

Sermon Series: Getting to Know Jesus

Subject: Take A Good Look at Yourself

Scripture: Mark 3:7-19

Date: 1-1-06

Introduction

As we began this New Year Mark gives us a warning that despite all you know and understand about the church, about Jesus, or about Christianity, you can still stumble and fall into sin.

This year we as believers need to know Jesus better; what He values and what is most important to Him regarding the way we conduct our personal lives, as His followers.

We live in an age of demonstrations which are no more than crowds out of control. This is the situation we have in the passage from Mark. **We shall observe the *Crowds who Followed Jesus*.**

1. The Size of the Crowd. (7-8)..
2. The Plan of Escape (9-10).
3. The Appointment of the Disciples (13-19)

I. THE SIZE OF THE CROWD. (3:7) But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea.

1. The Disciples was with Jesus. (7). Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples. Mark is not talking about just the 12 men that we normally think of as being Jesus' disciples, but included many of the people who were in the crowd who were considered disciples.

This is best illustrated at what happened immediately after Jesus ascended into heaven in the book of Acts...

Acts 1:15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (the number of names together were about a hundred and twenty)... The word disciples is the same word that is translated "disciples" in Mark 3:7. This term "disciple" means "a learner". So there was a good sized group of people who thought enough of Jesus and what He was teaching to go from place to place and listen and learn from Him.

2. There was a great Crowd that followed Him (7-8). and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and Judea.. And from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, (I-du-mae-a) and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

Jesus was really becoming popular. These names take in the total geographical area of that day. Jesus was becoming well known as a teacher and healer all across this region of the world. So, you can imagine that the crowds coming from all around this region steadily got bigger and bigger, until they reached huge proportions. *To get an idea of how big they were, look at the next two verses...*

II. THE PLAN OF ESCAPE (9-10). He spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. 10 For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

1. Jesus is worried about the crowd losing control and crushing Him in their efforts to be healed or to touch Him. He tells some of His disciples to get a small boat ready, just off the shore so he can jump into it if this crowd starts to stampede. *Notice next 2 verses..*

2. Satan tries to increase this danger factor in Jesus' life (11-12). And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried saying, Thou art the Son of God. And He straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

a) People possessed by Satan started agitating the crowd, and crying out for everyone to hear, "You are the Son of God!" And Jesus rebukes them.

b) Satan was trying to start a riot by having this crowd of people react to the wild shouts of the demon possessed. His intention was to cause a stampede that would kill or injure Jesus, and foil God's plans for salvation to take place through Him.

c) Jesus didn't take time to cast out the demons. He knew Satan's plans, and stopped those plans immediately by shutting the mouths of those demons possessed people.

d) After this mob scene quieted down, Jesus took the time to get away from the crowds. And in doing so, He gave a special invitation to just some of this group of disciples.

III. Disciples Appointed (Mark 3:13) *And he goeth up into a mountain, and called unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.* And from this select group, Jesus selects an even more select group...

Mark 3:14-15 *And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.* Then Mark gives us the list of this special company of 12...

Mark 3:16-19 *Simon Peter, -James and John, the son of Zebedee, (known as the sons of thunder.) -Andrew, -Phillip, -Bartholomew, -Matthew, -Thomas, -James, the son of Alphaeus, and -Thaddaeus, and -Simon the Canaanite, -Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him. This list is a stern warning to each one of us.*

1. Despite being someone who was a committed follower of Jesus, -Despite being someone who was chosen over many others, -Despite being one of only twelve who would be in the inner circle of students at the foot of the Son of God... One of these twelve wouldn't make it.

a) He forsake all the teaching of Christ, the greatest teacher and preacher to ever walk the earth. He chose to go his own way in order to gain wealth for himself. His name, Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

b) Mark is warning us this morning, at the beginning of the new year 2006, not to fall into the trap Judas fell into-the trap of self-centeredness, of greed, and hypocrisy.

2. Don't kid yourself! You and I could be just like Judas. Not one of us is better than he was. We have the same tendencies he did. We can lose sight of God's purpose for us on this earth. We can become tools of Satan causing dissension and bitterness, dishonoring Christ and the gospel, just like he did.

a) We're all human, we are weak in our own abilities to withstand temptation, and to stay focused on our mission, as well as keeping our selfishness from clouding our feelings and decisions.

3. The human sin nature is a big problem for everyone of us. It consistently needs to be subdued and defeated. *So, how do we overcome it, and not be like Judas?*

Illustrate: The Methodist preacher John Wesley, preached a sermon more than 300 years ago, that is the most up-to-date advice anyone could ever give to help Christians examine their lives and make sure they are not becoming like Judas. His sermon consisted of 10 points which are very valuable as we begin the year 2006.

1. Notice every sin in your life. Call it what it is-disobedience toward God, and wrong!

2. Realize that God sees everything. You cannot hide even the most secret thing from God.

3. Be serious and frequent in the examination of your heart and life. Did I honor God in everything I did today?

4. Let everything you do be an exercise in preparation for heaven.

5. Do not willfully sin, thinking that Christ has to forgive you. The Bible says...**Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked. A man reaps what he sows.**

6. Be humble. What have you got to be proud of? We are all sinful people dwelling in the midst of sinful people.

7. Mind your own business, and let God mind His. God doesn't need your counsel, your approval, or your permission. You mind your duty as revealed in the Word of God, and let God take care of the rest.

8. Whatever advice you give to someone else, make sure you are obeying it as well. If we would follow all the advice we have for others, we would be much better Christians.

9. Don't do anything which you cannot pray to God about. Prayer should be our most common, everyday occurrence.

10. Think, speak, and do what you believe Christ would do in your place. By imitating Christ we become an example to the world of His love, His power and His care. By imitating Him, we honor Him and bring glory to God.

Conclusion

Mark's warning is very simple... Despite all you know, despite all you understand about the church, about Jesus, or about Christianity, **you can still stumble and fall into sin**. Even the most spiritual of us can fall into that trap because we all have a sin nature.

You may wish to consider three things to do for the new year:

1. I will change
2. I will be different
3. I will be significant for Jesus Christ.