

## AIM

- To show that Jesus came to cure our heart problem – our sin – and to rescue us from judgment and hell.
- To challenge group members to consider the implications of this for their own lives.

## EXPLORE

- As for any questions over last week's follow-up reading and questions:

1. *Read Mark 3:7-5:43 – In this passage, Mark records Jesus doing four specific miracles:*

- a. *calming a storm (Mark 4:35-41)*
- b. *healing a demon-possessed man (Mark 5:1-20)*
- c. *healing a sick woman (Mark 5:25-34)*
- d. *raising a dead girl to life (Mark 5:35-43)*

*What does Jesus show authority over in these events?*

- a. nature
- b. evil spirits
- c. illness
- d. death

*How does this add to what we've already seen about His power and authority in earlier chapters?*

- We have previously seen Jesus' power and authority over evil spirits and illness. In confronting nature and death itself—by calming the storm and raising a dead girl to life—Jesus shows His power and authority in new situations.

2. *When Jairus' daughter died and all hope seemed to be lost (Mark 5:35), what did Jesus ask Jairus to do (v. 36)?*

- He told Jairus not to be afraid, but to have faith.

*Was that a "reasonable" thing to ask?*

- Everyone else had given up, so it was an astonishing thing to ask Jairus to do. It would not have seemed "reasonable"—instead it would have seemed foolish and cruel. But Jesus had already shown His power and authority over nature, evil spirits, and illness—and He knew that He had authority over death, as well. It would seem foolish and cruel coming from anyone else, but based on Jesus' past performance it was reasonable to ask Jairus to trust Him.

3. *Looking at all four events (see question 1), what are the different ways in which people responded to Jesus? Do you see yourself in any of these responses?*

- a. *Mark 4:40-41* – The disciples are afraid.
- b. *Mark 5:15* – The crowd who see Him heal a demon-possessed man are afraid.
- c. *Mark 5:27-28, 34* – The woman has faith.
- d. *Mark 5:42* – Jairus' family is amazed.

• Have a leader read Mark 2:1-12.

- *A huge crowd had gathered to hear Jesus. Why? What kind of reputation had He built up in these early days? (Look at Mark 1:27-28, 32-34, 45 for clues.)* Jesus' teaching and healing had amazed people, and news about Him was spreading.
- *Why do you think the four friends decided to bring the paralyzed man to Jesus?* They must have thought Jesus would be able to heal him.
- *What is the first thing Jesus says to the paralyzed man (Mark 2:5)? Is that surprising? Why or why not?* Jesus says, "Son, your sins are forgiven." That is very surprising, considering that the man was lowered through the roof to be healed, not to have his sins forgiven. But, we have seen (in the last session's DVD) that Jesus believes that our relationship with God is far more important than our physical health.
- *Why were the teachers of the law so annoyed by what Jesus said? (See Mark 2:6-7.)* Jesus is claiming to do what they believe only God can do (Mark 2:7), so they conclude that He is blaspheming.
- *Had they reached the right conclusion?* Yes and no. Yes, only God has the ultimate right and authority to forgive our sin, since all sin is an offense against God (cf. Psalm 51:4...David's sin against Bathsheba was ultimately against God), and all forgiveness must come from Him.  
No, Jesus isn't blaspheming, since as the "Son of Man" (v. 10) He has the authority of God. "Son of Man" was a title Jesus often used about Himself. This title is used in other places in the Bible and refers to God's only chosen King, to whom He gives authority. (It comes from the Old Testament book of Daniel [7:13-14] where the Son of Man came from heaven and was given eternal rule over the whole world, as God's Messiah.)
- *How do we know that Jesus has authority to forgive sin? (See Mark 2:8-12.)* He showed His authority by healing the man instantly and completely.

## **LISTEN (DVD)**

- Mark 2:17 – "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
  - The reason the world is not the way it's supposed to be is because we are not the way we're supposed to be. We all sin—we think, say, and do things that we would be ashamed to have publicized for all people to see; and we have failed to do/say things that we should have done/said.
  - So, what is the problem? Why is there so much to be ashamed of? Jesus tells that "sin" comes "from within," from our "hearts" (Mark 7:20-22). Each of us has a heart problem—this is the source. That is why we often treat each other and our world in a shameful way, and we treat God in that way, too.

- Because God made us, sustains us, and gives us every good thing we enjoy, we should love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). But we never manage to do this—it's not our heartbeat. We give our heart to lots of things, but not to our Creator. We develop relationships with others, but neglect the very relationship for which we were primarily designed. Instead of loving God, we live as if we were God. Yes, we've all rebelled against God, our loving Creator. The Bible calls this "sin."
- Jesus came to cure our heart problem, the problem of our sin. He came for people who realize they're bad, not for people who think they're good (Mark 2:15-17). This is why Mark calls Jesus, "good news."
- But, why did Jesus feel the need to call sinners at all? Because sin is even more serious than we imagine. Jesus lovingly warns us about hell, because He does not want us to go there. Our sin means we're all in danger, whether we realize it or not (Mark 9:43-47).
- The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. Our hearts are desperately in need of a cure, and no matter what we do, as history has shown, we cannot cure it ourselves. But that is why Jesus came. He has exposed what we're really like so that we can respond to Him, while there's still time. We'll never understand why Jesus came until we see the reality of our own hearts, and if we don't see that, we'll go through life without noticing that actually, we are in terrible danger.

## DISCUSS

- *Was there something in particular that stood out or stuck you from the DVD?*
- *Read Mark 9:43-47. Why do you think Jesus used such extreme language when talking about the need to avoid hell?* Jesus knows that our relationship with God is far more important than anything else. Jesus lovingly warns His disciples about hell because He does not want them to go there. Hell means eternal separation from God's blessing. Hell is the place where we face God's judgment for our rebellion against Him. So, we need to take this issue seriously. Hell is so serious that Jesus uses extreme examples to make His point. If we find them ridiculously extreme, it's probably because we underestimate the seriousness of the heart problem that Jesus talks about in Mark 7:14-23.
- *Jesus believed in hell. Should we? Why or why not?* In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, many people either dismiss hell as a myth, or makes jokes about it. But Jesus was very serious about the reality and horror of hell. He lovingly warns us so that we can be rescued from hell, a threat He took so seriously that He was ready to die to save us from it. (We'll be exploring Jesus' death in more detail next week.)
- *Imagine that all of your thoughts, words, and actions were displayed for everyone to see. How would you feel?* Thinking this way, we recognize that we all fall short of God's standards (in fact, most of us don't even meet our own standards). That means that we're all sinners—we all have a heart problem—and that we need to be rescued.

## FOLLOW-UP

Sometime during this next week, I encourage you to read through Mark 6:1-8:29 and answer the 4 questions that are in your notes.