

Matthew: Jesus, The King of Kings

They Begged Him to Depart

Matthew 8:18-34

Today: Discipleship, Storms, and Rejection

We'll see Jesus purposely leave an area crowding him to go to an area that rejects him

But he performed miracles in both places

Where's your heart this morning?

Psalm 139:1-4, 23-24 NKJV - For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. O LORD, You have searched me and known [me]. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. For [there is] not a word on my tongue, [But] behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. ... Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if [there is any] wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

[Pray]

8:18-22

Great multitudes...again

There's no end to need. To sickness. To problems in this world. Everyone is looking for a savior. But who will they turn to?

I hate crowds. Crowded areas. Not to mention danger.

Video of crowds in England, swaying, (danger of trampling)

Jesus didn't hate the crowd. But they weren't really there to follow him.

Gave a command - to his disciples

A scribe pipes up - one of the religious.

He doesn't want to be left, he wants to be a part of the inner circle.

Wants to be a disciple in his mind.

Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go!

That's quite a bold statement. He didn't yet know about the cross.

Fair weather fans

Popularity

What's Jesus' response?

I'm homeless. Will you be homeless to?

The animals are better off than me in this world, are you willing to be that poor for me?

God will take care of your needs. Jesus said so, himself.

He cares more about you than the sparrows and lilies.

But, God's call on your life may cost you everything.

Jake and I reading about discipleship, loving Jesus more than everyone in your life

Matthew 16:24-27 NKJV - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

This scribe was willing to make great claims and promises when it seemed like Jesus was going to be the biggest, most popular, most famous teacher - he would be - but not in the way the flesh wants to be known

Did the scribe follow? We're not told. Maybe he did. Maybe he went away.

What will you do when your faith costs you something?

Another - let me first go bury my father

His dad wasn't dead...yet. But he had family obligations

A will. An inheritance.

"Ok Jesus. You're homeless. I'll be homeless too. But let me get my inheritance. Let my 401k mature first. And I'll be right there...then."

We like to follow when we've got a plan
 We like to follow when we don't have anything to worry about

...or maybe when it doesn't require faith. Trust. Dignity.

We see Jesus

We see Him doing amazing things
 Impossible (for us) things

He says really hard things.

And then we think it's going to be easy to follow Him.

To walk in his footsteps.

John 15:18-25 NKJV - "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before [it hated] you. "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. "But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. "He who hates Me hates My Father also. "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. "But [this happened] that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

Jesus says "Follow me..."

He wants all to follow him. To come after him.

But

"Let the dead bury their own dead"

If you're going to follow Him, it's got to be in New Life
 Resurrected Life

The flesh can't follow him

The addictions can't follow him

The old habits

The old ways

The old desires

2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV - Therefore, if anyone [is] in Christ, [he is] a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

If you want to follow Jesus. You must be made new at the cross.

Then from there on, it's sanctification - a continual process of being made new completely. Giving everything over to him.

To gain an eternal inheritance. From your heavenly father who never dies.

The world's concerns are the world's concerns.

They are not yours, Christian.

Ukraine, Social Justice, Equity, DEI, the list goes on.
These are not God's initiatives.

But that every tongue will confess and knee will bow to Jesus. The one who can truly bring peace, justice, equality and honor.

But as believers, if we've seen and believed...we cannot stay where we are. We must go forward. We must follow. And It will mean leaving things behind.

(if you're a Christian, it means you've seen Jesus for yourself. And believed for yourself)

:23-27

Suddenly

This is basically a lake, storms don't come up out of nowhere.

And especially storms when seasoned fisherman are afraid.

There's a lot than can be studied about this storm. But I believe it was enemy-induced. (Job)

Jesus was sleeping

Do you ever get tired? That's OK! It's OK to rest.

Punishment for not keeping the Sabbath under the law? Death.

Side note: thou shalt not kill ... murder. God commanded the taking of life for certain offenses. Certain things require it.

**God created rest, even before sin came into the world.
And heaven itself is “Our Father’s rest.”
No more work!**

**Being submitted to God means resting.
Following Jesus means that service will wear you out.**

People getting burned out. Need to take a break! Can’t do it every week by themselves!

It’s not “more spiritual” to push on without resting.
Hiking yesterday, pushing on for quite a bit. Until it was time to turn around. Although there was plenty of trail left in front of us.

**Disciples wake Jesus up, we’re dying!
Oh, the drama!**

**Jesus rebukes the disciples first
Oh you of little faith!
He doesn’t comfort them like the little babies they were acting like**

Now would I have done any different? Doubtful. Especially without a life jacket being invented for thousands of years.

But Jesus WAS their savior. They didn’t need a life jacket.

If they believed Him to be at least from God, if not God himself, wouldn’t they think that he’s not going to die from a little weather, why are they?

Jesus rebuked the wind and waves
Another reason why I think the storm was spiritual. The weather was obeying the enemy.
Going against the purpose and direction of God himself - to get to the other side.

Why did the disciples cross the sea? To get to the other side!

Joke...but did they not think the purposes of Jesus would be fulfilled?
He commanded them to go that direction. So didn’t they think he’d know or could handle a problem, even a strange, out-of-nowhere problem, like a fierce storm?

How about you? And me?

**When God calls us to step out in a simple direction.
Go over to the other side.**

**And then there's problems.
Do we not think God saw this coming?**

Do we think he doesn't have a spare tire to fix our spiritual flat?

Do we think he doesn't have a plan or purpose for us when the pastor fails, or the church splits,
or our spouse goes crazy?

**The disciples marveled. They still didn't get it.
It was right in front of them!**

A little faith leads to a little vision.
Mom's story about my heavenly eyes as a child

:28-34

Gergesenes - "a stranger drawing near"
Interesting, as to them, Jesus was a stranger drawing near

The folks who lived on the eastern shore of Lake Gennesaret

**Apparently 4x2 miles, beautiful and rich like the Nile, Lots of water and irrigation.
Produced wild trees, flowers, and crops.**

Called "The Garden of God" by the Rabbis

**But when Jesus gets there...two demon possessed men are the first to come out
They come out from the tombs**

*Kids in High School liking death metal, wanting to hang out around tombs
That's the influence of death*

Jake talking about halloween decorated home, not wanting to wake up there!

These guys were no joke - people didn't go around there on purpose
*People on drugs, PCP, fighting police
Demonic strength*

If I'm remembering correctly, they also were naked.

Footage of cities today, people like zombies, frozen in place, going crazy, taking their clothes off in stores and trashing the place

These are disciples of another master

The demons knew who God was

James 2:19 NKJV - You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!

If time: Possessed man in the church in NYC

They begged. If you cast us out, permit us to go away

I think they knew Jesus would cast them out. Why would he let them continue?

Asking in a slimy way

They want to go into the pigs.

Pigs - unclean animal by the law

Not allowed to have or to eat

But these folks were making a living off of pork

The demons? Not on the side of the people.

They wanted to kill, steal, destroy - didn't matter what.

Jesus says, Go - permission.

No matter what work the enemy is doing, Jesus is still in charge.

The pigs ran violently - committed suicide

Suicide is not natural in the animal kingdom

But people do it...

The water would kill the pigs. Hurt the livelihood of the people. And the demons would still be homeless. The demons didn't die in the water. They'd just go find someone or something else.

The demons ran away from Jesus
 The pigs ran to their death under demonic influence
 The people ran away from the scene...and the work of God

Faith causes us to follow
Unbelief to flee

They told everyone in the area what happened.
 What was their response?

Rejoicing? The demons were gone. The man of God, who I'm sure they've heard about by now from the commotion across the lake...he's here!
 Nope...

Everyone came to see. But it was not to follow
 It was to cast out.

They didn't want God. They didn't want his law. His goodness. His freedom.

**They'd rather have demon possessed people running around
 terrorizing them**

**They'd rather be making money illicitly
 Then have the influence of God on their city.**

Does that sound familiar?

Is it any surprise that our world wants nothing to do with him?

We love celebrating the spiritual...As long as it's not holy.

Ironically, all hallow's eve is supposed to be the day before a holy day

Yoga, mysticism, new age, coexist, islam, humanism, buddhism, and even Christianity, as long as it's not Jesus.

So 9:1 says Jesus got in a boat, and left, and went home.

He says to us, Will You follow?