



theme: The Gospel of Mark #5 – Stand or Be Silent
materials: Bibles

This month the cell talks will cover chapters three and four of Mark. We are building up a picture of Jesus in these months, one which amazed, angered, and fascinated people in 1st Century Palestine. What does this picture of Jesus tell us now? How do we respond to this “Son of Man”?

welcome

Split the group in two and have a debate on something ridiculous. Assign a position to each side. Say, for example, that one team has to argue that Coke is the best, and the other team has to argue for Pepsi. Or something else equally as trivial. Spend some time preparing, and then make your best arguments for your position.

Are you the type of person that likes to take a stand, or are you more likely to remain quiet and neutral? Are there times when you have to take a stand?

interact

Encourage everyone to make a bold declaration of who the LORD is and what He has done in their lives. Then inquire of the LORD where He wants you to be more bold in your life – is there any area of your life where the LORD is challenging you to be more of a witness for Him?

read

Read Mark 3:1-20.

What do you learn about Jesus and His mission from this passage? What are the dominant impressions you take away from it?

Why were some people looking for a reason to accuse Jesus?

Have you ever had people who were looking for excuses to accuse you, or get you in trouble? What do you do about this?

Why would it have been “wrong”, in some people’s eyes, for Jesus to heal on the Sabbath?

Why do the people remain silent when Jesus asks them a question? And why does Jesus get so angry when they won’t respond?

Are we ever afraid to take a stand for what is right? Why would we be afraid?

Jesus had the authority to talk about right and wrong, good and evil. Are we prepared to talk about right and wrong? Is there anything in our world today that we are prepared to say is outright “evil”? Or a good that we are prepared to stand up for?

How can we know for sure what is good, and what is evil?

It says in verses 14-15 that Jesus appointed apostles and that he sent them out with “authority”. What kind of authority?

What kind of authority do we have as followers of Christ?

Is there ever a case where that authority is abused?



think

Traditionally the Sabbath is defined as sundown Friday evening to sundown Saturday night. It is a day of rest that comes from Genesis 2:2-3 (when the Lord rested on the seventh day) and it was considered unlawful to work on the Sabbath. But Jesus raises the good point “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or do harm, to save a life or to kill” (v. 4). This week on the Sabbath intentionally do good and intentionally save a life. Grab some friends or go out with your cell on a prayer walk and pray for the sick. Pray for every person you see who is sick or dying. You could even go to your local hospital or hospice. Believe that the Lord will heal on the Sabbath, and be intentional about it. When you come back to cell next week – share with everyone how the Lord did good on the Sabbath.

live & pray

Write down a list this week of things you care enough about to not be silent over – in other words, things you'd take a stand for, even if there are negative consequences. Share your lists next week in cell.

useful resources

Movie: *Luther*

leader's guide

Jesus developed enemies fairly quickly, as He cast out demons inside of synagogues and generally behaved in ways other than the religious authorities would have wanted. So some of those authorities were looking for ways to trip him up, evidences that they could share with the people to show that they should not be following Him. Healing on the Sabbath, which would be considered “work”, would be according to some definitions unlawful on the Sabbath.

The accusers remain silent in the face of Jesus' question possibly because they don't know the answer, and do not wish to appear foolish. Or they don't want their answer to justify Jesus' actions with their words. Either way, Jesus is pointing out that they have clearly lost the ability to differentiate between right and wrong, or they know and they won't do anything about it. This is a further blow to those who were meant to be interpreting the law for Israel. Jesus is angry because they will not even stand up for what is obviously good, and these are leaders leading the people astray. They care more for the “Law” and their position than they do for the people in their care.

Jesus gave his disciples the authority to drive out demons. They would be representatives of His Kingdom, carrying authority delegated from Jesus (not from themselves). He had enlisted them in His Kingdom war, and they could now do battle with the enemy in the name of Jesus.

Jesus Himself only ever did what He saw the Father doing, so we abuse authority when we go beyond obedience to what Jesus has called us to.