

Bible Study 39 Jesus' Mission

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Read Mark 1:9-45.

After Jesus' baptism and temptation, He began His public *on mission* ministry. List the various projects He undertook in the first chapter of Mark's account:

Verses 16-20: _____ Verses 29-31: _____

Verses 21-22: _____ Verses 35-39: _____

Verses 23-28: _____ Verses 40-45: _____

What was the usual result of His miracles? (vv. 28,33,37) _____

Why did Jesus warn people He healed not to tell anyone? (vv. 25,34,43-45) _____

Jesus' mission was to preach the kingdom of God and call people to repentance from sin (v. 38). His mission was to call out disciples to be trained as fishers of men (v. 17). He came to planet Earth as the Lamb of God who, by His death, became the Way to be reconciled to God.

So, what about all Jesus' miracles of healing, casting out demons, turning water to wine, feeding thousands of people and resurrecting dead people? Those actions caused a lot of attention and made Him extremely popular—for a while. Usually, when Jesus met the physical needs of one individual, soon floods of people overwhelmed Him and His disciples so much that they didn't even have time to eat (Mark

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3:20). Jesus' concern about the situation was that His healing, feeding and exorcisms were often keeping Him from His real mission (reconciliation). Seventeen times Jesus told those He healed not to tell anybody who had healed them. His popularity finally became such a problem, that, after feeding the 5,000 in John 6, the crowds tried to force Him to become their king (v. 15). But that was not His mission. Jesus refused to meet their physical needs anymore, saying, "*The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing*" (John 6:63, NIV).

Then why did Jesus get into "social ministry" in the first place? And, as *on mission* Christians, should we? Those are two important questions. First, examine Jesus' motivation for doing miracles. Mark's account records three reasons:

1. Mark 1:40-41 and 8:2-3: _____

2. Mark 2:3-5; 5:34; 9:21-24 and 10:51-52: _____

3. Mark 4:38-41; 5:22-24; 7:25-30, 32-36 and 8:22-26: _____

Jesus clearly did not help people to gain public visibility, improve His image, gather a crowd or win popular votes or political power. *Should we?* Jesus was all the power of God walking around in a human body. As the God of love who left heaven to die for His creation, it was not easy for Jesus to ignore someone who was personally trusting and begging Him for help—although He understood that fed people get hungry again, cured people get other diseases and resurrected folks eventually die again. Jesus cared. *And so should we.* He never publicized His healing services, counted His “help projects” or set goals to minister to more people next week than last week. *Should we?*

On the other hand, Jesus often used His miracles as object lessons and opportunities to fulfill His real mission. For example, when He changed water to wine, He revealed Himself selectively and personally to His disciples, and they “put their faith in him” (*John 2:11, NIV*). The miracle illustrated His power to not only change dirty wash pots into fountains of fine-grade wedding wine, but also to re-create the hearts of sinful men into living springs and rivers of righteousness. John’s account helps us understand Jesus’ message in His miracles.

Explain the following:

John 6:26-58: _____

John 9:35-41: _____

John 11:25-26: _____

What about us? Jesus clearly expects us to “go about doing good” and to help those in need. List five human needs He expects us to be involved in meeting (*Matthew 25:34-40*).

These ministries to needy people, however, are not our mission. Our mission is to join Him in His mission. Jesus commissioned His followers to “go and make disciples of all nations” (*Matthew 28:19-20, NIV*). Paul wrote that our ministry is to deliver the message of reconciliation.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 and John 17:25-26.

State Jesus’ mission in six words or less: _____