

Faith - Actively Overcoming Obstacles

Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26

vs. 2, many -> crowd (vs. 4)

- They demonstrate the popularity of Jesus. Crowds are mentioned 40 times before chapter 10.
- They are the audience of Jesus' teaching and the object of his compassion.
- The crowd however does not turn toward Jesus in repentance and belief (which is what the gospel requires).
- They generally demonstrate passivity and many times volatility.
- The most common attribute of crowds in Mark is they obstruct access to Jesus.

Question: Does my crowd obstruct access to Jesus? Are you a part of the crowd or are you a disciple of Jesus?

Crowds are not a measure of success.

In fact, the Greek gives us the repetition of the same or a similar sound in

Crowd -> ochlos (ὄχλος)

House -> oikos (οἶκος)

Crowd - enthusiasm for Jesus and even proximity to him are not the same as faith.

The crowd can in fact work against the gospel.

House -> often Jesus chose a private setting to give more explanation (clarity to his disciples) of revealed truth.

Jesus was preaching the word to them.

- This defines the essence of Jesus ministry.
- The word is the gospel of God.
- The truth that Jesus proclaims is the same truth that he embodies.

vs. 4-5, Jesus saw their faith.

First mention of faith in Mark

First mention of faith in Luke.

Faith demonstrated is those who act decisively on the basis of conviction that God's help is to be found with Jesus and gratefully receive God's action through him.

Faith is acting not simply knowing.

Faith -> active trust that Jesus is sufficient for our deepest and most heart felt needs.

Question: Are you lonely, confused, fearful,...?

Act in faith

Jesus is sufficient!

When we act in faith we remove the obstacles (even if it is a roof).

Faith requires Grit! (Digging through the roof) - finding another way.

Question: In moving toward Jesus, what is the strength of your resolve?

Has a life with Jesus become too much of an inconvenience?

Is the opposition too loud? Is your view of self too important?

Is the carnality of life too mesmerizing?

Do you have the grit (have you engaged in the training) to push through?

Faith -> (when Jesus saw their faith)

Pursued their goal without allowing numerous obstacles to get in the way.

Their faith -> the value and risk of healthy investment

- Relationships are difficult.
- The closer you become to someone the more vulnerable you have to be.
- Vulnerability can be close to impossible, especially if your life experiences have taught you to never be vulnerable.

Universal Fact: The people you invest in now are the people who will be invested in you tomorrow. And if you live as if you don't need people, you will get to prove it later.

Old and happy or old and alone?

Invest your life in people, and you will begin to build for yourself a relational net that catches you when you fall and picks you up when you're no longer strong enough to walk by yourself.

Question: When it comes to people are you a consumer or investor?

Look beneath the surface and allow the profile of this group of friends to challenge your relationships.

- Loyalty
- Commitment
- Inventive
- rule breakers (against the cultural norm)
- Selfless - If your faith was noticed, wouldn't you want something out of it? Shouldn't faith be personally beneficial? We want our faith to make a better life for us!

Son -> acting with authority and grace (benevolence).

Your sins -> personal knowledge and precise forgiveness (not generic).

vs. 7-8, Pharisaic and Scribal scrutiny.

They are constantly evaluating Jesus, but Jesus moves the discussion to an evaluation of them.

Who is this that blasphemes?

You don't know what to do with the truth of who I am. You have heard the message of John.

Luke1:76-78 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, **77** to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, **78** because of the tender mercy of our God,

I have forgiven this man's sins.

Your professional, religious expertise fails you. What will you do with this?

What is easier, "your sins are forgiven," or, "Rise, take up your bed and walk"?

I'll help you out.

To reveal to you that I do have authority to forgive sin I will physically heal this man.

Everyone here will see this man walk out of this room!

vs. 10, But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins

Jesus knew, cared, and healed.

This man will testify (proclaim) what has taken place. This encounter will change his life and he will let others know.

The power of testimony

I was (2 words) to explain.

I met Jesus (sentence describing how).

I now (2 words) to explain.

vs. 12, today we have seen things beyond our expectation.

Question: How will what I saw (experienced) yesterday influence my actions today?

Are you amazed at the forgiveness of Jesus?

Does that amazement continue every morning?

Do others hear the “why” of your amazement display in your words and actions?

Psalm 145:4 “One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.”