

Amington 10.30am HC

Series on Mark. Mark 1:14-34

**Jesus is the teaching, healing, wandering
rabbi.17.9.2017.**

We continue our study of the Gospel attributed to Mark.

This passage is a wonderful example of the rate at which Mark moves.



In these twenty or so verses Jesus travels about 150 miles.

That alone would have taken about a week without stops.

That does not include his forty days holiday in the wilderness.

Not only did Jesus travel the distance but Mark recorded a dozen or so events that Jesus was involved in.

John had been arrested and put to death.

Mark refers to that in Chapter 6.

Jesus continued John's message of re-thinking life and believing in the Good News.

A change of pace.



Jesus was having a stroll by the Sea of Galilee and he met Simon, Andrew, James and John working as fishermen.

He called to them and said, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

What would they have thought?

I think that they would have thought that they were being called into military action.

So many times in the Old Testament fishing is associated with fighting.

In Ezekiel 29 and 38; Amos 4 fishing is used as an analogy for killing enemies.

Remember, the Messiah was one who would rescue Israel from the Romans and return it to the Jews.

Perhaps Jesus was being ambiguous, deliberately.

Not a very spectacular story is it?

Four, very ordinary people recruited.

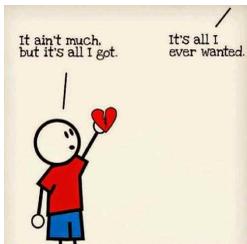


Surely there was a batman, superman or superwoman around to recruit.

Somebody spectacular.

Spectacular would have ruled most of us out.

If Jesus is recruiting ordinary people then He's inviting all of us to have a go.



Many of us feel we haven't the gifts required.

Many of us hang back because we're afraid of commitment, failure of looking silly.

Jesus has the habit of tapping us on the shoulder and saying "Come and have a go!"

JESUS DOESN'T CARE WHETHER WE'RE HAVES OR HAVE-NOTS; HIS REQUIREMENT IS THAT WE ARE WILLING TO SAY "YES" AND FOLLOW HIM.

Strange as it may seem,
Establishing God's Kingdom has something to do with us.



It has something to do with you

I could spend the whole of this morning on this part of the reading but I do want to move on.



Jesus and his new disciples went to Capernaum and on the Saturday they went to the synagogue.

We read that Jesus taught.

I wonder what he taught.

Mark didn't seem interested.

Nor did he record what it was that struck his hearers as authoritative.



It may have been that Jesus was non-judgemental whereas the scribes would probably have been telling people what they should and should not be doing,

The Greek word that Mark uses is *exousia* which suggests speaking powerfully.

The Markan Sandwich



Stories in Mark's Gospel are sandwiches!

One thing I like about Mark is his use of a sandwich technique.

He starts a topic and then either illustrates it with a story or an example and then goes back to His original topic.

Here is a good example.

His topic was authority and teaching which he began and ended with.

In the middle He sandwiched the story about the unclean spirit.

Mark wrote a lot about demons and I am not going to bother about the existence or otherwise of demons as a cause of illness.

But the story gives an illustration of Jesus' authority.



His response to the challenging comments about Jesus being a nobody from Nazareth was pretty dismissive.

“Just shut up and clear off.”

However you interpret the story it certainly demonstrated Jesus' authority.

Which is the moment that Mark returns to his theme.

He returns to the real world and reports that the people were amazed and started to discuss what had happened and recognising that this was something new.



Here was somebody teaching with power and authority.



Not just repeating what the rule book said regardless of whether it made sense.

A new teaching.

Nothing much was happening in the synagogue in Capernaum until Jesus showed up.

What was the result?



Word spread like wildfire.

The grapevine was even better than that here in Amington.

Ok, Jesus finished in the Synagogue and the five of them trotted over to Simon's house, presumably for some food and a drink.

Simon's mother-in-law had a fever. Fevers, in those days, were serious.

You either got better or you fell off the perch.

All you could do was to sit it out and see what happened.

Jesus was told about her situation and He made her better.



No magical incantations.

No magic wands.

No declaring her sin was the problem.

He simply took her by the hand and lifted her up.

Pure love.

I suppose it might have been self-preservation.

Four men, not one of them able to make a cup of tea.

No, I think we're getting a glimpse of the true nature of Jesus.

His love for all,

Even mothers in Law.

It's getting late.

Not here.

In Capernaum.

More and more people arrived at the house including the sick.

More healings took place.

I want to return to the start of the story.

The calling of the four disciples.



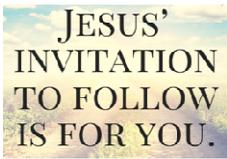
Abraham Lincoln said, “God must love the common people. He made so many of them.”

I prefer the plagiarised version.



God must really love ordinary people.

Simon, Andrew, James and John were ordinary people earning their living by fishing.



We, too, are ordinary people that Jesus can use in extra-ordinary ways if we only answer His call to follow Him.