

APRIL 26, 2020 • DAVID SMITH

Clarity in Confusion

When we think about the gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – Mark isn't usually the first place we go. Yet Mark, listening to the eyewitness accounts of Peter, wrote a fast-paced gospel sharing the miraculous things Jesus did, including His death and Resurrection, to convince his Roman readers that Jesus is the Son of God. Let's not overlook what we can learn about our Savior in the overlooked gospel.



INTRODUCTION

Today's current COVID-19 crisis has many asking "why?" Uncertainty, pain, and loneliness are common emotions. In this time of confusion, the gospel of Mark provides a path to clarity in the midst of confusion. As David pointed out today, "Clarity is found in knowing our Kingdom actions!"

STARTER QUESTION

It is often said we are "creatures of habit." We heard today how the Pharisees created rituals (or habits) in an effort to find favor with God. Before diving into the more serious side of this question, what fun or interesting rituals have you created in your life or the life of your family? Share one or two with the group (or if alone, jot down a couple in your journal).

INTO THE WORD

The gospel of Mark provides us specific "Kingdom Actions" from the life and words of Jesus we can turn to in times of confusion. Let's take a look at the Word to discover how we may employ these as citizens of the Kingdom of God.

What do you think God's purpose is by giving us fasting and the Sabbath? Read Psalm 51:10 and 2 Peter 1:3-10 (emphasis on verse 10). When was the last time you took time to examine your heart? Do these disciplines come naturally? If able, share with the group about someone that modeled these things well in your life?

Obedience not rituals honor God. Rituals remind us to be obedient. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 and Matthew 28:19. Discuss how the acts of grace given by the Father in the rituals of communion and baptism can lead us to obedience and honoring Him.

Jesus gave some of his disciples new names because His focus wasn't on their issues, but who they were becoming. Read Philippians 1:6 and Romans 8:29,30. What are some attitudes, actions, or thoughts that God has pruned from your life to make you more like Him? How do these verses indicate that you are becoming someone different in your spiritual life?

APPLICATION

What does God typically use in your life to remind you of His goodness and sovereignty?

Loving people is a measurement of your love for God. Read Galatians 5:14 and 1 John 4:8. How might we show God's love to someone during this unprecedented time?

Kingdom actions, not busyness, provide us with the proper framework to respond to crisis. By taking time away to spend more time with God, we can find peace in the midst of life's storms. What kingdom actions can your family implement during this time of quarantine that will help all of you grow closer to God?

PRAYER

The Holy Spirit is our power, our authority, and power of God (Luke 21:12-15 and 2 Timothy 1:7). As a group or individually, take a brief time in prayer specifically asking how God would use us during this time of crisis to further His Kingdom through our Kingdom actions.