

Day 22 (Tuesday 25th September)**Read Mark Chapter 5 verses 1 to 13**

Jesus heals the Gerasene Demoniac

To the man in the tombs, demon possession was all too real. His demons totally controlled him in an utterly wretched condition. Jesus though has come through a storm to liberate the man and give him his life back. As far as Satan and his demons are concerned, people are of no more worth than pigs. One is as good to possess as the other, but when the pigs are taken over they kill themselves. To Christ we each are of infinite value and He is able to liberate us from whatever controls us.

Questions to think about

1. In what ways does Satan attempt to take over people's lives today?
2. Is there anything that Jesus cannot deliver us from?
3. What should be our reaction to anything like Ouija boards and mediums that could expose us to evil spirits?

A prayer you may wish to say

Father of all, have mercy we pray on all in the power of forces beyond their control. Give us your compassion for all people. Deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever, amen.

Day 23 (Wednesday 26th September)**Read Mark Chapter 5 verses 14 to 20**

The man whom Jesus delivered was completely changed. He sat rather than charged around, was clothed rather than naked and was now in his right mind. His reaction was to want to stay with Jesus. Christ told him however to go home and tell people how much the Lord had done for him. The people from the area just asked Jesus to leave – and He did.

Questions to think about

1. What might the people of the area have been afraid of? (Verse 15)
2. What would we say if asked "What has God done for you?"
3. Christ left when asked to. What are the implications of that for us as we seek to tell others the good news about Him?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord thank you for all you have done in our lives. Thank you that you have delivered us from the powers of evil and sin and that we can now live for you. Please help us as we seek to show and tell others what you have done, so that they too might know your power in their lives. Amen.

Day 24 (Thursday 27th September)**Read Mark Chapter 5 verses 21 to 34**

A Woman healed

The woman was understandably fearful. As a woman, contemporary society looked down on her. Quite apart from how her illness made her feel, society saw her as unclean and wouldn't want to be near her. On top of all this, having spent all she had, she was still only getting worse. Somehow, she got near to Jesus and with a tiny faith that others might dismiss almost as superstition, reached out to Him. The crowds just wanted to see miracles. She in desperation wanted to be healed. Jesus used the faith she had and gave her status and peace as well as healing.

Questions to think about

1. Are we ever just one in a crowd to Jesus?
2. What did it say about the disciples' faith if they said "how can you say 'who touched me?'"
3. The first thing Jesus said to the woman was "Daughter". What does that indicate?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord thank you that with you no one need be an outcast or feel rejected and without hope. Please take the little faith that we have and make it greater as we increasingly trust in your power and love. Amen.

Day 25 (Friday 28th September)**Read Mark Chapter 5 verses 35 to 43**

A Girl Restored to Life

As with the woman in yesterday's reading, it was difficult for Jairus to come to Jesus. He was an important man in society. Other religious leaders were speaking against Jesus. So desperate was he however that he fell at Christ's feet and begged (verses 22,23). His faith was severely tested. Not only did he have to wait while Jesus healed someone else but then he was told his daughter had died. When Jesus said "only believe" (v 36) it had the sense of 'keep on believing'. Finally, Jairus arrived home to see the mourners had arrived.

Questions to think about

1. People laughed when Jesus said the child was not dead but sleeping. What happened to those people (verse 40)?
2. After the resurrection, Christians were described as 'falling asleep' rather than 'dying' when they died. Why do you think that was?
3. What sort of experiences can make our faith grow?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord, help us when our faith is tested. Help us through difficult situations and use them to increase our faith rather than weaken it. Thank you that you really are the Lord with power even over death itself. Amen.

Day 26 (Saturday 29th September)**Read Mark Chapter 6 verses 1 to 6**

The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

People in Nazareth were astounded by Christ's wisdom and works but in their eyes, He was just the local man they had grown up with. Calling Him the son of Mary was actually insulting as men were normally referred to as the son of their father. Because of their unbelief they saw few deeds of power done there.

Questions to think about

1. It is said 'familiarity breeds contempt' but that doesn't have to be the case. How can we avoid it in our relationship with Jesus?
2. Can you think of a time when you have experienced rejection? What effect did it have on you?
3. What do verses 5 and 6 teach us about who God chooses to work with?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord, forgive us for our unbelief. Forgive us for the times when we have forgotten just who you really are. Please use us to show others what an amazing, almighty, God you are. Amen.

Day 27 (Sunday 30th September)**Read Mark Chapter 6 verses 7 to 13**

The Mission of the Twelve

Jesus starts to train his disciples now to go out in twos as His representatives. They were told to travel light but not to beg (carry a begging bag). They were to accept hospitality where it was offered (as was customary in that culture) and move on if people refused to listen to them. They were to preach repentance and given authority to carry on Christ's mighty works.

Questions to think about

1. The disciples went out in twos. Every Sunday we leave church in the name of Christ to love and to serve. How might contact with another Christian during the week help us?
2. How would going with just what they stood up in help the disciples' faith?
3. The disciples' mission involved them in speaking and doing. Is it ok for us to just do one of those things?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord, thank you that you have commissioned us as your representatives on this earth. Please fill us with your love as we seek to show and tell others about you. Please help us to take the opportunities we have and trust you to give us the words to say.

Day 28 (Monday 1st October)

Read Mark Chapter 6 verses 14 to 29

The Death of John the Baptist

This Herod is Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, the King when Jesus was born. He had divorced his first wife so that he could marry Herodias, the wife of his half-brother. He liked to be called a King – though he only ‘ruled’ in a quarter of a country governed by the Romans. Later, after hearing Him himself, Pilate would send Jesus to Herod for trial (Luke 23. 6-12) but Jesus said nothing to him. In AD39 Herod was denounced by his nephew and sent into exile by the Emperor.

Questions to think about

1. Many people say Jesus was just a great teacher or prophet. What would you say to those people?
2. Herod knew John the Baptist was “a righteous and holy man” but still had him killed. Doing what he wanted and not losing face were more important to him. What are the reasons why we sometimes do wrong things?
3. Jesus had nothing more to say to Herod at his trial. What happens when we repeatedly ignore God speaking to us?

A prayer you may wish to say

Lord, I’m sorry for the wrong things that I have done. Help me to act on what you say to me in your word and do the right things now. Thank you that you are much more than just a great prophet. Thank you that you have the authority to forgive our sins.