sin. He alleges you can break God's law (moral or physical) and nothing bad will happen. However, in this story we see where sin—and Satan's rule—ultimately leads, captivating and degrading the mind.

- d. In this account God shows the difference between His rule and the rule of Satan/sin. Satan/sin degrades the mind and the moral nature, God restores the mind.
- e. What implications does this have for lifestyle habits that degrade or undermine our moral capacities?
  - How do alcoholic beverages fit it? What about caffeine? Lack of sleep? Lack of exercise?
  - We can see that ultimately God wants the best for us. We may have to sacrifice things that Satan tries to allure us with, but such self-denial will put us in the best position to have health and a truly abundant life.

D. A significant subplot in the account of the demoniac: the power of the Word/the power of our words. Consider the following:

1. It is Jesus' Word to which the demons must submit. But it is then the word of the swineherds that calls attention to the event. Similarly, the healed demoniac is called to publish the word of God's miraculous working in his life—by giving his own words or testimony.
2. Several different Greek words are used to denote the power of the Word/words.
  - a. When it comes to the word used for what the demoniac did: “And he departed and began to proclaim [*keryssein*] in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.” (Mark 5:20, NKJV). This word, from the root, *kerysso* indicates to announce publicly and extensively. Although elsewhere the verb can be translated to “preach” this word does “not mean the delivery of a learned and edifying or hortatory discourse in well-chosen words and a pleasant voice. It is the declaration of an event. Its true sense is ‘to proclaim’” (Kittel, et al. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume 3. Eerdmans 1964.) This word is used more by Mark than by any of the other gospel writers. Mark uses it 14 times, Matthew and Luke each use it 9 times, while John never uses it in his gospel, and only once in the book of Revelation (see Revelation 5:2).
  - b. On the other hand, in Mark 5:14 and 19 a different word is used for proclamation: “So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it [from Greek root, *apangelo*] in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened” (NKJV). “Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell [from Greek root, *apangelo*] them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.” (KJV). This root, *apangelo*, also has the connotation of formal proclamation, “With the meaning of ‘proclamation’ it is used of the proclamation or declaration of a king; of the reports of envoys; of an unconcealed message of sorrow; of communications.” (Kittel, et al. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume 1. Eerdmans 1964.)
  - c. Regardless of the Greek words used, a clear message emerges: it is the proclamation of God's Word and our word of testimony regarding His faithfulness that changes lives.

- i. In view of this, how much of a disciple are we if we are not proclaiming the works of God in our own lives?
  - ii. Don't we each have the responsibility to sing God's praises for the measure of health He has given us?
  - iii. Shouldn't we pray that God would give us the tact, wisdom, and courage to proclaim what He is doing in our lives?
3. Can we be inspired by the healed demoniac's response to seemingly unanswered prayer?
  - a. Although he begged Jesus to go with Him, Christ denied the demoniac's request.
  - b. In spite of what must have been an obvious disappointment, this man was completely willing to do just what Jesus said. He consequently remained behind and did the work the Lord requested. Are we as quick to do what God says to do?
  - c. In our quest for insights into social health, is this perhaps an illustration of Jesus seeking to heal the social structure?
    - In this scenario, sending the demoniac back to his people revealed a bigger plan. Proclaiming his testimony helped a whole region be spiritually healed.
    - Think about it. He had been terrorizing that area. When he returns, the people have living evidence that the region's terrorist has been healed. His example had the power to heal those formerly terrorized by his presence.
  - d. A contrast with Jesus' usual instructions for "Messianic Secrecy." When in Jewish territory Jesus typically instructed those healed to keep quiet (e.g., Mark 1:44). Many believe this had to do with the false expectations of the Jews regarding the mission of the Messiah (as a political ruler more than a spiritual deliverer). However, Jesus is here in a non-Jewish region. There appears to be no danger of excessive popularity, or misguided political motives cutting short His work.

### **Healing Jairus' Daughter - Mark 5:21-24, 35-43**

- A. This story provides further insights into Jesus' power—even in apparently hopeless situations. Even when Jairus' daughter had died (v. 35), Jesus, encouraged him, "Be not afraid, only believe" (v. 36). How willing are we to believe—have faith—in humanly hopeless situations?
- B. Jesus shows Himself to be the loving Great Physician by raising this young girl to life.
  1. It seems it was very important for Jesus to show He had power over the grave. Each time He was in the presence of someone who had recently died, Jesus raised them to life. (See also Luke 7:11-15 and John 11:1-44.)
  2. In this way He showed that He was "the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25-26) and that He "had life in Himself." (John 5:26).
- C. Jesus demonstrated He can solve humanity's greatest health crisis, namely death.

1. If Jesus can raise the dead, shouldn't we be willing to trust Him with smaller things? No matter how bad our health situation, Jesus has the power to help us today.
2. Although resurrections have been documented in modern times, they are extremely rare. Does it take more faith to believe in a God who heals—or a God who does not always intervene?
3. We have an example of this soon after, in Mark 6:14-29, where we read about the beheading of John the Baptist. Many wondered why Jesus did not miraculously deliver John. Although it is beyond the scope of our study presently to attempt to explain reasons why God does and does not heal or deliver, the Bible is clear: God is trustworthy—whether or not we understand His motivations. Even in the midst of tragedy, the Bible goes on record that God still is ultimately working out something that will turn out to be a blessing for His children: “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28, ESV)”
4. Perhaps, most importantly, the resurrection of Jairus' daughter reminds us of the resurrection power in Jesus. Consider the following texts:
  - a. “all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life...” (John 5:28-29, NKJV)
  - b. “And when I saw Him [Jesus], I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.’” (Rev 1:17-18, NKJV)

#### **Healing the Woman with the Issue of Blood - Mark 5:25-34**

- A. Everything the world had to offer this poor woman did her no good—for over a decade she “had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse” (v. 26). When you read of Jesus' healing this “hopeless case,” be encouraged—even if you feel like you've exhausted the world's resources in your quest for better health.
- B. A number of key words appear in this remarkable healing of another humanly hopeless case. These words provide practical insights for us today.
  1. The Greek word *elegen* is used in verse 28: For she said [*elegen*], “If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.” The tense of *elegen* does not indicate that the suffering woman merely said this once—the tense refers to something you do over and over again. In other words, she kept saying to herself that her hope of healing was to come in touch with Jesus. Why could she so confidently repeat this to herself?



- a. Is it possible that even today such hope fixed on a living Savior will tend to result in our having a healing relationship with Jesus?
  - b. How does this parallel our claiming God’s promises?
  - c. What does it tell us about the power of retraining our minds to think more positive thoughts?
2. In verse 27 we are told that the woman “*heard* about Jesus.” In other words, this woman exercised faith before she had never seen Jesus face to face. Isn’t it the same for us today? We have heard the reports about Jesus, we have the Old Testament and New Testament. Can’t we reach out in faith to a Savior we have not physically seen?
3. The Greek word *sozo* also provides powerful insights for us. In this vignette, it first surfaces on the woman’s lips: “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well/be saved [form of *sozo*].” (v. 28, NKJV). Jesus then uses the term in v. 34: “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole/saved you [form of *sozo*].”
- a. The word *sozo* carried a depth of meaning in Jesus day. It included concepts as diverse as saving, keeping, benefitting, curing, delivering, and helping. As expressed in a theological dictionary: “In the healings of Jesus *sozo* never refers to a single member of the body but always to the whole man, and it is especially significant in view of the important phrase ‘thy faith hath saved thee.’ The choice of the word leaves room for the view that the healing power of Jesus and the saving power of faith go beyond physical life.” (Kittel, et al. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume 7. Eerdmans 1964.)
  - b. Thus, when the woman sought Jesus with the confidence she would be made *sozo*, it is likely she was thinking of much more than physical healing. This would be expected, as in the culture of her day, a woman with a continuous hemorrhage was physically, spiritually and socially stigmatized. In Leviticus 15:25-27 we read of how such an individual was considered ritually unclean—a designation that basically ostracized her from society.
  - c. The use of the word *sozo* in this passage also points to a universal truth; namely, Jesus’ physical healings illustrated His ability heal spiritually as well.

### **Other Insights into relational health from Mark 5**

- A. Faith in God is intrinsically relational—an observation that brings us back to the theme of social health in Mark’s gospel.
  1. In the story of the woman with an issue of blood, it is clear her faith is not merely an idea or creed.

2. Consequently, when this woman has faith contact with Jesus, He is aware of it. Jesus recognizes the relational connection that comes about through faith—and He stops a whole procession in order to make a special point of it.

**B. More Relational Insights. How do we respond when those who claim to love us don't deliver?**

On at least four occasions in Mark 5 we see a form of the Greek word *parakaleo* used. This word has on the surface the connotation of “calling to oneself.” However, it can also carry the sense of *imploring* or *begging* such as calling one to your side to help you. Additionally, it can be used in the sense of your comforting someone by calling them close to comfort them. Consequently, it is one of the key relational words used in Mark's gospel.

1. In Mark 5, we first see *parakaleo* used by the demons. They beg Jesus to send them into the swine (v. 10, 12) and He grants their request. Ironically we next see the healed demoniac begging Jesus to go with Him. However, in response to this apparently righteous request of a new follower, Jesus says “no.” He has something better for the healed demoniac.
2. Finally in v.23 Jesus is implored (*parakaleo*) by Jairus. Instead of rushing post haste to his dying daughter, Jesus provides an object lesson by dealing with a woman who suffers from a chronic disease. In some sense, Jesus' delay sets the stage for the remarkable resurrection of Jairus' daughter. However, when Jesus stopped to make a lesson of the woman's faith, Jairus could have thought Jesus, by halting His progress toward Jairus' home, was unmindful of his great need. When you put these three stories side-by-side some interesting issues emerge:
  - a. How do you feel when it seems God answers the prayers of those who seem to have less need/less merit than you?
  - b. How does it feel when God seems to answer the wicked in a time of their extremity (think of the legion of demons), but when you pray you seem to get no response—or even a denial (think of the healed demoniac who wanted to go with Jesus or Jairus when it looked like Jesus' delay may have cost his daughter's life)?

**Mark 6**

**A. Jesus is rejected in His hometown of Nazareth. (Mark 6:1-6).**

1. The power of the Word/the power of words. This theme recurs throughout these three chapters (Mark 4 to 6). Here we see a limitation in Jesus' ability to heal with

His Word. The Word that healed the demoniac, the woman with the issue of blood, and Jairus' daughter is largely powerless here.

2. The reason: the Word only has power when it is mixed with faith: "And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief." Mk 6:5-6, ESV
3. The Danger of Underappreciating the Familiar—read carefully: the basis for Jesus' rejection in Nazareth appears to be the town's intimate knowledge of Him and His family.
  - a. Is there a similar danger in other areas of our life, namely, are we in danger of not fully accepting the things we think we most "know"?
  - b. Is it possible we underestimate the supernatural healing dimension in "common things" God longs to use to give us health? For example, have you been learning more about how God can use simple lifestyle factors (e.g., nutrition, exercise, water, etc.) to bring about amazing transformations? Aren't these all remedies that most people overlook and don't put to proper use?

#### **B. Jesus Commissions the Twelve Disciples. (Mark 6:7-13).**

1. Jesus not only gives the 12 disciples "jobs," but He gives them an explicit job description. They are to continue His work of preaching, teaching, and healing. All are clearly indicated in this passage (compare Matthew 10:1-15).
2. **The power of an accurate diagnosis.** One facet of the disciples' teaching was the preaching of repentance: "So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent." (Mark 6:12, ESV). The call to repentance involves at least two things: (1) a description/diagnosis of error or sin and (2) a call to change. This largely parallels the physician's work for the body where a patient's motivation to utilize a treatment regimen is largely dependent on their understanding the diagnosis and its gravity.
  - a. "Untreated" sin will result in death: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23).
  - b. Turning from sin (repentance) is necessary in order to receive "the free gift of God" which is "eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

#### **C. An unwelcome diagnosis (Mark 6:14-29).** John the Baptist faithfully engaged in the "physician of the soul" work to which Jesus called His followers: he calls Herod and Herodias to repent of their sinful alliance (see Mark 6:18).

1. Ultimately, Herodias has John killed for being a faithful diagnostician.
2. Have you ever wanted to "shoot the messenger"? How about a doctor who gave you bad news?
  - a. Although there are legendary stories of physicians' callously giving a dread diagnosis, many communicate with the utmost compassion.
  - b. Regardless of their bedside manner, could you relate to someone who killed a doctor because they didn't like the diagnosis he or she communicated?

- c. This may seem shocking when it comes to physical health, but when it comes to spiritual things, many a murder and many a war have commenced because of a failure to accept an ultimately loving diagnosis.
  - d. Realize, however, Jesus own death on the cross was due to the failure of His people to accept a “gospel or repentance” (see Mark 1:14-15).
- D. **The value of rest** (Mark 6:30-32). The disciples have just come back from their first “job on their own.” Their excitement over God using them to teach, preach and heal is tempered by the death of John the Baptist.
- 1. Following both great accomplishments and great trauma is the need to come apart and rest.
  - 2. Jesus recognized this need.
    - a. He makes provision to give that to His disciples.
    - b. How well do you prioritize the need to rest?
  - 3. Has Jesus given any special provision for our rest?
    - a. Up to this point in the gospel of Mark, there has been much controversy over the Sabbath.
    - b. What is there in the origin of the Sabbath that speaks to us about rest (Genesis 2:2-3)?
    - c. As Jesus presented it, was the Sabbath more a blessing or a restriction?
- E. **Health priorities.** (Mark 6:33-44). Although rest is a true health principle, health principles are designed to increase our capacity for ministry, not detract from it. Therefore, Jesus even set aside His need for rest when confronted with a greater need.
- 1. In the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus demonstrated that He is willing to inconvenience Himself to meet the needs of those around Him.
    - a. How willing am I to sacrifice my “real needs” to help others. If I am not willing to do this—am I revealing the true spirit of Christ?
    - b. Think about it: many have rejected Christianity because of the bigotry of “Christians,” wars and atrocities committed by “Christians,” etc. But this story and the entire gospel reveal that such behaviors are not representative of true biblical Christianity. The religion of Jesus is self-sacrificing, characterized by love and concern for others and ministry to their needs.
  - 2. What encouragement does the feeding of the 5000 give you when it comes to your meager resources? Do you think Jesus has the power to take the little you give Him and multiply it to do great things?
- F. **Man of Humility, Man of Power** (Mark 6:45-56). Many see Jesus’ dismissal of the disciples and crowds an indication that popular favor may have tried to set Him on the throne.

1. However, the humble Jesus never sought for power and position: His focus was always on ministry.
2. Despite His humility, Mark 6 ends with two demonstrations of Jesus' power: walking on the water and again healing the sick.
  - a. Can God give us the power to help others, even if we take a humble place?
  - b. Or is humility perhaps the very prerequisite for God using us?