Wayside Soil Preachers

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Text: Mark 3:13-15

### Intro

1. The Gospel of Mark has been called “The preaching gospel” and has long been identified as “The book of preachers for preachers!”
2. Mark begins and ends with preaching and proclaiming!
   1. Mark 1:1-4: The gospel begins with John the Immerser (Baptist) fulfilling the prophecy of the voice crying out in the wilderness by preaching (Isaiah 40:3).
   2. Mark 1:7: John preaches that Someone greater than himself is coming.
   3. Mark 1:14-15: That One comes, and what does He do? Jesus preaches! He preached (proclaimed) “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel.” *(Gal. 4:4: The fulness of time came and was fulfilled in Jesus).*
   4. Mark 3:13-15: Jesus appointed twelve of His disciples to be His twelve apostles for the purpose of preaching! *(3:16-19 gives the names of these 12 men)*
   5. Mark 16:15: Jesus commissions the twelve to preach (proclaim) the gospel to the whole world!
   6. Mark 16:20: What do they do? –- They preach everywhere!
3. Mark is the shortest gospel but speaks on preaching more than the other gospels!
   1. The Greek word translated as preach is *kerysso [kay-roos-so] (G2784):* to herald, to preach, proclaim, publish.
   2. The New Testament uses the word 61 times
   3. Matthew uses the word 9 times (56% longer than Mark)
   4. Mark uses the word 14 times (23% of the uses in the NT are in the gospel of Mark!)
   5. Luke uses the word 9 times (71% longer than Mark)
   6. John uses the word 0 times! (not at all!)
4. At the heart of preaching: There’s a new King in town and all need to repent! (Mark 1:4, 15; 6:12-13)

#### The Preachers Jesus Chose

* 1. We may have a tendency to put the apostles on a high pedestal – superhero-like status!
  2. We all know Peter messed up, Thomas doubted, and Judas fell away, but overall we may think of them as the best of the best, and that’s why Jesus chose them! As preachers, we will never measure up!
  3. Jesus didn’t choose them because they were perfect, but because He knew what they would become!

#### Outsiders & Wayside People

* 1. The gospel of Mark paints a completely different picture of them than do the other gospels – they are portrayed as wayside soil people & outsiders!
     1. *Mark 4:1-20: The Parable of the Sower.*
     2. The first type of soil is the Wayside Soil – sown on the wayside (beside the road – what was the Sower thinking?).
     3. The birds pick it up and eat it – describes hearts that Satan takes the word away from so they won’t believe and be saved! (Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12)
  2. The apostles depicted as “outsiders” and “wayside people”
     1. Mark 1:35-39: The struggle with the disciples begins here as they didn’t understand Jesus’ preaching mission. They thought He should do what the crowd wanted, but Jesus said He had a mission elsewhere.
     2. Mark 3:13-19: The 12 are appointed to preach and to cast out demons, to be like Jesus in His preaching – Mark 1:39: Jesus preached and cast out demons.
     3. Mark 4:11-13: Trouble! Jesus tells the 12 they are appointed to know and understand the secret of the kingdom but for outsiders He applies Isaiah 6:9-10, that says they have eyes and ears but don’t see or understand.
        1. Then Jesus rebukes the 12 for being in the same boat as the outsiders, “Do you not understand this parable (the Sower)? How will you understand all the parables?”
        2. A distinction is planned for the apostles from outsiders, but here at the outset Jesus says they are in the same boat: They heard but didn’t understand.
  3. Double the feeding, double the misunderstanding!
     1. Mark 6:30-44: The apostles expressed disbelief (a trait of wayside people) at Jesus feeding a crowd of 5,000, and despite their doubt & unbelief Jesus did so with two fish and five loaves of bread!
        1. Mark 6:45-52: This is followed by Jesus walking on the water. Mark leaves out Peter walking on the water also, but is the only one to reveal the reason that the 12 were astonished at Jesus walking on the water was because they failed to understand the incident with the loaves, and reveals their hearts were hardened! (Mark 6:52)
        2. Unbelief & hardened hearts – traits of the outsiders & wayside people!
     2. Mark 8:1-10: Jesus repeats the lesson of the loaves when He feeds 4,000 people from seven loaves and a few small fish.
        1. It seems the apostles forgot the incident with the loaves from Mark 6 and express doubt – that would be bad enough on its own but then they get into the boat with Jesus and…
        2. Mark 8:11-21: Jesus teaches them about the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod. They feel they are rebuked because they only brought one loaf of bread (amazing since 12 baskets of leftovers from the 1st time, and 7 baskets of leftovers from the 2nd time).
        3. Jesus asks, “Do you not yet see and understand?” and asks if their hearts are hardened (Mark 8:17), then brings Isaiah 6:9-10 back to mind and applies it to them: eyes and ears but do not see or hear (Mark 8:17-18).
        4. He then asks again, “Do you not understand?” (Mark 8:21)
        5. The apostles are just like the outsiders & wayside people – on the road to judgment because they don’t get it!
        6. Lack of understanding and hard hearts – traits of outsiders and wayside people!
  4. If the apostles were filled with doubt, unbelief and hard hearts, what hope did the rest of the world have?

#### Failure of Their Commission

* 1. They were appointed & commissioned to be like Jesus in His work (Mark 1:39; 3:13-19)
     1. They were to preach and have authority over demons to cast them out!
     2. Mark 6:7-13: Jesus sends the 12 out 2x2 to preach and cast out demons – they actually fulfill this commission!
  2. When Jesus comes down from the mountain after spending time with Moses & Elijah, He finds the apostles similar to how Moses found the Israelites when he came down from Mt. Sinai!
     1. Mark 8:27-30: Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ (Son of God – Mt. 16:16).
     2. Mark 9:2-9: On the mount, Peter, after his big confession of faith, says they should build three shrines: one to Jesus, one to Moses, and one to Elijah. God’s voice said to listen to Jesus, His beloved Son (Mark 9:7).
     3. Mark 9:14-29: Even more trouble awaited down the mountain, not gross idolatry as Moses found but lack of faith!
        1. The disciples at the base of the mountain were found that they could not cast out an unclean spirit in a little boy! (Mark 9:18)
        2. Jesus said to them, “O faithless generation!” (NKJV: Mark 9:19)
           1. NASB: “O Unbelieving generation!”
        3. He wasn’t talking to the man or the crowds but to His apostles, the ones who couldn’t cast it out! (Mark 3:13-15: Part of their mission!)
        4. Their faithlessness cause doubt in the man who said to Jesus, “If you can do anything…” to which Jesus said anything is possible to the one who believes – a lesson to His disciples (Mark 9:22-24).
        5. The man’s confession of faith (Mark 9:24) should be an example to the apostles struggling with their own faith!
        6. Later, they ask Jesus why they couldn’t cast it out. Jesus said it is a kind that can only be cast out by prayer & fasting (Mark 9:29).
        7. Perhaps they thought they could do it on their own and Jesus reminds them they needed to be connected to God for it is by His power that demons are cast out, and not their own.
        8. If that kind can only be cast out by prayer then the apostles are really in trouble because we learn in Mark 14:32-42 that they couldn’t keep watch and pray with Jesus for an hour! *Can we?*
  3. More trouble as others carry out their commission better than they do!
     1. Mark 9:33-37: The apostles fight with each other over who is greatest.
     2. Mark 9:38-41: After fighting over who is greatest they see someone, who is not among their number, casting out demons in the name of Jesus!
        1. What did they do? Did they learn something about faith in Jesus?
        2. No, they tried to stop them! (Mark 9:38)
        3. They may want to compete with each other over who is greatest, but surely they are all better than some no-name do-gooder out there, who is not even among the 12!
        4. All of this just highlights the preachers Jesus chose don’t measure up! They are no better than the others around them!
        5. In fact, this account highlights the fact that there are others who seem to measure up more than they do – Wow!
  4. A shining moment!
     1. Mark 8:27-30: While others say Jesus is Elijah, John the Baptist resurrected, or some other prophet, Peter says Jesus is the Christ. Jesus tells them not to tell anyone. But…in Mark this may not be enough to set them apart…
     2. Mark 1:24-25, 32-34: Remember what the demon confessed?
        1. “I know who You are…the Holy One of God.” Jesus told him to be quiet and cast him out.
        2. While Peter’s is a powerful confession of belief, it is no more than what the demon confessed (James 2:19)
     3. Mark 8:31-33: To drive this home even further, when Jesus took the 12 aside to tell them about His coming crucifixion, Peter rebuked Him and said it would never happen.
        1. Jesus said, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but the things of men!”
        2. Peter has moved in the right direction, but is still not better off than the demons yet.
        3. Even with that good confession he is still an instrument of Satan.
        4. Interestingly, Mark is the only one who says it is Satan that takes away the word of God from the wayside soil people (Mark 4:15).
        5. Doesn’t this account call to mind that passage? Satan takes away the word from the hardened heart of the wayside soil person.
  5. The preachers Jesus chose have failed at their commission up to this point!

#### Falling Away

* 1. Mark 14:26-31: Jesus had explained plainly that He would die and raise up the third day (Mark 8:31-32), and here warns them that they will all fall away and fulfill the prophecy of Zechariah 13:7.
     1. Jesus said when He rises from the dead they are to meet Him in Galilee.
     2. That means He will rise again, and when He does, they are to go to Galilee.
     3. Before that though, they will all fall away.
     4. Peter denies this and says even if all fall away, he will not! (Mark 14:29)
     5. Jesus tells him he will deny Jesus 3 times (Mark 14:30).
     6. Peter says he would die first! Mark tells us they were all saying the same thing! (Mark 14:31)
  2. Did they all flee or not?
     1. Mark 14:50: They all fled!
     2. Mark 14:51-52: One of them wanted to get away so badly he pulled free of the linen sheet and fled naked!
     3. This calls to mind a prophecy against Israel from Amos 2:16 that wraps up a rebuke that began with the sin of selling the righteous for silver (NKJV: Amos 2:6).
     4. Are any of those who fled from Jesus in this moment different from Judas who betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver? (Mark 14:11; Matthew 26:15)
     5. Mark 14:66-72: Mark points out that the disciple who stays near Jesus at His trial is the one who said he would never flee or deny Him – he later denies Him 3 times as Jesus said and runs out weeping (Mark 14:72; Luke 22:61-62).
  3. They did not do what Jesus told them to do!
     1. Mark 14:28: Jesus said when He died and rose again they were to go to Galilee!
     2. They did not!
        1. They lingered in Jerusalem *(Luke 24:33, 52).*
        2. When the women came to the tomb the angel told them to tell the apostles to go to Galilee (Mark 16:7), and when the women & Mary Magdalene came from the tomb and told them Jesus had risen, they refused to believe it! (Mark 16:11)
     3. Mark 16:12-13: Jesus appeared to two others on the road (possibly the two on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:13-35) and when they reported they saw the risen Lord, the others refused to believe it!
     4. They didn’t believe the women; they didn’t believe two of their own!
     5. This means since they didn’t believe it they didn’t go to Galilee (Mark 14:28; 16:7)
     6. Mark 16:14: Since they didn’t go to Galilee Jesus came to where they were and appeared to the 11 (minus Judas – Matthew 27:5)
        1. Notice His rebuke: Unbelief and hardness of heart!
        2. They had Jesus’ own words on what would happen and what they were to do. They had the words from the women sent by the angel and Jesus Himself. They had the words from two of their own.
  4. Six verses away from the end of Mark’s gospel and he has depicted the preachers Jesus chose as stubborn, faithless, hard-hearted, ignorant, outsiders, wayside soil people, and worthy of judgment like everyone else Jesus encountered!

## Conclusion

1. If Mark’s gospel concluded with this, one may think that Jesus’ all-night prayer prior to choosing His preachers was in vain! *(Luke 6:12-13)*
2. However, in the gospel of Mark, Jesus looks forward to and foretells that His apostles will stand head and shoulders above the outsiders and will teach the wayside people!
   1. Mark 10:39: In the midst of the argument over who would be greatest after James and John asked Jesus to sit on His right and His left, Jesus does tell James and John they will drink the cup Jesus drinks and be baptized with His baptism (this could, presumably, apply to the rest, minus Judas).
      1. That is to say, they will share in Jesus’ suffering *(Mt. 26:39, 42; Acts 5:40-42).*
      2. Though they flee at Jesus’ arrest, trial, and crucifixion, they will ultimately live up to the commission Jesus appointed them for!
      3. Though all others fail, they were faithful till death! *(James – Acts 12:1-2)*
   2. Mark 13:9-13: Jesus foretells a day that they will bear witness before governors and kings, will be put on trial, and put to death for Jesus’ sake.
      1. In those moments they need not be anxious because the Holy Spirit will speak through them!
      2. Peter, who had been the mouthpiece for Satan *(Mark 8:31-33),* will become the mouthpiece for the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 14; 4:8)
3. Mark 16:15-16: In the final verses of the gospel of Mark, Jesus commissions the 11 (again, minus Judas) to fulfill the mission He appointed them for: To preach to the whole world!
   1. Mark 16:20: “They went out and preached everywhere”
   2. Acts 1:8: Jesus said they would be His witnesses to the “remotest parts of the earth.”
   3. ***The apostles step up and do exactly what they were commissioned to do! (Became the Good Soil hearts from Mark 4:20)***
4. When you and I struggle with our faith and wrestle with doubts and unbelief, remember the preachers Jesus chose: They were in the same boat as everyone else!
5. They overcame their doubts, fears, and unbelief, and became the preachers Jesus chose them to be!
6. In Mark 9 when they couldn’t cast out that one demon and Jesus told them that kind can only be cast out by prayer, we ought to be reminded that in our daily struggles with the enemy, DON’T FORGET TO PRAY!
   1. What were the apostles doing in the ten days after the ascension and before the descension of the Holy Spirit? (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9; 2:1-4)
   2. They were together and “devoting themselves to prayer!” (Acts 1:14)
7. If God can use such stubborn, struggling men as the 12, He can use us – He can use you!
   1. *He can transform your Wayside Soil heart into the Good Soil heart!*
8. If you are not a Christian, you need to be! Repent and be baptized!
9. If a Christian in error, repent (correct) & be renewed!
10. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!