

Mark 2:1-12

One More

Image Church // Abide and Abound Week 5

Introduction

Good morning Image Family!

Covenant Members Class... **Nov. 7th**...

Alright, well we've been a series based out of **John 15:4-5** called **Abide and Abound**

I told you that we have **two primary goals** that we're going to be orienting around...

1. Abide: We want to abide in the riches of the gospel in order to take us deeper in our knowledge and love of God.

2. Abound: We want to abound in the gospel by bearing fruit that expands our impact locally, nationally, and internationally.

And with these goals, we're doing something called the **Abide and Abound initiative** for the purpose of financially fueling these goals over the next year...

You should have by now received a commitment card- we have them at the door, you can get one the way out- but I want you to take it and use it as a reminder to pray this week and ask the Lord what He's calling you to give toward this initiative...

Understanding that every dollar that you give toward this **Abide and Abound initiative** will go toward, and enhance, our missional efforts locally, nationally, and internationally... *See page 6...*

And next weekend, **November 7th** we're going to have a **Commitment Weekend** where we'll come together and commit our **above and beyond gifts** toward this **Abide and Abound Initiative**...

- And then you'll have the opportunity to give toward your above and beyond gift over the months of **November and December**... So this is not year long it only lasts through the end of December and you will be able to give toward that specifically online, or you can label your gift as you drop it in our giving box in the lobby...

So come prayed up and ready next week- it's going to be a special weekend! _____

Alright, well I'm excited about this morning as we continue our journey through this **Abide and Abound series** that's setting the tone for us over the next year in the life of our church as we begin to cultivate who we are and where we're going...

We set the stage with our chair passage that this series is framed around in John 15:1-8 as we looked at our call to **be before we do**...

To abide and let that motivate us to abound and each week I've framed out specific ways the bible frames this out... *And we've looked at the:*

- **next gen**
- **Neighbors**
- **Nation and nations**

And what I hope that you've seen is that at the end of the day we want to see a movement happen where the gospel is working in us and through us...

My goal has been to give you the blueprint for **that's based on Jesus call for the church** and help you find your place in it!

But here's the reality that I want you to understand this morning and this going to frame out where we're headed... **Movements rarely start with the masses; they almost always start with the one...**

And so, this morning I want to press in on that... Because at the end of the day our goal is to be about the advancement of the gospel- we want to be about seeing dead people come to life **one person at a time!**

We want it to be said of us like it was said of Barnabas in **Acts 11:24** for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And large numbers of people were added to the Lord.

This starts by being faithful with **the one**... The way we say it as a church is we want to be about **ONE MORE**... We always want to be about **one more** coming to faith in Jesus...

Which means that each of us needs to have our sights set on our **one more** that we want to see God add to the Kingdom. We don't want to be a church that suffer from **paralysis of analysis**...

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 *you have been given the ministry of reconciliation... We are ambassadors of Christ; God is making His appeal through us...*

- *The Spirit comes to you and works through you...*

We want to be faithful to pursue one more and let God use it in our lives to shape us for what's next...

This morning I want to give you a **framework** for what this looks like...

To do that I want to key in on a unique encounter that a group of people have with Jesus... **If you have your bibles go ahead and turn to Mark 2...**

- What I want you to see woven in here is a **model** for what it looks like to advance the mission of the gospel one person at a time...

It's something that if we grasp it can have an incredible impact...

For many of you it's going to be the things that gets you off the sidelines of the Christian life and into the game...

To go from a **cheerleader to a contributor**- and what this will do is open your eyes to the missional reality we've been called to, and you will get a front row seat to watching the Spirit work through you...

Mark 2:1-12

1 When he [Jesus] entered Capernaum again after some days, it was reported that he was at home. **2** So many people gathered together that there was no more room, not even in the doorway, and he was speaking the word to them. **3** They came to him bringing a paralytic, carried by four of them. **4** Since they were not able to bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after digging through it, they lowered the mat on which the paralytic was lying. **5** Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, **"Son, your sins are forgiven."**

Love this, one of the things we see in this is that faith is not a feeling, it's a belief that drives action¹- these men **believed** that Jesus could heal **so they acted on it** and brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus...

Their faith in Jesus leads them to bring someone else to Jesus...

Verse 6 But some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts: **7** "Why does he speak like this? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" **8** Right away Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were thinking like this within themselves and said to them,

BTY: Bonus feature- he knew their thoughts...

"Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? 9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat, and walk'?"

Now, to be fair neither one of these is easier- both of these could only be done by the power of God... **Which by the way is the point Jesus is God...**

¹ Thought gathered from Joby Martin, *Miracles: Friends*.

But in light of the moment based on the perspective of the Pharisees it would *seem* easier for Jesus to just say *your sins are forgiven* because there's no way to verify it...

Whereas Jesus telling this guy to get up and walk would change the game because it most certainly could be verified...

Well, Jesus is about to make this really easy for them, He's going to give them a 2-for-1...

Verse 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he told the paralytic—**11** "I tell you: get up, take your mat, and go home."

Jesus is like how about this boys- I'm going to give you a miracle that you can see, to **validate** the reality of that which you can't see...

- **IOW:** in the same way my words had the power to heal this guy, my words also had the power to forgive this guy!
- **Notice** Jesus goes above and beyond the expectations of everyone here- the friends, the paralyzed guy, and the Pharisees...

Verse 12 Immediately he got up, took the mat, and went out in front of everyone. As a result, they were all astounded and gave glory to God,

They were able to worship God because they encountered Jesus...

And they encountered Jesus by coming to Him **in faith** and part of their coming to Him in faith involved bring another **in faith** and letting Jesus do His thing!

And then they finish by saying...

saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Would our faith be the thing that drives us to bring others to a place where they see something they've never seen before!

Here's what I want you to see... We've been drilling down on how **abiding** in Jesus leads us to **abound** in the things of Jesus...

Listen to me, *one of the greatest ways to deepen your faith is to help someone else discover their faith.*²

Watch this, sometimes taking faithful action to **abound** in the things of Christ is the very thing that takes you deeper in your abiding in Christ...

- Takes faith and requires you to tether yourself to the things of Jesus...
- And ultimately you take a step of faithful obedience as a result of your abiding anyway- **it's a perfect circle...**

Ok, here's what I want to do, I want to hold up for you **4 things** that we see in what happened here that need to be true of us when it comes to bringing people to Jesus!

1. Our faith motivates our actions

The text shows us that these 4 guys had faith, and their faith is what gave-way to action...

They genuinely believed that Jesus could heal their friend and were willing to do whatever it took to get him there...

Is the same true for us??

Here's what I think the problem is for many of us... I think for most of us we would say that we **believe that** Jesus can save, but I don't think we **believe in** Jesus to save...

Let me explain to you what I mean...

Example: If you went to a bungy jumping site that was on a bridge... And you stood there while people were strapping in and jumping off...

- And someone asked, what do you think... And you say I **believe that** it would hold me if I jumped...

² Direct quote from Joby Martin, *Miracles: Friends*.

- I've watched others and it's held them so I **believe that** it would hold me...
- Well, there is a big difference in making that statement vs. strapping up and jumping off...
- One is believing **that** and the other is **believing in...**³
 - One has no action, the other does...

IOW: Believing **that** Jesus can save is different than believing **in** Jesus to save, **one is an idea**, the other **involves action**...

For many of us we have the **idea** that Jesus can save but no activity behind it when it comes to bringing people to Jesus...

For many of you, you're on stuck on the sidelines of the Christian life believing that, but not believing in...

The call of the Christian life is not to **believe that** things about Jesus are true, the call of the Christian life is to **believe in** Jesus by acting on the things that you know to be true about Him...

Which means that if you're not bringing people to Jesus, then you're missing Jesus on a personal level...

You've forgotten the gospel... It's no longer good to you otherwise you would be motivated to share it with others...

Example: You promote and share with others the things you believe in! You work a job that you can get behind and believe in...

And with fervor we recommend... In life (*about dumb stuff*) and in our jobs...

And yet when it comes to Christianity, we don't do the same thing and it's of the greatest value!

We have to go back to our salvation story...

GOSPEL...

*If it's not good news for us, then we will never see it as good news for others...

You're here and you're not a Christian... *Appeal*

2. We work together in faith

There were 4 guys that brought their friend to Jesus...

It was a team effort not an isolated effort... You don't carry this weight alone...

This is what the church is for...

Ways to leverage the church...

- Weekend Gathering
- Community group
 - Gathering...
 - And one-off hangouts...

It's why being involved in these spaces matter: Why you need to serve and be in a CG...

We're partnering together- everything we do is about **one more...**

We don't want a situation like these guys faced where anyone is prevented from encountering Jesus because of the chaos...

- Non-Christians wont press through... We want them to show us, and they know we were expecting them...

Be involved... Serve, give, engage with people...

Acts 15:19 *we should not cause difficulties for those among the Gentiles who turn to God...*

3. Our faith empowers us to overcome obstacles

³ Thought here, and example from Charles Martin, *The Turned the World Upside down*.

These friends had a serious obstacle... The house was full so they went to the roof... *Serious obstacle...*

Obstacles will be present... And they are not simple and easy to overcome- it wasn't simple and easy for these guys...

But obstacles are possible to overcome when we approach them through faith and not through our flesh!

Here's the reality for most of you, your greatest obstacle is yourself...

There's a bunch of you that're paralyzed when it comes to the mission of God because you feel like you don't know what to say, or you don't feel skilled enough, persuasive enough, qualified enough, or you don't feel smart enough...

Here's the thing you have to understand- God loves using every-day, unimpressive, underqualified people as the means to advance His mission as a way to show off His power to point people back to Him!

God's given you what you need through the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out the mission of the gospel... **Some of you need to stop looking at your inability and start looking at God's ability...**

What you need is **willingness** to take a step of faith and God will use you no matter how gifted you are and use you for His Kingdom, because it's not about you and what you bring to the table, it's about the power of God in you, and you taking a step of faith believing that!

Here's another thing, for these boys to overcome this obstacle it took **time, effort**, and it meant they **had to get their hands dirty...**

Some of you are willing to do whatever it takes for you job- over work, travel, sacrifice... Whatever you need to do...

- But when it comes to the mission of God there's a massive gap in that thinking because you don't have that same drive...

- Again, **this means that you've forgotten the joy of your salvation and you've forgotten the worth of Jesus...**
 - Why you have to remind yourself daily- Word and Prayer...

For some of you the biggest obstacle is **you don't know what to say...**

- Starters, do you know the gospel...
 - Explain it... teach here...

Some of you don't know what to say because you never share the gospel... you need to share it...

- At work you're good at your pitch because you do it..

Would be good for many of our community Groups this week to break into groups and share it this week...

Here's another part of this where many people get hung up...

- **Start with the Savior and not the sin...**
- **Flesh out...**

Another obstacle: Will it change my relationship with this person?

- No!! That's your perspective not theirs...
- **Example:** my neighbor... 82-year-old I asked where are you spiritually?

Another obstacle: There is no way God could save...

- Pray...
- Be persistent...
- Live out the gospel to them, don't just preach at them...

Example: When I was in college... we would go door to door...

- Painfully awkward...
- But the value of the laugh and the shock at what people would do was worth pressing through...

We are willing to press through obstacles when the value of what we want is greater than the obstacle we face...

When Jesus is our greatest value, when we see Him for who He is only then will we be willing to press through...

4. Circumstances serve a bridge to the Savior

This might be one of the best takeaways from what happened in our text...

This whole thing started because of a circumstantial reality- some guys had a friend that was paralyzed, and they wanted Jesus to heal him...

But the truth is that this lame man's ultimate need isn't to walk, it's to have his *sins forgiven*...

But watch this- it was a circumstantial reality that brought Him to the feet of Jesus... And once at Jesus' feet, Jesus *reveals who He is and what He came to do*... To bring about restoration for a broken world...

- *Jesus superseded expectations*...

Jesus did the showing off, Jesus did the saving... but it was the circumstantial reality- the brokenness that this man was experiencing that served as the bridge that brought Him to the feet of Jesus...

One of the greatest, if not the greatest bridge to the gospel are circumstances...

- People are all about their circumstantial reality...

Be sensitive to recognize circumstantial brokenness and use it as a bridge to Jesus...

- And trust that in the same way Jesus showed up here in Mark 2 that He will show up as you bring people to Him...

Example: In any tragedy- God's not ok with it... He came to eliminate it... Brokenness in every form is a result of the pollution of sin and the unrevealing of creation... Jesus came to deal with that!

- *Flesh this out*...

Get them to Jesus...

Appeal to non-Christian: For some of you, your missing your greatest need isn't what you're currently facing... Your greatest need is to be made clean from your sin...

Conclusion [VAMP]

At one point you were the guy on the mat...

Some of you are on the mat now...

Ultimately this passage is centered around the person of Jesus... The question is do we see and believe- really- if we don't truly see and believe then we will never share...

- This is not about lip service, it's about life surrender...

Do we see the beauty of our salvation... The gift of the Kingdom??

Who is your **ONE MORE?** Write their name down and we want to spend some time praying for them...

For some of you- you're here and you've never trusted in Jesus... Maybe you've been scared by religion...

- *Would you see a Savior ready and willing to save you*...

Space for prayer...