

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO!
A STUDY OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK BY BRENT AMATO
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LESSON NO.5-CHAPTER 4

I. BEFORE WE GET GOING...

- A. Why the study; why the title?
1. For the seeker-Study Jesus because He is the “Gospel” (Mark 1:1, John 20:31)
 2. For the saint-Study Jesus to either fall in love with Him anew (John 21:15-17) or more deeply (Ephesians 3:14, 17-19)
 3. A “profitable pursuit” (II Timothy 3:16-17)
 4. Life is a race to be run and won (I Corinthians 9:24, Phil. 3:14)
- B. “Go”
1. “The Gospel of Mark has well been called a moving picture of the ministry of Jesus...The Gospel of action...Rapidity of action is its main characteristic...It gives us the works, rather than the words of Jesus.” (Earle)...While only 18 of the 70 parables of Jesus are in the Gospel of Mark, over half of the 35 recorded miracles of Jesus are in Mark’s Gospel. (Mark 16:20)
 2. Key word: “Immediately” (used 41 times; ie 1:10, 12, 18, 20, 21, 28, 29, 42, 43)-For example, “Mark seems to have been impressed by the swiftness with which the Lord’s commands were obeyed. He spoke! It was done!” (Phillips) (ie, 1:42)
 3. “I read in a book where a man called Christ went about doing good. It is very disconcerting to me that I am so easily satisfied with just going about.” (Anonymous)
- C. Some background on the Book
1. Its purpose-Proclaim Christ the Son of God sent to save (Mark 1:1, 11; 3:11; 5:7; 9:7; 12:1-11; 13:32; 14:61-62; 15:39) and the Servant sent to serve (Mark 10:45), whose power was manifested in His service through a series of victorious conflicts
 2. Key themes
 - a. Who?
 - (1). Who Jesus is (Mark 9:7, 15:39)
 - (2). Who we should be (Mark 16:14, 13:33-37)
 - b. What?
 - (1). What Jesus did (Mark 1:35, 6:45-51) and What we should do (Mark 10:21, 12:28-31)
 - (2). What Jesus taught (Mark 4:2-8, 13-20; 11:22-24) and What we should learn (Mark 4:9, 7:14, 16-18a)
 - c. Transformation (Ashey)
 - (1). Believe what Jesus believed (with transformed minds)
 - (2). Live the way Jesus lived (with transformed character)

- (3). Love and care the way Jesus did (with transformed relationships)
- (4). Minister the way Jesus ministered (with transformed service)
- (5). Lead the way Jesus led (with transformed influence)

D. Key (memory?) verses (Psalm 1:2)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____

E. An outline (Wiersbe)

- 1. The presentation of the Servant (1:1-13)
- 2. The Servant's ministry in Galilee (1:14-9:50)
 - a. Period of popularity (1:14-6:29)
 - b. Period of withdrawal (6:30-9:32)
 - c. Period of completion (9:33-50)
- 3. The Servant's journey to Jerusalem (10)
- 4. The Servant's ministry in Jerusalem (11-16)
 - a. Public teaching and controversy (11:1-12:44)
 - b. Private teaching and ministry (13:1-14:31)
 - c. Arrest, trial and crucifixion (14:32-15:47)
 - d. Resurrection and ascension (16)

F. Resources-See Lesson No. 1

G. What's happening in Chapter 4?

- 1. Action!
 - a. "Parable Teaching" (4:1-34)
 - b. "Hush, Be Still!" (4:35-41)
- 2. Behind the action (4:9, 23, 40)
- 3. "Kingdom" (3:24; 4:11, 26, 30)
 - a. John the Baptist (1:1-8)
 - b. Jesus (1:14-15)
 - c. What kind of "kingdom"?
- 4. The context of Jesus' ministry
 - a. During its high point
 - (1). Crowd control (4:1)
 - (2). One tired minister (4:38)
 - b. About halfway through the three years

II. "PARABLE TEACHING" (4:1-34)

A. Natural acoustics! "The still waters of the lake behind me acted as a sounding board. Every syllable was caught up and amplified and heard clearly by the men sitting on the hillside. The whole area turned out to be a natural amphitheatre and the acoustics were remarkable. A microphone was unnecessary. The lake was its own amplifier. The Lord knew all

about the acoustical qualities of the area and took advantage of them to address vast crowds.” (Phillips)

- B. Do you wonder...whether his mother and brothers stayed? (Phillips)
- C. Parables (3:23; 4:10-12, 24-25; Matthew 13:10-17; I Corinthians 2:9-10, 13-14; see Lesson No. 4)
1. “”A system of instruction specifically designed to sift the wheat from the chaff among His hearers.” (Cole)
 2. “Jesus’ enemies rejected His teachings, and the multitudes had become indifferent to spiritual truths. They were actively interested in His miracles, but not in the spiritual application. He now resorts to the use of parables to enlist their interest. The antagonistic attitude of His enemies and the lethargy, indifference and incomprehension of the multitudes necessitated a change to the use of parables so that those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness would be filled and those who wanted spiritual truth could have their eyes opened.” (McGee)
 3. “There is a sort of arithmetical progression in things spiritual; to him that already has something, more will be given, and insight into the meaning of one parable will lead to spiritual perception of the meaning of other such parables. Contrariwise, failure to apprehend will lead us further and further into the fog, until we are completely mystified, groping in darkness...Either we see or we do not see, and to see is the proof that we have received the illumination of the Holy Spirit who alone can open our spiritual eyes, blind by nature, to the truth of God.” (Cole)
 4. “It was part of the genius of the Lord’s teaching that He could use such simple, everyday things to accomplish so profound and complex a goal...He probably had been thinking about these things for thirty years.” (Phillips)
- D. Questions of The Teacher
1. “Are you listening?” or “Are you careful to what you are listening?” (4:3, 9, 23, 24, 33; Revelation 2-3)
 2. “Don’t you understand?” (4:13, 34)
 3. In response to challenging “students” (“The constant peril facing the believing Christian is the temptation to apply the Word of God to others, without applying it first of all to himself.”-Cole)
 4. The link between the two (4:23-25)-Consider the woman at the well (John 4: 9, 11, 19, 29)
- E. The parable of the sower, the seed and the soil (4:3-8, 14-20)
1. “This parable is the key to all the other parables, for it deals with our reception of all of Christ’s teaching.” (Cole) (4:13)
 2. The setting: “In all likelihood, the seated multitude could actually see a plowed field not far from where they sat.” (Phillips)
 3. The issue: “How can the hearing of God’s Word produce different results in different people?” (Cole)

4. The principle: "The operation of the divine word on the heart of men is not automatic, and, while the doctrine is unvarying, the nature of the response is dictated by the nature of the heart that receives it." (Cole)
5. The symbolism-It was what Jesus was doing right at that moment (Cole)
 - a. The sower (I Corinthians 3:5-9)
 - b. The seed (Luke 8:11)
 - c. The soil (Proverbs 4:23)
 - (1). Hard (Hebrews 3:15, 4:7)
 - (2). Shallow (Orpah-Ruth 1:10, 14-15; Demas-Colossians 4:14, II Timothy 4:10)
 - (3). Crowded (Mark 10:17-24)
 - (4). Good (Matthew 8:5-13)
6. Spiritual warfare influencing the soil (Ephesians 2:1-3)
 - a. Satan and the hard soil-Note he is also a man of action (4:15)
 - b. The flesh and the shallow soil
 - c. The world and the crowded soil ("worry, wealth and want"-Phillips)
7. What will God do with these "soils"?
 - a. "Plow" the soil (Jeremiah 4:3, Hosea 10:12)
 - b. "Add" to the soil (John 14:26)
 - c. "Weed" (prune) the soil (John 15:2)
8. Fruitfulness
 - a. Evidence of true salvation (II Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:19-23)
 - b. There are degrees of growth
 - c. What about the possibility of a "hundredfold crop"? (Ephesians 3:20)
9. Inventory time!
10. A teacher's perspective
- F. The parable of the lamp (4:21-25)
 1. The oil lamp's function ("A man who receives the truth must act." McGee)
 2. The oil lamp's need
 3. "At the Great white throne (for sinners) and the judgment seat of Christ (for saints), all hidden things will be exposed." (Phillips)
 4. Footnote: Working with the King James translation ("candle"), note the cost to the candle (Phillips)
- G. Parables about the kingdom of God (4:26-32)
 1. The parable of the seed (Isaiah 55:11, I Corinthians 3:6-7)
 - a. Unique to the Gospel of Mark
 - b. The mystery/miracle of spiritual growth to the natural man-He doesn't get it!

- c. The mystery/miracle of spiritual growth in the spiritual man-He can't fully explain it!
 - d. Consider the "Oreo Cookie": Man's role and God's role
 - e. Growth in phases
 - 2. The parable of the mustard seed
 - a. "How shall we picture...?"-Earthly models of kings (ie, David) and kingdoms (ie, Solomon's) are lacking (Phillips)
 - b. Consider the shock of the disciples when they heard this description of the "kingdom" they envisioned! (Phillips)-another "180 degrees"
 - c. The contrast in size and the potential of growth (as witnessed in Acts-ie, 2:41)
- III. "HUSH, BE STILL!" (4:35-41)
 - A. "Footnotes on the Gospel of Mark"
 - 1. "Such details could only be supplied by an eyewitness, Mark's mentor, Peter." (PBC)
 - 2. Only Mark tells us it was "a miracle of mercy on a larger scale." (Cole)
 - B. A geography lesson: The Sea of Galilee
 - 1. 15 miles long by 7 ½ miles wide, cradled between hills that tower more than 2,000 feet above the shore
 - 2. "Usually calm, it can become treacherous when swept by violent storms that spring up without warning (like life itself)"
 - 3. "The Turf" of some of the disciples
 - 4. A clue to the severity of the storm
 - C. What "that day" had held
 - 1. Facing and healing a fierce demoniac (Matthew 12:22)
 - 2. Dealing with opposition of both His friends (3:20-21) and His foes (Matthew 12:24)
 - 3. Preaching and teaching
 - D. Storms
 - 1. "Storms at sea" happen
 - 2. Sometimes, spiritual warfare is behind the storm (Ephesians 2:2)
 - 3. Sometimes we are sent into these storms ("Jonah ended up in a storm because of his disobedience, but the disciples got into a storm because of their obedience." Wiersbe)
 - 4. The "earthly question" in the storms
 - a. First, at least they knew where to turn
 - b. But what impertinence! (Phillips)
 - c. Sometimes out of panic, ignorance or immaturity, we ignore spiritual clues like 4:35
 - 5. The "spiritual answer" in the storms-Jesus ("What He promises is not His protection *from* the storm but His presence *in* the storm."-Phillips)
 - a. He can be trusted (Galatians 2:20)
 - b. He was with them (John 14:18)

- c. He was at peace (John 14:27)
 - 6. The issue in the storms-Faith in Jesus
 - a. "Faith and fear cancel each other out. If we have fear, we have no faith; if we have faith, we have no fear. Their terror proved their lack of trust." (Phillips)
 - b. "Our greatest problems are within us, not around us." (Wiersbe)
 - c. Jesus puts us into storms of life in order that we might grow closer to Him and that we might know Him better." (McGee)
 - d. Footnote: A step in the right direction-From fear of the storm to fear of Him (Phillips)
 - E. Testing always follows teaching
 - 1. "Hearing God's Word is intended to produce faith (Romans 10:17) and faith must always be tested." (Wiersbe)
 - 2. "And on that day..."
 - 3. From the "seashore" to the "ship at sea in a storm" ("the 'curriculum' of that day"-Wiersbe)
 - F. The ultimate question of life and eternity: "Who then is this...?"
 - 1. "Fully man"-exhausted and asleep (the only biblical record of Jesus sleeping-Phillips)
 - 2. "Fully God": Manifested in the first of four miracles-victories over "The Dreaded D's" (Wiersbe)
 - a. Victory over danger (4:35-41)
 - b. Victory over demons (5:1-20)
 - c. Victory over disease (5:21-34)
 - d. Victory over death (5:35-43)
 - 3. "The Master of every situation and the Conqueror of every enemy" (Wiersbe)-In this case, note the different 'words' to the wind and sea (Phillips)
 - 4. Flashback: "Then God said..." (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26)
 - G. "This same Jesus is willing to come on board our little vessels too. But we must receive Him *as He is*. He is not going to change, but He will change us. That's the way He is...what He is and what we are cannot coexist. One of us will have to change. He is not going to change...(Hebrews 13:8)...We take Him aboard our lives, however, as He is because He wants to make us as He is (I John 1:7, I John 3:2)." (Phillips)
- IV. BEHIND THE ACTION (4:9, 23-24a, 40)
- A. Listening to the Word
 - B. Faith
- V. SO WHAT?
- A. What did Jesus teach that you needed to learn?
 - B. What type of person do you need to become?
 - C. What do you need to do?
- VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY-SEE LESSON NO. 1