

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE MASTER

Mark 1:16-45

Introduction:

Two weeks ago, before Thanksgiving – then Jesus came. Twice in vv. 9-15 – “Jesus came...” First (v. 9) to be baptized and to face temptation. This was to prepare him for the ministry ahead of him. Then (v. 14) he came proclaiming the gospel of God – the time is fulfilled – see Gal. 4:4. The kingdom of God is at hand – Jesus came to offer a new kingdom – the kingdom of those saved by grace – we’ll get into that more as we move through the book of Mark.

I mentioned last time that when Jesus came people were changed—the lame walked, the deaf heard, the blind saw. But more than that, when Jesus came, their lives were changed. Sins were forgiven, relationships were healed, people were given hope.

This morning, as we move on in Mark 1, we see that happening. When people had a personal encounter with Jesus, things changed—their focus changed, their hope changed, their future changed.

We are going to quickly look at a series of encounters with Jesus and see the events as they happened and then try to draw out some principles and applications from this passage. We are going to try to cover the rest of Mark 1 this morning.

A Call to Follow (vv. 16-20)

- Four men who were fishermen – Simon & Andrew, James & John
- Jesus’ call to Simon & Andrew – fishers of men – you will be pursuing men and women by preaching the gospel in order to bring them into the kingdom.
- Their response – immediate and complete. They left their nets and followed. That doesn’t mean they never fished again, but their vocation and their livelihood became secondary to the service of Christ.
- Calling of James and John – they also left everything, including their father. Even family became secondary...

The call to follow – we are all faced with the call of Jesus on our lives. Discipleship—the cost of following Jesus is a theme throughout Mark and all of the gospels. What is our response?

Teaching with Authority (vv. 21-28)

- He did not separate himself from the everyday life – went to the synagogue.
- People were amazed at the power and authority of his teaching
- “...not as the scribes.” The scribes taught the writings of by rote, based on the writings of the Rabbis, but Jesus taught as one sent from God, with the authority of his Heavenly Father.
- Casting the unclean spirit out of the demon-possessed man. The demon recognized Jesus for who he was and challenged him, but Jesus silenced it and cast the spirit out.
- Again the people were astonished that he spoke with such authority and even the demons had to flee. Obviously they had no power over the evil spirits.
- The word soon began to spread about this new teacher.

The authority of Jesus over Satan and his demonic host is evident right from the beginning of his ministry.

Power over Sickness and Disease (vv. 29-34)

Read vv. 29-34...

- Healing of Simon’s mother-in-law. They leave the synagogue and enter Simon & Andrew’s house – just a short way away.
- Bringing of all sorts of sick, diseased and demon-possessed people to be healed.
- It was a time of tremendous busyness and activity. One can only imagine how exhausted Jesus must have been by the end of the day.

There are times like that when you are involved in the Lord’s work—not only for those in full-time ministry but also for any servant of God. That is why the next passage is so important.

Time out for Renewal (vv. 35-39)

Read vv. 35-39

- Jesus' early morning prayer time – it is obvious that communion with his Heavenly Father was of vital importance to Jesus.
- The disciples' consternation at not finding Jesus when they got up. Where was he? Didn't he realize how much work there was to do? People were looking for him and here he's off hiding somewhere.
- Jesus leads his disciples to expand the ministry by moving on to other towns throughout the region of Galilee.

A couple of important notes:

- What could be more important than time spent with our heavenly Father in preparation for a day of busyness and activity?
- Jesus did not condemn his disciples for interrupting him, but involved them in what he was doing.

A Personal Touch (vv. 40-45)

Read vv. 40-45

- The leper – no one was more of an outcast in that day than a person with leprosy. It was considered contagious. No one would come near a leper, let alone touch him.
- Jesus could have simply spoken and healed him, but he reached out and touched him. He cared enough to show his compassion with a personal touch.
- Note Jesus' instructions – v. 44
- V. 45 - By the time word spread, Jesus could not get away from the crowds. Even in the wilderness and desolate places the people came looking for his healing touch.

Conclusion

As we wrap this up, a couple of things:

- An encounter with Jesus always changes people – it changes their physical condition, their psychological condition, but most of all their spiritual condition.
- Never allow the busyness of life keep you away from time spent with the Lord – I need that time with Him; you need that time with Him.