

MARK: Restoring the Mission

Pastor Danielle Burkholder

Mark 3:7-19

Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. When they heard about all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. Whenever the impure spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." But he gave them strict orders not to tell others about him.

Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve e that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means "sons of thunder"), Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Mk 3:7–19.

Tyre & Sidon

One of the original designations of land that God gave to Israel was the apportion of Tyre and Sidon, but they never went in and conquered that land in the times of Joshua.

In the present day, they were described as some of Israel's most vile enemies.

And it is this crowd of mixed people that were listening to Jesus. It is this crowd that Jesus is healing and casting demons out of.

And as we have seen with these demons before, they're crying out calling him, "The Son of God." But immediately Jesus silences them.

Meditation Opportunity

The Jesus you follow heals people.

The Jesus you follow casts demons out of people

The Jesus you follow calls people out of all kinds of situations to follow him.

If any of us aren't following Jesus, then we should be paying attention to the fact that even demons are announcing that he is the Son of God.

Is what I believe about Jesus the same as these spirits or do I disagree with demons?

The oft-cited quotes highlight that Jesus life demands a response; a belief about who Jesus is. He is either a lunatic, liar, legend, or Lord.

It will be up to all of us to examine the evidence and make that decision for ourselves.

Called Whom He Wanted

Jesus called whom he wanted.

Then out of those, he appointed 12 to empower them and delegate authority. Their first responsibility was to be with him.

Jesus' first priority upon calling someone is to establish. meaningful connection; to be with those whom he calls.

This was extremely counter cultural. Typically, proselytes would choose the rabbi they wanted to follow, according to their preferences. Their proselytes would be men of pedigree and status in the community.

However, the disciples were messy and rough. They clamored for pedigree and status and lacked tact and self control. Peter especially was racist and bigoted.

The Number 12

The number 12 pops up everywhere in the Bible with significance.

- 12 stones on the breastplate of the priest
- 12 gates on the Heavenly city of Jerusalem
- 12 tribes of Israel
- 12 disciples.

This 12 was just the beginning. They were to carry out Jesus' commission of cosmic restoration.

Ordinary Extraordinary

These men had nothing special about them. They were ordinary (and some were even less than ordinary). And Jesus turned them into extraordinary people.

And the way that they made the transformation was through being with Jesus.

We need to stop excusing our ordinary selves and realize that being with Jesus is able to transform us. And then send us on mission.



The call to follow Jesus is not the call for accolades and recognition. We know about Peter, James and John, but what about Thaddeus or Bartholomew? We never hear about them again, with scant traces of their lives even in church history. They were off on mission.

Where Are You?

If you're in the crowd, Jesus is the Son of God, and he's calling you to be with him so he can transform your life to do extraordinary things.

Today can be the day that you can be called out of your ordinary life and be with Jesus.



Maybe being with Jesus is not compelling, or going with Jesus is less than exciting. Even some of the ones Jesus called thought the same thing. But at some point or other, they accepted the call. They didn't get accolades, but were transformed by the King of Life.