

WEEK THREE
January 27-31

Prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Day 1: Mark 4:30-41

To what does Jesus compare the kingdom of God?

A mustard seed.

In what way does the kingdom of God behave like a mustard seed?

It is the smallest seed in the garden, yet it grows and becomes the largest of the garden plants so that even the birds can perch in its shade.

What do you find strange about Jesus behavior in the boat during the storm?

Jesus was sleeping while the boat was being tossed around in the storm.

Agree/Disagree – The disciples in the boat trusted in Jesus to take care of them.

On the one hand, agree: They turned to Jesus in their need. On the other hand, disagree: They were exasperated and even cried out, “Don’t you care if we drown?” So they had faith, but their faith was weak.

How powerful were Jesus’ words to the wind/water?

Jesus spoke two words and that was all that was necessary to change the weather.

They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” How would you answer their question?

This is Christ the Son of the eternal God. He has all power.

Day 2: Mark 5:1-20

Give examples of the supernatural power that the demon-possessed man had.

He could not be bound because he was super powerful. He tore chains apart. He cut himself with stones.

What things in this account make it evident that Jesus was even more powerful than the demons?

The demon possessed man fell on his knees before Jesus and begged Him not to torture them. Jesus also ordered the demons to come out of the man.

In the Roman army of Jesus’ day, a “legion” was a unit of 3,000 to 6,000 men. “Legion” can also simply indicate a vast multitude.

Did the demons get any better circumstance for themselves by going into the herd of pigs?

No, they ran off a cliff.

Compare the reaction of the pig herders to the reaction of the man who had been healed. Why do you think this is? The man experience personal salvation from the demons. The herders had probably already learned to be afraid of the demon possessed man. Here was someone more powerful than the demons listened to. That made Jesus more scary to the people who did not know Him.

Day 3: Mark 5:21-43

What was Jesus reaction to Jairus’ plea? What does this tell you about your Savior?

Jesus immediately went with him –no discussion, no hesitation, no argument. Our Savior is eager to help us and responds to our prayers immediately.

Why was the woman trembling to tell Jesus what happened? What do you think she expected Jesus to say to her? Why do you think Jesus wanted her to identify herself? She thought perhaps Jesus would be angry because she had snuck up on Him. She may have thought Jesus would say, “How dare you!” But Jesus really wanted her to be comforted and to know that she didn’t need to be afraid of seeking help from Him.

When Jesus arrived at Jairus’ house, what made people laugh at Jesus?

Jesus had said the child is not dead but asleep.

“Little girl, I say to you, get up!” What a tender moment! Can you think of a specific event when God called you by name? (And raised you up from spiritual death)

Your Baptism.

Day 4: Mark 6:1-13

List reasons why the people in Jesus’ hometown had trouble accepting that He was their Savior?

They knew He had been a carpenter. They knew His mother and family. They had seen Him grow up.

(Not unlike we might have less respect for someone in our family than for a stranger.)

Why did Jesus tell the Twelve not to take provisions for their missionary journey?

God would provide for them.

What special powers did Jesus give to the Twelve to help their preaching?

The drove out demons and healed sick people.

True/False – If pastors today could do miracles, many more people would believe in Jesus.

False. While the ability to do miracles might get people’s attention, the only thing that creates faith in Jesus is the Word.

Day 5: Mark 6:14-29

There is a lot of confusion today about Jesus, especially when people don’t rely on the Bible to make it clear. Were people more clear in Jesus’ day as to who He was?

No.

Jesus once said about John the Baptist: “Among those born of women there is no one greater than John.”

Did the way John died seem appropriate for someone regarded so highly by God?

No. Being beheaded at the whim of an adulteress was a terrible and shameful way to die.

Why do you think John was hated so much by Herodias? Does the world still react this way?

He pointed out her sin and in her conscience she knew he was right. She didn’t like being called a sinner.

It has been said, “The way John died will result in an even greater resurrection.” In what sense is this true?

By being beheaded, John’s body was not preserved but destroyed. In the Resurrection his whole body will be restored and glorified. What a stark contrast to the condition of his dead body.

Blessing: The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. (Ps 121:8)

Final Thoughts: In this past week’s readings we see Jesus personal, one-on-one care for individuals and his quick response to help them. We also see Jesus’ purposeful work to train his disciples and bring the Gospel to the world at large.