

DISCUSSION NOTES

SEPTEMBER 11, 2016

Remember to pray as you open your discussion. Ask God to show you more of Himself and more of the grace of Jesus. Ask God for faith to trust Him and for strength to live out the things you learn.

GETTING STARTED

1. What comes to mind when you see the word “authority”? What feelings does it surface? What kinds of people come to mind? Can you think of any songs praising authority? What about songs resisting or rejecting authority?

DIGGING IN

2. Read Mark 1:21-45. Over what areas does Jesus demonstrate his authority? How is Jesus’ authority unique? What does this teach us about the kingdom?
3. What importance does Jesus put on preaching in his first day of ministry (see verses 22, 27, 38)?
4. In Mark 1:35, what does Jesus do after a powerful day of ministry and great popularity (note the four verbs in verse 35)? Why was this surprising to his disciples? How did they respond? What do we learn about Jesus’ priorities from verses 35-39?
5. Jesus’ healing of a leper is described in Mark 1:40-45. In antiquity, leprosy was a commonly known condition applied to various skin diseases and issues. These diseases were deforming and damaging, and they often became life threatening. Believed to be highly contagious, many societies quarantined lepers. In Israel, lepers also bore the weight of being considered ritually unclean, and many were required to scream “unclean” when they were approaching so that others could avoid touching them. If an Israelite touched a leper, they were then considered unclean.
 - How would you describe the leper’s emotional state in verse 40?
 - What do we see of Jesus’ character in verses 41-42? What kind of person is Jesus?
 - What stands out about the specific manner in which Jesus performs the healing?

LIVING IT OUT

6. In Mark 1:35, we see the priority that Jesus placed on prayer as a life-giving personal practice. How purposeful are you in seeking quiet time alone with your Heavenly Father? Have you found this to make a difference in your daily life? What is one way you could grow your relationship with God this year?
7. Apply some lessons from Jesus’ healing of the leper (Mark 1:40-45). Are you ever afraid to come to Jesus in your personal “uncleanness” or sin? How does it make you feel to see the way Jesus cares for this desperate man, even caring for his emotional needs? How should Jesus’ compassion and willingness to heal encourage you? How should this shape the way you view and serve others?
8. How is God calling you to respond in light of what we’ve seen in God’s Word?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY PLAN

THE REAP METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY

REAP (Read, Examine, Apply, Pray) is a straightforward way to process what you're reading, either on your own or with a small group of people. This is a flexible plan—you could use it quickly in a 20 minute time span, or you could spend hours digging into the Word with it. Our hope is that you will experience how to study the Bible during your group time, and then try it on your own during the remainder of the week. It may be a little messy, and that's OK. It will get easier with practice. This isn't the only way to study the Bible, but we believe it is a helpful tool to have in your toolbox.

The goal of this kind of Bible study is primarily to grow in faith and obedience, not mere knowledge. Keep that in mind and be attentive each step of the REAP process. Remember to pray as you open the Bible, asking God to encourage, teach, correct, and train you (2 Timothy 3:16) through your time in the Bible, as well as to show you the grace of Jesus.

READ

Read the passage. If you have time, you might read it a few times, silently and out loud, with a pen in hand. Note or underline thoughts that might be significant. Answer the question, "What do I see?" As you're reading, think through these questions:

- What is happening in this passage? What things are emphasized, repeated, related?
- What do I see about God? What is God doing in this passage?
- What do I see about man? What are the people doing?

EXAMINE

Examine the passage. At this point, answer some questions about the meaning of the text. Take time to reflect. Ask yourself these questions, and write down your thoughts:

- How do I think the author wants his audience to respond?
- What do I learn about God's character?
- What wrong beliefs about God and myself do I have?
- What do I like? Is there anything that I don't like?
- Is there anything I don't understand?
- What seems most significant?

APPLY

Apply the passage to your own life. Answer the question, "No matter where I am spiritually, what would it look like for me to live out what I just read?" Some questions to consider might include:

- How do I need to repent or change?
- What truths do I need to believe?
- What false beliefs must I turn from?
- What can I do – empowered by the Holy Spirit – to live out this passage?

PRAY

Pray through the passage and your application, asking God to change your heart and to change your life. Ask that God would be glorified as you seek to apply the passage this week. Ask God to make his love and his grace real to you.

After you finish, share what God taught you with at least one person—your roommate, your spouse, your kids, your friends, or your coworkers. Don't keep what God taught you to yourself.

If you would like help finding a Bible reading plan, ask your group leader or pastor; Or, visit <http://www.esv.org/resources/reading-plans-devotions/>.

The above plan is modified from The Austin Stone and is available at austinstone.org.