

Set Free From Bondage

[Mar 9:30-37 ESV] – 30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise." 32 But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him. 33 And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, "What were you discussing on the way?" 34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. 35 And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all." 36 And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, 37 "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."

I. Intro

- A. We need to be clear, and apparently controversial, but things need to be said:
 - 1. There is one religion in the world that is true, Biblical Christianity.
 - 2. There are many false religions, and any religion denying the deity of Christ, the humanity of Christ, the physical death, the bodily resurrection, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, is a false religion.
 - 3. A local pastor is in the news for saying Islam is a religion of false teaching, and it is.
 - 4. And there are many other religions that deny this truth as well, but let's be clear, people following false religions are those that need to be reached with the gospel.
 - 5. We should pray for them, speak the truth in love to them, and show them our love for them through actions and words.
 - 6. Lost people are going to fill the void in their life with religion, and the gospel is meant to set them free!
- B. If you could just sit and talk with Jesus for a minute, what would you ask him?
- C. What needs to be said?
- D. Do you think you would listen more than you talk?
- E. The disciples were getting a private lesson in preparation for what was to come, and they had witnessed many things that they could not fully comprehend
- F. Now, coming off the transfiguration, moving through the depravity of the evil influence in our world, and then they begin arguing over who is the greatest.
- G. Yet, Jesus has grace for them and continues teaching them.
- H. You see, Jesus knows their future and will empower them to overcome themselves
 - 1. The entire relationship is a reminder of our beautiful salvation
 - 2. They are being prepared, not because they are remarkable or worthy, but because Jesus chose them.
 - 3. They are battling the flesh while being confronted with the Spiritual truth
 - 4. They have a bright future as world changers, and only Jesus understands this.
- I. I'm so thankful for Christ's investment in us!

II. Text

- A. Verse 30: They needed some preparation time away from the crowds
- B. Verse 31:
 - 1. This is the third time he tells the disciples about his coming death and resurrection
 - a) Mark 8:31-32: all the disciples
 - b) Mark 9:9: Peter, James and John
 - c) Mark 9:31: All the disciples
 - 2. Clearly stated, but so outside of what is normal, the disciples cannot understand.
- C. Verse 32: And they were afraid to ask
- D. Verses 33-34: They were arguing about who was the greatest, but didn't want to say anything
- E. Verse 35: The answer, and it's all over scripture:

1. To be first, be last
2. And a servant of all

F. Verses 36-37: More on this next week

III. Points

A. Set free to ask questions

1. They could have asked for clarification, but they did not.
2. When we refuse to ask questions, we find ourselves filling in the blanks ourselves.
3. We may never have all our questions answered this side of heaven, but it is right to go to the father and ask.
4. HE CAN HANDLE OUR QUESTIONS
5. There are honest skeptics and dishonest skeptics, if you are a skeptic, be an honest one.
 - a) Ask questions
 - b) Seek answers
 - c) Find truth...receive truth
6. [Mat 7:7-11 ESV] – 7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!
7. This is a beautiful aspect of our relationship with Christ, He wants us to ask, wants us to seek, knowing that we will find HIM
8. What does this look like in your daily walk?
 - a) Read good books that challenge your thinking
 - b) Study the word and look at it with integrity and faithfulness to the rest of the Bible.
 - c) Be satisfied with relationship, look forward to illumination, and serve building confidence.

B. Set free from fear

1. They were afraid to answer Jesus, but He knew all along.
2. Grace is ALIVE today, and so is expectation and accountability.
3. Healthy Fear, Unhealthy fear
 - a) Healthy Fear:
 - (1) Reverence and respect for God
 - (2) [Pro 1:7 ESV] – 7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.
 - b) Unhealthy fear:
 - (1) To live in fear and paralysis, to refuse to grow in trust and faith.
 - (2) He is to be trusted
 - (3) [Isa 41:10 ESV] – 10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
4. Anxiety is the most prevalent manifestation of fear in our world today
 - a) Anxiety is defined as "fear of the future"
 - b) Anxiety is an emotion characterized by apprehension, tension, and a sense of impending danger, catastrophe, or misfortune
 - c) The disciples were worried about Jesus' response, what looming tragedy, and things they didn't understand
5. The fear the disciples had was normal and natural, the faith to overcome will only come by grace through faith.
6. You do not have to be heald by the same fear as the disciples, not we have the SPIRIT OF GOD alive in us to speak truth in the midst of our fear.

7. An oversimplification:
 - a) Fear is the enemy of Faith
 - b) Yes, but growing through our fear makes us strong in faith!
- C. Set free to serve
 1. Service is something all believers are called to do.
 2. Not one of us is exempt
 3. I have attempted to model this before the church for 18 years:
 - a) Do what you can
 - b) Do what is needed
 - c) Do what is important
 - d) Give of your time, talent, and treasure to the body of Christ
 4. The psychology of service:
 - a) Thinking less of yourself makes for healthy contribution
 - b) But, valuing your gifts and ministry also makes for healthy contribution
 - c) We are to serve as we are gifted, and seek to sharpen our gifts and talents to be more effective.
 5. Do not think of yourself too highly, but do not minimize what you have to offer.
 - a) Wherever you are in your faith journey, there is much for you to offer
 - b) Wherever you are in your struggle, there is strength to overcome.
 6. We need servants to step forward and participate in the ministry.
 7. We are a sending church, and as a sending church, we need people to be prepared for to fill the roles vacated and train up for service.
 8. We are all to be
 - a) leading as we are equipped
 - b) Preparing as we are serving
 - c) Serving as we are connecting
 - d) Connecting as we are growing.
 9. The type of leadership and service that is obviously being taught by Christ is that Service will require sacrifice.
 - a) Service and sacrifice cannot be divided in the kingdom
 - b) Service to Christ is rewarding and costly
 - c) How are you living this out in your daily life?
 - (1) Sacrificially investing in others
 - (2) Sacrificially investing with your finances
 - (3) Sacrificially investing in denial of your own wants and desires for service to our Lord.

IV. Close