

Mark: Every Man's Gospel

Introductory Theme: Insider and Outsider

Text: Mark 4:10-13

The Gospel comes in the form of a real person to meet the real needs of every man.

Introduction:

One of our greatest fears is the fear of being an outsider.

We fear being misunderstood, going unnoticed, under-appreciated, unaccepted and rejected.

We have a whole category of peer pressure and socialization.

Such fears set us up for welcoming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Why?

The insider circle includes those who would have held a seeming "faith-advantage." It includes those groups of people that were "closest" to Jesus: family (3:31-35), his hometown (6:1-6), the religious leaders (11:27-33), and even his disciples (8:14-21). Yet these are the crowds that were without understanding, hardest, and most resistant to Jesus.

On the other hand, those who were not only outside of Jesus' social circle but even outside of the cultural order, those known as "outsiders," e.g., women, Gentiles, and "unclean" Jews," were the first to display spontaneous, simple and deep faith in Jesus.

- Leper (1.40-42)
- Four friends of a paralytic man (2.5)
- Hemorrhaging woman (5.35)
- Syrophenician woman (7.24-30)
- Blind Bartimaeus (10.52)
- Widow with no money (12.41-44)
- Woman who anoints Jesus (14.3-9) – John 12 identifies this woman as Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.
- Above all, the centurion (15.39)

This is remarkable.

I remember Tim Keller say something like this once: The gospel really is about insiders v. outsider. Those who think they are in are out and those who are made to feel outside are in. If you think you're in you're out and if you know that you're out you're in.

It is not surprising then that Mark portrays Jesus as the supreme outsider.

Thesis: The Gospel is not identifiable with any existing social norms or institutions, but is uniquely centered in the person of Jesus Christ.

1:45 – The leper is made clean (even ceremonial clean). He is “in” again. But in order for him to be in, Jesus suffers the reproach of being unable to enter town. Jesus is out. This is a reversal of fortunes.

5:17 – Jesus is no longer welcome in the region after he cast the demons into the swine.

8:23

11:19

12:8

15:20-22 – After giving no response to Pilate’s charges, Jesus is led out to be crucified. Jesus was not as interested in living his life as he was in giving his life.

Jesus fits none of the prevailing social categories, and throughout his ministry he faces misunderstanding, hardness and rejection.

Bear the reproach with him.

Hebrews 13:11-16

Move toward need, not security.