

Bible Study Notes

A companion to the Rooted Podcasts available on YouTube.

How to use this:

This is intended to be used flexibly- either in a group, or individually.

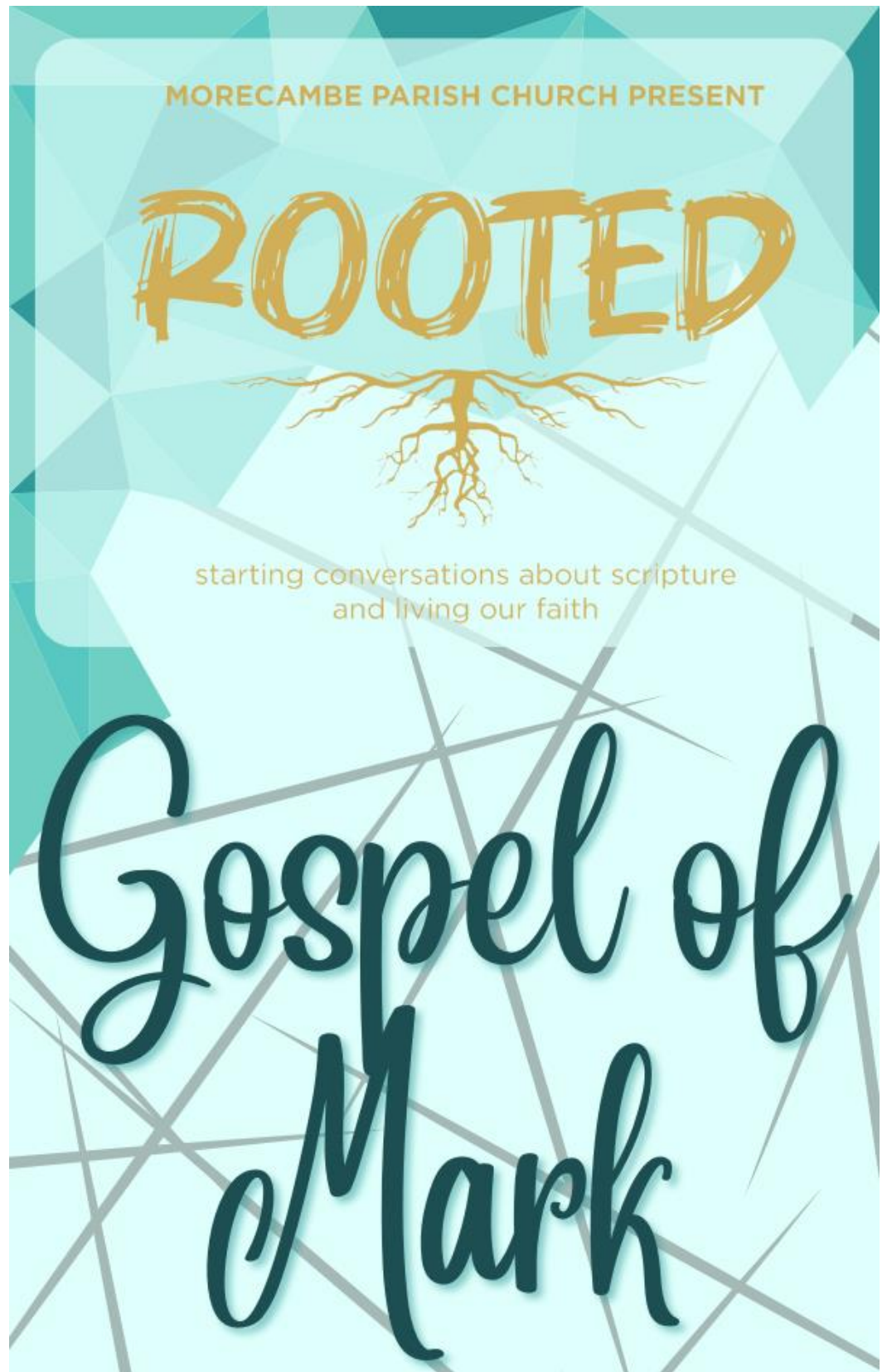
Why not invite a friend to go through this together? You could use a notebook to collect your thoughts.

These questions, along with the Podcast video, are meant to lead us into further thought or discussion.

You can work through all the questions, or just pick one or two that interest you.



▶ Scan with phone camera



Bible Study Notes

Session: 9. What is your name?

Looking at: Mark Chapter 5 verses 1-43

Jesus has the power to
heal and restore us.

Before you start...

If you are doing this with others you could light a candle as a point of focus, reminding everyone of God's presence with us as we look more closely at his word.



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Each of the three encounters with Jesus in today's passage starts with a great deal of noise and confusion – the cries of the afflicted man, the crowd surrounding the bleeding woman, and the commotion of mourners around the dead girl. After each encounter with Jesus, there is a sense of peace and restoration – perhaps reminding us of the storm in Chapter 4.

The Quaker writer John Greenleaf Whittier may well have had this Chapter in mind when he penned the hymn 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind,' with its line "reclothe us in our rightful mind," recalling Mark 5:15.

Quakers value silence and stillness as the way to know God's peace and hear the promptings of the Spirit.

How do you use silence in your own prayer life?

A prayer for beginning:

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.
Psalm 119:105

Heavenly Father,
As we study your bible help us to come to you with all humility, praise, and thanksgiving.
We ask for your guidance and your Holy Spirit so that we may never let an opportunity to grow in you pass us by.
Also, we ask that you fill our hearts with love for one another as you have intended.
We pray in the mighty name of Jesus,
Amen.

Introduction to the passage

In Chapter 5, Jesus meets three people in need of his help – a man possessed by demons, a leader whose daughter is dying and a woman with a chronic condition. They hold very different places in their society, but all are united by their utter need of healing and deliverance.

What stands out to you in these passages?

vv.1-20 *The Gadarene Dementiac*

v.2 The moment Jesus gets off the boat, he is met by the man with the impure spirits. Do you think Mark means us to draw any links between this man and the storm the disciples have just experienced?

v.9 In ancient cultures, to know the name of someone or something was to have power over them. Jesus forces the spirits to tell him their name, and so shows that he is in authority. How could Jesus help you to name and face the influences or problems which prevent you from living life to the full?

v.9 "Legion" – a Roman legion at this time comprised about 5,000 soldiers. Why do you think the demon (or demons) shares its name with the occupying army?



Keith points out that all three of these healings are for people who might be considered outcasts: a gentile man who has been excluded from his community, a woman who was considered unclean, and a religious leader who put his standing on the line by coming to Jesus. Who are the people who are on the margins in our society? Where might we find Jesus amongst them?

Keith says, "It feels like Christianity should be 24/7, and for a lot of people Christianity's about going to church on a Sunday and perhaps one or two other things." How do we integrate our faith with our daily life?

Keith points out that Jesus tells the healed man, 'Stay where you are; be with your own people; tell them.' Those words resonated with Keith in his own calling. What do they say to you?

v.13 The fate of the pigs is troubling – why would Jesus allow 2,000 innocent animals to die, and people's livelihoods to be destroyed? Biblical commentators have suggested that Jesus thought the pigs were unclean and didn't care about them; that the demons drove the pigs mad; or even that the pigs sacrificed themselves to kill the demons. What do you think?

vv. 21-24 *The parent's plea*

v.21 "pressed around him" – the word Mark uses for the crowd is like a cattle crush, and yet in v.22 Jairus is able to get straight to Jesus. What might that suggest about Jairus's standing in the community – or his desperation?

vv. 25-34 *The faithful woman*

v.28 "If I could just touch his cloak..." Why do you think the woman doesn't want to approach Jesus and talk to him? Is she trying not to distract him from attending to the sick child? Does she think Jesus's cloak contains some kind of magic power? Does she consider herself unworthy? Is she embarrassed by her condition, or disheartened by years of unsuccessful medical treatments? Have there been times in your life when you have been reluctant or scared to bring your concerns to Jesus?

vv. 35-43 *A daughter restored to life*

By the time Jesus gets to Jairus's house, it looks as though he is too late and the child has died. Do you have experiences of prayers which seemed to go unanswered, or times when God appeared to have let you down? Looking back, how do you view them now?

Chris notes that physical touch is important in these stories of healing, underlining the importance of presence. Keith links this to the Sanctuary and Pantry; people feel that God is there because of the presence of people who share God's love and healing.

Psalm 139:7-10

*Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens,
you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths,
you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.*

Something to listen to:

https://youtu.be/J6sq-JJ_3H8?si=G1rE3leEiO81rDIv

*Dear Lord and Father of mankind (Repton)
Words: John Greenleaf Whittier
Music: C. Hubert H. Parry
(sung by Katherine Jenkins)*

vv.21-43 X marks the spot!

In this chapter, the story of the faithful woman is sandwiched between two halves of the story about Jairus's daughter. This is a technique Mark uses a lot in his gospel ([here's a list](#) for the super-keen). It's known as Chiasmus, from the Greek letter Chi (written X). Like the letter shape, a Chiasmus points from both sides into the centre: ><

The Greek letter Chi was also used by early Christians as a shorthand for Christ, as in the symbol Chi-Rho.



So these stories remind us that Jesus was right in the centre of these people's lives, healing and restoration. How does your life point people towards Jesus?

Conclusion

Jesus brought healing and restoration to the people he met by being fully present with them in their struggles. Although we may not always feel our prayers are answered immediately, we can trust that Jesus is always with us. He knows the forces that threaten to overwhelm us, and he has power to defeat them and bring us into fullness of life.

Suggestions for prayer:

Spend some time in silence and stillness, and allow yourself to experience the presence of Jesus in your life.

Pray for those who are excluded from society, or who feel abandoned or let down by God.

Pray for the work of the Sanctuary and Pantry.