

## August 23-29

### **(Monday) Mark 3: Miracles and Magic**

How is Jesus' attitude toward the Sabbath different from the Pharisees' (v. 1-6)?

While the Pharisees and Herodians (an unlikely alliance!) are plotting to kill Jesus, how are the common people responding to him (v. 7-12)?

What charge do the teachers of the law bring against Jesus (v. 20-30)? How does Jesus refute it?

Have you been rejected by people close to you on account of your faith? How can Jesus' words in verses 33-35 bring perspective and comfort?

*Prayer Focus: Ask God for courage to follow him in the face of opposition and rejection*

*Family Devotional: Read verses 31-35. Jesus' family thought he was crazy. How does Jesus respond? How can we love our earthly family and spiritual family more?*

### **(Tuesday) Mark 4: Hard Soil**

Jesus explains the parable of the soils (v. 3-8) in verses 14-20. Put this explanation into your own words.

On what grounds are people included or excluded from the secret of the kingdom (v. 9-13)? How do verses 21-25 help to explain verses 9-13?

What insights do you gain from verses 26-34 on the nature of God's kingdom on earth?

How does this chapter affect your understanding and approach to personal evangelism?

*Prayer Focus: Pray for God to make you receptive soil, and to use you as a sower*

*Family Devotional: Read verses 13-20. What kinds of desires and worries in life could distract us from God's truth? How do we know when we're producing a crop for God?*

### **(Wednesday) Mark 5: Jesus and Illness**

In the story of spiritual illness (v. 1-20), who is afraid and why?

When Jesus allows the demons to enter the pigs, what does it show about their intentions with the man? What does it show about Jesus' sovereign power?

The illness of Jairus' daughter and the bleeding woman both involve faith and fear. Describe both.

Does the power of Jesus invoke sinful fear or God-fearing faith in you? Why or why not?

*Prayer Focus: Pray for your earthly fears to be overcome by a holy fear of God*

*Family Devotional: Read verse 35-42. What kind of power is Jesus displaying? Why would this make people astonished and fearful? Should we fear Jesus? Why?*

**(Thursday) Matthew 5: Inflammatory Word**

How would you define the qualities Jesus desires in each of his followers (v. 3-12)? How would you describe the promises that are attached?

Jesus compares his followers to salt and light (v. 13-16). What do these metaphors suggest about our role in society?

The rest of chapter 5 deals with misconceptions we might have about the Old Testament Law. What is the general theme of Jesus' statements? Why does Jesus stress that he did not come to abolish the Law?

Why are our motives just as important as our actions? What does Jesus reveal about your own motives?

*Prayer Focus: Pray for God to give you the right motives to do the right things*

*Family Devotional: Read verses 3-12. These are the qualities Jesus wants to see in each of his followers. How would you define each of them? Can you think of some people you know who show some of these qualities?*

**(Friday) Matthew 6: Sermon on the Mount**

What do we learn about proper and improper motives from Jesus' examples about giving, praying, and fasting (v. 1-18)?

In Jesus' discussion about treasures, eyes, and masters (v. 19-24), what common themes tie these verses together?

Worry is a dominant theme in verses 25-34. How should worry be conquered, according to Jesus?

What does seeking first God's kingdom and righteousness (v. 33) mean in your everyday life?

*Prayer Focus: Pray for a singular focus on God's kingdom, and not the worries of this world*

*Family Devotional: Read verses 28-33. What kinds of things do you worry about? Why? What would it mean for you to seek God's kingdom instead?*