

Message Discussion Guide UN-CLEANLINESS NEXT TO GODLINESS

The Church at Brook Hills,

Dr. Bart Box

April 19, 2009

Mark 4:35-5:43

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Invite a few or all learners to share about the time when they first realized they were sinners and that Jesus offered them salvation. Direct them to discuss how they felt and to describe their excitement about becoming a Christ follower. After learners are finished, ask the following questions:

- **How difficult has it been to keep the same excitement and wonder about your salvation since that first time?**
- **Why is it possible for our amazement at Jesus as the Son of God to dwindle over time?**

Explain that today we will discuss the wonder of salvation.

Option 2

Encourage any married learners to share about their excitement of their wedding day and the thought of finally marrying their spouse. Or, encourage learners to share about one of their favorite Christmas times and why they were excited about that day. Then ask the following questions:

- Have you had to struggle to maintain the excitement of that special day in your day-to-day lives over the years?
- Why does our excitement seem to lessen over time?

Explain that today we will discuss how the wonder of salvation can lessen but deserves our obedient response at all times.

Review the Message . . .

Jesus is able and willing to save His people from their sins

A Danger We Face

If we are not careful, we may neglect the _____ wonder _____ of our salvation

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Discussion...

- Enlist a volunteer to read Isaiah 64:6. How does Isaiah describe the “goodness” of man apart from God? What does Paul have to say about our “goodness?”
- Invite someone to read Romans 10:9-10. How does a person become truly righteous? What is the only “good” in a believer?

Application...

- How can Christians sometimes live as if we have become a “good” person apart from the work of Christ?
- How does that behavior reflect a complacent attitude toward the work of Christ in our lives for our salvation?

Two Realities Concerning this Radical Salvation

- We have a _____ strong _____ Savior
 - Jesus is Lord over...
 - Danger

Discussion...

- Enlist a volunteer to read Mark 4:35-41. How did Jesus demonstrate His identity as the Son of God during this event?
- What did the disciples’ question of Jesus demonstrate about their faith in His authority and His compassion?
- Why did Jesus’ disciples become fearful?
- How did this event change their view of Jesus’ identity?

Application...

- Why do we often question God’s care for us when we encounter trials and difficult times?
- Bart mentioned that people often misinterpret this story to mean that Jesus will always calm the storms of our lives. Why is that a wrong interpretation and application?
- How can viewing Jesus as the One who has authority over danger and nature affect the way that we view His identity? His character? His power? Our circumstances of life?
 - Demons

Discussion...

- Enlist one or two volunteers to read Mark 5:1-20. How does the reaction of the demons reflect their knowledge of Jesus’ identity as the Son of God?

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- How does the demons' reaction compare with the reaction of Jesus' disciples in the boat? How does their behavior reflect more belief than His disciples?
- How does Jesus' action in this passage indicate His supremacy in this world, both spiritual and physical?
- How does His action reflect His compassion?
- If this was the only story we had about Jesus, what does it tell us about His identity?

Application...

- Explain that Scripture clearly indicates that even the demons believe in God and are forced to obey Him. How should this truth affect the way that we deal with spiritual battles in our lives?
- How does the demons' instant bowing to Jesus compare with our response to being in His presence?
 - Disease

Discussion...

- Invite a volunteer to read Mark 5:25-34.
- What does the woman's urgency to touch Jesus' outer clothes reveal about her faith in His identity?
- Jesus told the woman that her faith had healed her. How did she demonstrate faith in Jesus' ability to heal her?
- How does this woman's faith in Jesus and her belief in His identity differ with that of the disciples in the boat?
- With all of the people who were bumping into Jesus, He noticed the faith of one woman. What does this attention indicate about Jesus' personal care and attention?
- What does Jesus' power over this woman's body indicate about His authority?

Application...

- How does our pursuit of Jesus compare with the courage of this woman? How should it compare?
- Jesus has both power over and care for our individual lives. How should this truth affect the way that we see Jesus? See ourselves?
- The lady fell before Jesus' feet in humility when He questioned her. What does our approach to Jesus reveal about our view of His identity? How should we approach Him?
 - Death

Discussion...

- Enlist a volunteer to read Mark 5:21-24, 35-43. How does Jesus demonstrate His authority in these passages?
- Invite learners to compare the faith of Jairus to the faith of the crowd at his house.
- How does Jesus' power over death give hope to His followers?

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Application...

- Jesus is the only person to have been dead for three days and then risen to life by Himself. He conquered death. How should we respond to such power?
- How should Jesus power over death affect the way we approach the death of loved one? Or our own death?
- How should we respond to Jesus when trials do not end in the way that we ask or desire? Why?
 - Our salvation is possible only through Christ

Discussion...

- Looking back over the four separate events in these passages, who could have performed these miracles, other than the Son of God?
- How is Jesus' identity as the true Messiah evident throughout each of these passages?

Application...

- In practice, do we often look to ourselves to save ourselves?
- Why is our reliance upon Christ for salvation often the last place where we end up searching for help?
- We have a compassionate Savior
 - The common threads...
 - The common thread in Mark 5 is ritual impurity
 - The common thread in human history is spiritual impurity
 - The cross's answer...
 - He is clothed in our filth
 - We are clothed in His righteousness

Discussion...

- Explain that the last three events are more than just physical healing but would have evoked images of uncleanness to the original readers. For a Jew, a Gentile's city, tombs, demon possession, pigs, female bleeding, and death were all considered ritually "unclean". Considering these cultural ramifications, how does Jesus' response to each of these situations demonstrate His compassion and care?
- How did Jesus' willingness to become unclean provide a way for each of these people to become clean?
- How did Jesus' willingness to become "unclean" with our sins provide a way for us to become righteous before God?

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Application...

- How can we likewise demonstrate Jesus' compassion and care for others as we go about making disciples?
- Do we have any "unclean" people or places that we refuse to go to because of our prejudices, personal issues, arrogance, etc? Should we regard any place or person unclean if we call ourselves followers of Jesus?

Three Implications of this Radical Salvation

- We should trust Christ fully
- We should worship Christ passionately
- We should proclaim Christ obediently

Discussion...

- Jesus' encounter with His disciples in the boat provided an example of a lack of trust in Jesus. How did the people involved in the last three events model full trust in Christ?
- Looking at the previous passages, how did the people react to Jesus' presence as the deserving Messiah?
- What instructions did Jesus give the Gerasene Demoniac? How would this man's proclamation of Christ help in the spread of the gospel?

Application...

- Why can we trust Christ fully to care for us and as the Way to salvation?
- How can our worship lack passion for the risen Christ, who is deserving of complete worship and devotion?
- Do we have an excitement or a lack of excitement to tell people about how Christ has affected our lives? How do our lives reflect our desire to tell others about the Savior?
- How are we actively making disciples by proclaiming the Messiah to others?
- What are ways our group can reach out to others like Jesus did with His Care and Compassion?