

The Crowds and the 12 Mark 3:7-19
Christ Church Huntingdon Sunday 22nd September 2019

Intro before Reading...

- We return to Mark's gospel. Zooms in on Jesus. So helpful put HIM in spotlight.
 - Where come so far... (up to 3:6 if here 1 year ago started 1:1).
 - J's ministry in Galilee. In fulfilment OT, J comes as Messiah with authority. King. Beginning to face opposition from religious establishment.
 - Where going this section?
 - Some parables, miracles. Exciting stories
 - What impact?
 - Those thinking through- perfect- go for the jugular- Xty about Christ!
 - Xns: Evangelism- why not everyone becomes Christians. How to cope when your prayers don't seem to be answered. What true discipleship looks like.
 - For both why Jesus is such an awesome Lord and Saviour.
 - So do pray and do read on. Few copies.
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V14,15

- **Ed Sheeran on Desert Island [Discs](#)** Kirsty Young.
 - Famous person gets asked about their lives and favourite music.
 - Kirsty Young Asked how deal with fame and crowds.
 - Said *"I don't think I did deal with it very well. Playing at venues like Wembley in front of 87,000 people, I will admit I did lose myself for a bit. You can't really not go mental in that setting"*.
 - How would you cope with the crowds? Would you be one person in front of the crowds and one person with a small group of friends?
 - How you deal with those settings would tell us a lot about you.
- **Well the passage just read focuses on Jesus Christ in both settings.**
- **Crowds** and smaller group **12 Disciples**. Both show us a lot about Jesus.
 - **Crowds show us Jesus' attraction.**
 - **12 show us Jesus' agenda.**
 - Let's look at those 2, and draw out a lesson for ours

1) The Crowds show us Jesus' Attraction

A) HUGE CROWDS FLOCK TO JESUS.

- Seen J impact on people so far in book.
 - 1:33. Whole town.
 - 1:37 everyone is looking for you.
 - 2:45 after leper.
 - 2:2 such large numbers
 - 2:13 a crowd at the lake.
- Large crowd from Galilee v7- area around Lake where seen J in action.
- But now growing.
 - Look at **MAP**- pretty much all points of compass, and distance!
 - See what Mark telling us- J influence is widespread.

- Huge crowds are flocking to Jesus.
- Pause on this.
 - Attractiveness of Jesus.
 - ☹ Some bad experiences of church, but focus on Christ.
 - And if reaching out to friend.
 - Want to talk about suffering.
 - Being moral, and how you can be moral without a faith
 - But bring it back to Jesus! What do you think of him.
 - OK bad experiences of Christians, I'm sorry. But JESUS?!
- People flocking to him.
 - Magnetic attraction.
 - In fact so much v9. Crowding him could be "afflicting him" or "crushing him"
- Raises question how do we evaluate crowds.
 - To be commended- got it right- flock to Jesus.
 - But question mark- why? Have they really understood him properly.
- Reason for flocking clear: v10 Healing.
- Have they really grasped who he is.
- It seems the demons or impure spirits have understood his identity.
 - Strangely as often in Mark, told to keep secret.
 - Why is that? So strange. Surely J wants ppl to know who he is.
 - But half knowledge is dangerous.
 - ▲ Analogy of building site. Who can operate crane.
 - Careful: half wrong dangerous. Ppl flocking. What kind of Messiah.
- Well it will be ch8 before Peter makes his famous confession that Jesus is the Christ.
 - And even then he'll get it horribly wrong what sort of Christ Jesus is.
 - Half wrong dangerous- get behind me Satan.
 - And it's chapter 15 before the Centurion makes his famous declaration that Jesus is "the Son of God".
 - The demons get it, though they don't submit to him.
 - The crowds don't seem to yet.
- So there's a positive and a negative here.
- The attraction of Jesus, but **B) DESPITE THEM NOT FULLY GETTING IT!!**
 - We shouldn't be too harsh on the crowds, because we too so often get Jesus wrong.
 - Exactly £1.60 in the car for my car park, Praise the Lord. He does care for the details of our lives.
 - But short step to Jesus a cosmic Butler who sorts out my preferences, and brings the drinks I need and puts on the music I want.
 - And if I don't get my way, I start to complain
- Jesus Christ is LORD. He's the boss, we are the servants.
- We need to make sure we grasp deeply who he is.
- The King. And what kind of King.
 - A King who does far more than solve my parking space crisis.
 - He solves my sin crisis, and he died for me it was so important.

2) The Twelve show us Jesus' agenda.

If we've seen people's agenda for Jesus, we now see Jesus' agenda for people.

- He steps away from the crowds.
 - ➡ Perhaps another lesson for us is not to be fixated with numbers.
 - As the church grows in number we give thanks.
 - But we must also pray that it grows in depth.
- Focuses on his agenda.
- The people he chooses. "those he wanted". V13
 - Incidentally not chosen for anything in them, as we'll see.
 - But his free & sovereign choice.
 - Up the mountain- like Mount Sinai where God gathered his first people?
- V14 He appointed twelve. Some versions "appointed twelve which he named apostles".
 - These are special people with a special role- eyewitnesses who will pass on the message from the first generation.
- But more important thing
 - The twelve.
 - Important. In fact number repeated 15 times in Mark. Twice here.
 - There's something important there.
 - 12 tribes.
 - Joseph and his brothers. Tribes of Israel
 - Jesus is gathering a new community. **A) JESUS GATHERS A NEW PEOPLE.**
 - Already seeing old people of God are rejecting him.
 - He's gathering a new people.
- Look carefully v14. To be with him, and send out. **B) ON A MISSION.**
 - We can see those two in the coming chapters.
 - With Jesus hearing parables, and sometimes inside explanations.
 - Sent out ch 6 to make J known.
 - Lesson there for us: need to be with him to be of use in his service. We need to spend time with him.
 - His priority was to preach- hence the boat (v9), and it's his priority for us too (9 easiest words- would you like to come to church with me- Guest service coming up 13/10).
 - And driving out demons.
 - Preaching and driving out of evil go hand in hand.
 - "the preaching results in and is authenticated by people being delivered of demons".
 - As thought last week, expect demonic resistance whenever the gospel goes out.
 - Could be full on spiritual warfare
 - Could be (as one pastor friend in Brussels- whenever evangelistic event, one of his kids gets ill).
- But, there was a "despite" point 1, and despite here point 2
 - **C) DESPITE THEM BEING A MOTLEY CREW.**
 - Do you know what I mean? Bunch of misfits.
 - Quite an interesting bunch.
 - List Headed by someone who denied him

- List ends with one who betrays him
- Extraordinary mix of people:
 - Simon Zealot- wanting Romans out.
 - Matthew a customs official siding with Romans
- Same today- friend on camp BXL told me people in church extreme polar opposites politically. Far right and far left in same church get on!
- That's the beauty of the gospel
- But it's also the nature of the church.
 - Full of sinners.
 - Pretty mixed bunch.
 - Some almost unheard of again in Scripture.
- Some great names who wrote NT. Peter, John, James.
 - Guys who often got it wrong.
 - James & John, Sons of Thunder.
 - "Lord shall we call down fire from heaven on these towns"? No!
 - Peter -the Rock?
 - After he learned the hard way that he wasn't that he was as solid as water, and let Jesus down 3 times.

I think there's a note of grace here for us. Jesus calls a motley crew to be his followers, and even his messengers.

Ever feel you don't quite belong in church? You're just the person!

Final lesson...

Keep coming to him as your King.

People's agenda for Jesus- healer.

Jesus' agenda for people- gathering

Come to him as KING. That's first move in Christian life. It's ongoing move- keep coming back.

Let's not have him as cosmic butler.

Have you seen who is- Son of God!

Can never be just your religion, your hobby, "that's fine for you!"

He's LORD! Son of God. Look at Psalm 2, the one who's going to crush nations!

Repent and turn to him.

Don't just flock because he meets your surface needs.

Look deeper and see he welcomes sinners.