The Good News told by Mark

A Bible teaching commentary
on the Gospel of Mark
in easy-to-read English

Written by Fred Morris

A foreign woman asks in faith for Jesus
to heal her daughter

Mark Unit 6 of 12

Chapter 7:24-8:38

Manna Publications

EASY READ

Unit 6: Chapters 7:24 to 8:38

A Foreign Woman shows Faith in Jesus

Jesus left that place and walked 60 km to Tyre. Tyre was a very old city on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The people who lived there were not Jews. They worshipped gods or idols.

Jesus did not want people to know where He was. But even in this place, the people knew about Jesus.

A woman saw Jesus and knelt down at His feet. She wanted Jesus to heal her daughter. An evil spirit controlled her little girl. 'She begged Jesus to drive out the demon from her daughter'.

Jesus told her, "It is not right to take the bread from the children and throw it to dogs". Jesus meant that he had come to teach the truth of the Kingdom of God to the Jews first. Jesus told His disciples to do this. Their time to teach those who were not Jews would come later.

The woman knew what Jesus meant. She knew that Jesus was testing her faith. She was bold and strong in her faith. She answered, "Yes Lord, but even the dogs under the table eat the crumbs that the children leave".

Jesus was very pleased with her answer. He told her, "That was a good reply. You may go now. The demon has left your daughter". She went home and the demon was gone.

The Kingdom of God is for all people including foreigners. Jesus accepts anyone who confesses his or her sins, repents and follows Him. He later warned those who did not repent. He said that it would be easier for Tyre on Judgement Day.

Jesus Heals a Deaf and Dumb Man

From Tyre, Jesus travelled back to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The people who lived there were also not Jews. He continued to perform miracles among the non-Jews. Jesus healed

a man who was deaf and could not speak very well. The man was healed because the people brought him to Jesus with faith. 'They begged Jesus to place His hand on the man'. He put His fingers in the ears of the man. He touched the tongue of the man. The man was healed. The people were amazed.

Mark Chapter 8

Jesus Feeds Four Thousand

Many people listened to Jesus as He spoke. They had been with Him for three days with nothing to eat. Jesus said, "I feel deep concern for these people… Some have come from far away".

The disciples had seven loaves with them. 'He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. He took the seven loaves and thanked God for them. Then He broke them and gave them to the disciples. They set the loaves down in front of the people'.

'The disciples also had a few small fish. Jesus thanked God for them too. He told the disciples to share them'. When we obey Jesus and have faith in Him, He can open the way for a miracle. They obeyed. About 4000 men ate the food and were filled. There were seven baskets of food left over.

After this, Jesus got into a boat with His disciples and went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. This was on the north-west side of the lake where the Jews lived.

Those with Little Faith, No Faith or Great Faith

Some of the religious leaders met Jesus. They were the Pharisees. They came and began to ask Jesus questions. They wanted to test Him. So they asked Him for a miracle, a sign from Heaven.

Those Pharisees had no faith in Jesus. Their questions made Jesus sad and tired. He sighed deeply. He said, "No sign will be given to you".

Jesus left them. He and the disciples went into the boat again to go to Bethsaida. The disciples had forgotten to bring some bread with them. Jesus warned, "Be careful about the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod".

The disciples were confused. Jesus asked them, "Do you have eyes and still do not see? Do you have ears and still do not hear?"

Jesus used the words of the prophet Ezekiel who lived 600 years earlier. God told Ezekiel, "You are living among people who refuse to obey Me. They have eyes that can see. But they do not really see. They have ears that can hear. But they do not really hear. They refuse to obey me".

Jesus did not want faith in Him to be destroyed by the rules of the Pharisees or their evil king Herod. He wanted his disciples to remember the feeding of the 5000 and 4000. He wanted them to have more faith in Him. He said to them, "Can't you understand yet?"

Jesus walked away from the Pharisees who did not want to believe in Him. But He helped His followers who wanted to understand the truth.

In Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Jesus. They asked Jesus to touch and to heal him.

Jesus took the man outside the village. The healing was in two stages. The man could not see clearly at first. 'Once more Jesus put His hands on the eyes of the man. Then… he saw everything clearly'.

Spiritually the disciples were like this blind man. They could not see clearly the things that Jesus taught. They needed more

faith to follow what Jesus was saying and doing. They had to learn to obey the Son of God, not follow the traditions or rules of men.

After the resurrection of Jesus, the faith of the disciples and the power of the Holy Spirit changed the lives of many people in Europe, Africa and Asia. Faith in Jesus is a gift from God that has changed the world one by one.

Peter Believes that Jesus is the Christ

Jesus and His disciples went to other villages. One day, Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do people say I am?". He wanted to know what they really believed.

They answered, "Some say that you are John the Baptiser. Others say Elijah. Still others say [that you are] one of the prophets".

"But what about you?" Jesus asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Peter tells Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God".

Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God". Peter meant the Messiah, the special king that God had promised Israel, who would become saviour of the world. At last the eyes of the disciples were opened!

Jesus was pleased with this answer. "This faith was not given to you by man. My Father in Heaven showed it to you".

The Way of Suffering for Jesus

Jesus then told His disciples what would soon happen to Him. 'He told them that He must suffer many things. He said that the religious leaders would not accept Him. The chief priests and the teachers of the [religious] law would not accept him either. He must be killed and after three days rise again'.

He spoke to them clearly, not in parables. Soon, He would be taken away by His own people, the Jews and their religious leaders. Many would shout, "Kill Him!"

Peter was very upset about this. He did not want to believe that his Lord and Master would be rejected. He said to Jesus "Never, Lord! This will never happen to You!"

Satan used Peter's words to try to stop the calling of Jesus. Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan. You are not thinking about the things God cares about". Satan had put these words into the mouth of Peter. Satan uses any means to stop or destroy the plan of God to save men and women from their sins. Peter did not fully understand the plan of God for Jesus to suffer and to die. Jesus told him, "You are thinking only about human things."

The Way of the Cross for the Followers of Jesus

Then Jesus called the people to Him. He said, "If you want to be my disciple, you must put yourself last. You must pick up your cross and follow me".

Jesus warned them all that every follower had to take up their own cross. The way of the cross is a way of suffering. Each person must be ready to give up their own way of life. We must be ready to do the will of God for our lives. That is what Peter needed to do.

For followers of Jesus, His cross is not just a thing of gold or silver on a chain. The cross means death to our old life. We live to serve God. We do only the things that please Him. The cross means dying to our old selves, and then allowing the Holy Spirit to make our lives new.

Jesus gave up His glory and power and came to earth as a baby, to do what the Father wanted. Now He offers His followers a new life and calling. He gave up everything to seek and to save those who were lost.

Jesus wants His followers to put God first in their lives and to spread the Good News. "Whoever wants to save their life will lose it. But whoever loses their life for Me and for the Good News will save it". For many people who have followed Jesus, it has cost them their lives. For some people today, it might also cost them their lives. Are we ready to give everything we have for Jesus, if necessary, then live with him forever?

Jesus later sent the Holy Spirit to live in His followers. The Holy Spirit gives peace, joy and hope and the power to overcome evil. Christians believe that our God is three-in-one: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Warnings from Jesus

Jesus warned His followers that it is not good if someone gains many riches in this world but loses his soul. They will lose their eternal life in heaven. He said that there is nothing more important than eternal life.

Later, Jesus warned those who did not stop sinning. He said that it would be easier for the foreigners who lived in Tyre. "On judgement day it will be easier for Tyre than for you".

Jesus also spoke about His Second Coming. Jesus promised to return in the glory of His Father and with the holy angels. When Jesus returns, He will not accept those who have not accepted Him.

Conclusions

The book of Mark tells us the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus chose and taught His disciples to have faith in Him. He prepared them to do His ministry of teaching with miracles of healing and freedom from evil spirits. He taught them the truth about His heavenly Father, our Lord God Almighty.

Jesus gave His followers many examples of the Kingdom of God. He also warned everyone not to reject the promise of eternal life in heaven. Instead, He warned His followers to feed daily on the bread of eternal life which is Christ Himself.

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