

DEEPER ROOTS

February 12-17

Planting Seeds: Read Mark 7:31-37

Jesus returns to a region where He was before. In Mark 5:17, Jesus has been here and healed a man and they responded by begging Him to leave. When Jesus returns, they bring a man to Jesus who is in need of healing. The people have seen the lasting effect of the good work of Jesus, and they are no longer afraid. Instead, they are in need. Jesus does not hold the people's previous attitudes and actions against them. He does not try to exact revenge. Nor, in His pride, does He make them recognize that He was right, and they were wrong. Instead, Jesus humbly heals a man. Jesus takes the man aside privately and touches him. He is near to this man in order to heal this man. Service does not occur from a distance. Serving people and their needs cannot happen from a distance. We see Jesus do miracles over a distance. We see Him heal the sick and raise the dead across geographic obstacles. But here, He ministers to this man in close presence. If we are going to minister to people, we must be willing to bridge the distance between us and them. This is not always easy. It is not always fun. Ministering to people who are in need generally means entering their own sickness, struggle, and discomfort. If we are going to love people with the love of Jesus, we must choose to intentionally invade that sickness, struggle, and discomfort. **Why is it hard for you to minister to people who have obvious need? Describe a time when you overcame your concerns or anxieties and served someone in need. What happened?**

Digging Deep: Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

Paul teaches a truth here that is simple to comprehend, but difficult to believe. We are blessed when we share in Christ's sufferings. Jesus wants us to share in His sufferings. We don't like this idea, and we definitely don't like telling other people that this is what God wants for them. But this is what God chose for Himself. He chose suffering, in order to be a blessing. Now, when we suffer, we are blessed. We are blessed to share with Christ in His suffering, and that means that we get to share in the process of being a blessing. Suffering leads to blessing. After we suffer, we are better able to bless others. **How does it feel to think that your suffering is for someone else? How can you suffer well, so that others are blessed by your struggle?**

Pioneer Drive Baptist Church wants you to grow in The Word during the week of 2.12-17.23. Planting Seeds is a quick devotional and Digging Deep is a more robust study for you, your family, or your group. If you have questions or feedback, please email Terence@pioneerdrive.org.