

4 What God's kingdom is like (Mark 4–5)

We've seen Jesus using his authority to set people free from afflictions and the powers of evil. The self-appointed guards of society (scribes and Pharisees) condemned Jesus for accepting "sinners," ignoring their fasts, and not stopping his healing programme even on rest day. When they turned his family against him, Jesus redefined "family" as the entire community God had placed in his care.

Tonight we see Jesus planting images of the kingdom of God in his audience through stories. The kingdoms of this world have been built by uprooting other powers (war), but God's kingdom grows organically. Like a farmer, Jesus plants the seeds that will eventually grow into the harvest God always intended. Even the worst spiritual oppression cannot stop it, as we'll see in our second session.

Any questions before we begin Mark 4 and 5?

4.1 Who was the sower? (4:1-20)

Heard the parable of the sower? What's it about? The farmland (four soils)? The farmer? The seed? The way the farmer plants his seed? Fruitfulness? Evangelism?

How do you understand this parable?

Mark 4:1-9 (NIV)

¹ Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge.

² He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said:

³ "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

⁵ Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil.

It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times."

⁹ Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

The crowds didn't understand Jesus' story. The disciples didn't understand the story. Why tell stories no one understands?



Mark 4:10-12 (NIV)

¹⁰ When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. ¹¹ He told them, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables ¹² so that,

“ ‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving,
and ever hearing but never understanding;
otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’” [Isaiah 6:9-10]

At first glance, the quotation from Isaiah may sound like Jesus doesn't want people to understand the story, as if Jesus doesn't want his nation to turn to him to be released from their sins and restored as a kingdom under God. That would contradict everything Jesus has been saying from the start (1:15). The context in Isaiah clarifies what Jesus is referring to.

In Isaiah 6, Israel's heavenly sovereign is calling Isaiah to prophetic ministry. The LORD of hosts calls for a messenger, and Isaiah volunteers. He warns Isaiah this will be a frustrating commission, since God's nation doesn't want to listen to the heavenly sovereign. Their ears, eyes, and hearts are unresponsive. Isaiah asks how long he must keep confronting a people who won't listen. God's reply was effectively:

“Until everything has fallen. Until there's nothing left.”

Isaiah was not alone. All the prophets knew the frustration of a people who would not listen to their heavenly sovereign. Some, like Elijah, gave up (1 Kings 19).

Jesus faced this frustration. What's the point of teaching God's people how to live as the restored kingdom if they will reject God's leadership and kill God's anointed?

That's why Jesus gave cameos of what the kingdom would be like, parables that contain the seeds of the kingdom that is yet to grow. Jesus is the farmer broadcasting these seeds. He knows many of them won't produce anything. Some of what he's sharing never even germinates. Some germinates but doesn't grow. Some germinates and grows but never becomes fruitful.

Ask yourself:

- a) **Who is the sower?** It's the person telling these stories.
- b) **What message is he sowing?** Hint: verse 11. Compare 1:15; 4:26, 30.
- c) **Is it worth it when the majority were unresponsive?** Hint: verse 8.
God decreed fruitfulness for the earth in the beginning, and God will have his harvest in the end (compare Isaiah 55:10-13).

Here is Jesus' explanation of why he persisted in his frustrating commission by using parables:

Mark 4:13-20 (NIV)

¹³ Then Jesus said to them, “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? ¹⁴ The farmer sows the word.

¹⁵ Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. ¹⁶ Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. ¹⁷ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ¹⁸ Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²⁰ Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

Do you understand this parable?

4.2 Who are the kingdom parables about? (4:21-34)

Don’t you love the stories Jesus uses to explain what it’s like to be God’s kingdom?

Mark 4:21-23 (NIV)

²¹ He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? ²² For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. ²³ If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

When the light comes on, we can see what was there all along. In God’s kingdom, nothing stays hidden, even if it’s not clear yet. What was it that people were not yet seeing as Jesus spoke these words? (Hint: Mark 8:27-29).

Again, Jesus is not proclaiming his own authority as anointed king. That’s something God must reveal to those who are open to hear it (the opposite of verse 12).

Mark 4:24-25 (NIV)

²⁴ “Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. ²⁵ Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

What was Jesus asking his audience to *consider carefully*? Some had already made judgements about Jesus (Mark 3:6, 20, 22, 30), and how we judge Jesus is how God judges us (compare Matthew 10:32-33). If we have an openness to Jesus, we’ll have everything else we need, but if we’re closed to Jesus, we lose everything.

How does Jesus envision the kingdom of God growing?

Mark 4:26-29 (NIV)

²⁶ He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. ²⁹ As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

It is God who grows his kingdom. Human effort cannot make it happen. That makes the kingdom of God unique, different to every other kingdom in history.

Kingdoms do not spring up organically. It takes enormous resources, effort, and strategic planning to build a kingdom. Jesus' audience knew this well from their experience as a nation.

The word *kingdom* first appears in Genesis 10:10-12. In the prequel to the Abrahamic nation, the chapter explains why there are gentile nations. Babylon and Assyria—the kingdoms that eventually overpowered Judah and Israel—are named here. A warrior named Nimrod realized the power of death (authorized in 9:1-6) could be used to “hunt” humans. So it's warriors who build kingdoms like Assyria and Babylon: through war!

That's how kingdoms grow. That's how David extended his power over his enemies (1–2 Samuel). Yet, this son of David tells a different story.

In Jesus' parables, the kingdom grows organically. The heavenly sovereign decreed fruitfulness for the earth (Genesis 1:11-12) as God gave dominion to the human, so this is how the kingdom grows for the Son of Man.

Under Jesus' leadership, we are also servants of the heavenly sovereign, humans in partnership with God, beneficiaries of what God has intended from the start. We scatter the fruitful seed, relying on God to make it grow into the harvest that comes to life in the resurrected king rather than through war.

The organic growth metaphor continues in Jesus' next parable:

Mark 4:30-32 (NIV)

³⁰ Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. ³² Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

If you were buying seeds at the market and a seed slipped off the scales, you'd ignore it. What's one little seed?

Yet, in the way God designed the world, one little mustard seed is not insignificant. It can grow into a shrub that takes up a whole corner of your garden. It will be significant not only for you, but also for other creatures in creation.

What do you think Jesus was talking about? Who was the insignificant seed who would grow into something significant? And why is this a story of God's kingdom?

As a side note, please don't push Jesus' stories to say things he wasn't saying. Biologically speaking, the mustard seed is not *the smallest of all seeds on earth* (verse 31), and the mustard bush is not *the largest of all garden plants* (verse 32). Jesus was not giving a lecture in biology; he was speaking of how the kingdom grows.

In all these stories of the kingdom, the crucial question is, "Who is the king?" The stories make sense when you realize Jesus is explaining his actions without making power claims. It is God who reveals his anointed to the peoples of the earth.

Mark 4:33-34 (NIV)

³³ With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. ³⁴ He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

Is there something for us to learn from Jesus' story-telling approach? Would you prefer it if Jesus had provided a more systematic approach to what we believe, a theology of God, humanity, salvation, church, and end times?

That might be attractive to some people (modern Western academics?), but stories work for everyone in every culture and in every century. All of us use stories to make sense of the world we're living in. So, was Jesus on to something here? Should we focus more on storytelling?

If you've tried telling stories, one of the problems we face is this: to what extent do we explain our stories? Fairytales and movies designed for children sometimes spell out the moral of the story, but that's not how you write a good movie script or spy novel. The meaning is transmitted through the story, not overtly spelled out. Jesus was okay with telling the stories and leaving his audience to figure it out in a way that most preachers don't. Is there something to learn from Jesus' approach?

4.3 When creation is out of control (4:35-41)

Most of the time, Lake Galilee is relatively calm, but storms could threaten to swamp the small fishing boats used in the first century:

Mark 4:35-41 (NIV)

³⁵ That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” ³⁶

Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”



Model of a first-century fishing boat, found in Lake Galilee. Photo: Allen Browne, 2017.

The story leads us to the ultimate question: “*Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?*” (verse 41 ESV). Rulers claim power over the land by drawing lines on maps, but no one controls the sea.

We fear what is outside our control. The disciples were unable to trust Jesus’ authority over what they thought was uncontrollable (verse 40).

Jesus used the journey to catch up on some sleep (compare 6:31), but to the disciples it felt as if Jesus did not care about them (verse 38).

When Jesus commands the winds and the waves (verse 39), I wonder if the disciples recalled any stories from the Old Testament? Pharaoh had no control over the Red Sea, but it obeyed the LORD. In the Psalms, the controllable sea is often a symbol for God’s authority over a world that does not recognize his authority. Examples:

- *He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed (107:29).*
- *[God] stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations (65:7).*
- *You rule over the surging sea; when its waves mount up, you still them (89:9).*

That final one is particularly significant as Psalm 89 wrestles with the problem of David’s fallen kingship and whether God’s faithfulness will be seen in his Anointed.

4.4 Jesus' authority in gentile-controlled territory (5:1-20)

This is the most extreme example of a demonized person in the Bible. Jesus releases this guy from a legion of demons, something 2000 pigs couldn't cope with:

Mark 5:1-13 (NIV)

¹ They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. ² When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³ This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴ For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷ He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!"

⁸ For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"

⁹ Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." ¹⁰ And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

¹¹ A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹² The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them."

¹³ He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

The eastern shore of Lake Galilee was gentile territory. The region was called *Decapolis* meaning "ten cities" (verse 20). These cities had temples to pagan gods. The region had unclean activities like pig farming. It was not somewhere Jews wanted to be. Why did Jesus go there?

Immediately, Jesus was confronted by someone who lived among the dead (verse 3). Every attempt to restrain him had failed (verse 4). Day and night, the hillside graveyard echoed his anguished cries as he tortured himself—trying to find relief from this inner torment (verse 5). The evil power had so dehumanized him that the locals no longer saw him as one of them.

No matter how strong the hold of evil is on someone, Jesus never stops seeing them as a person. Jesus had authority to help him: "*Come out of **this man**, you impure spirit*" (verse 8).

Since Jesus is addressing the impure spirit, what we're hearing in verse 7 is probably the evil spirit speaking through the man (as it is in verse 9). The evil spirit recognizes Jesus' authority, and is terrified of being tortured—ironic, considering the torture it is inflicting on its victim (verse 7).

Jesus asks the spirit to identify itself (verse 9). Some exorcists today take this as standard procedure: they ask for the name of the spirit so they'll have the power to cast it out.²³ That's misguided. For starters, this was not standard procedure for Jesus: normally he silenced the evil spirit (e.g. 1:25; 3:12). Further, this demon did not give a name that helped Jesus with



Region of Decapolis. Source: *Zondervan Atlas of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 206.

the exorcism. Its evasive answer was effectively, “There’s a whole mob of us; you’re outnumbered” (verse 9). In any case, it makes no sense to trust anything a demon says. Lying is so inherent that the demon tried to put Jesus under oath! (verse 7)

The demons can’t resist the Messiah’s authority, but they don’t want to leave the area (verse 10). They may be questioning whether Jesus’ kingship includes this non-Jewish side of the Lake. In the end, they agree to leave the human if they can have the pigs instead (verse 12).

The pigs can’t cope. Tearing down the slope, the entire herd of 2000 pigs drown in the lake (verse 13). Did the demons drown as well? While that’s not spelled out, it is clear that no power of evil can prevent the Messiah restoring God’s reign to the earth.

Perhaps there’s an echo of what God did at the Red Sea. The army that supported Pharaoh’s oppression of God’s people found themselves hurled into the sea: “*The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone. Your right hand, LORD, was majestic in power; your right hand, LORD, shattered the enemy*” (Exodus 15:5-6). In the new covenant, Jesus has the authority to cast the enemy’s forces into the abyss, to set the earth free to be God’s kingdom.

²³ For example, Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2001), 182: “In an exorcism ritual, naming is a crucial part of trying to gain control of the demon.”

But not everyone is pleased:

Mark 5:14-17 (NIV)

¹⁴ Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.

¹⁵ When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. ¹⁶ Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well.

¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

The pig farmers are not happy. Today in Western Australia, 2000 large white pigs would be worth tens of thousands of dollars, possibly \$100,000. Was it worth it?

We already noted how the locals had stopped seeing this man as a human being. It's very confronting to see him *sitting there* rather than running about issuing terrifying screams, *clothed* instead of in the shredded rags left from cutting himself, and *in his right mind* instead of inflicting his inner torment on everyone else. They'd learned to avoid the dehumanized thing he had become, but they had no idea how to respond to him as a human being (verse 15).

What did this Jewish visitor want? Did he want to control their territory? Did he want to impose Jewish Law (Torah) on them? Had he destroyed the pigs because they were unclean? What else would he take from them? That's why *the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region*, sending him back where he belonged (verse 17).

Mark 5:18-20 (NIV)

¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. ¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." ²⁰ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Verse 18 answers a huge theological question. **What does King Jesus do when he's not wanted?** What if the people of earth don't want Jesus ruling over us?

Imagine a delegation telling Caesar they didn't want him over their area! They'd be hanged for treason. King Jesus does not operate his authority through force. He has the authority, but he doesn't impose his authority where he's not welcome. Can this work? Can the world be saved if he waits for people to recognize his authority?

Of course, the man Jesus released from the power of evil wants to stick with the one who restored him as a human being. But instead of granting his request, the king gives him a regal commission: "*Go home and tell your own people*" Ah! That's how the people of this resistant region will hear the good news of King Jesus! (verse 19).

That's how the world discovers its Saviour. Transformed lives are evidence of Jesus' authority on earth, the stories of the kindness of the Lord who changes everything.

And that's what it looks like to share the gospel with people. Jesus did not commission the rescued man to tell the region what sinners they were for rejecting Jesus. That's not the gospel. The good news is that God has put Jesus in charge of the world, and the evidence that he's the only ruler worthy of the name is what he is doing for us, the liberating kindness of his leadership (verse 19). And it works (verse 20).

Still not convinced the gospel is the good news of Jesus' kingship? There are so many clues in this story!

This region on the eastern side of Lake Galilee had been part of Israel before the kingdom fell. The tribe of Manasseh lived on both sides of the Jordan River. That's why Jesus crossed over to share the gospel of the kingdom with these people as well.

The demons identified as *Legion*. A "legion" was the fundamental unit of soldiers in the Roman army. A first century reader would not have missed the obvious parallel between oppression by a legion of Rome and oppression by a legion of demons. And guess what was the symbol used by the local legion? Michael Bird (Australian) notes:

The horde of demons possessing the Gentile man are called "legion," which is the name of a Roman fighting unit comprised of about 6000 soldiers. Interestingly the Roman 10th legion, the Legio X Fretensis, was based in Syro-Palestine and had a wild boar as the insignia on its standards and seal.²⁴

Jesus is the divinely appointed king who liberates earth from every kind of oppression.

4.5 Jesus' touch overturns uncleanness and death (5:21-43)

With the criticism and plotting that's been taking place among the Bible scholars in the synagogues, this story is different. A synagogue leader named Jairus asks Jesus for help. But before Jesus can reach Jairus's house, an unclean person stops him.

Mark 5:21-24a (NIV)

²¹ When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake.

²² Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. ²³ He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." ²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

It's a great opportunity for Jesus to connect with the synagogue leader. But:

²⁴ Michael Bird, *Post-Colonial Interpretation of Mark 5:1-20*.

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/euangelion/2017/04/post-colonial-interpretation-mark-51-20/>, 2017.

Mark 5:24b-34 (NIV)

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’ ”

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Part two of the story is about a nameless person who had no right being in a crowd of jostling people. She was ritually unclean, and everyone she touched became unclean (Leviticus 15:25-30). She understood this after twelve years in this condition. Yet she planned to touch Jesus' garment (verse 27)!

Her plan was to touch Jesus' clothes, receive her healing, and quietly slip away. No one would know. Her plan comes unstuck when Jesus stops and asks, “Who touched me?” She tries to hide in the crowd, as she has no doubt done so many times in the last decade. But Jesus doesn't give up. He felt something, and he wants to know the person's story (verse 32).

Now she's really terrified! She has to confess in front of all these people what a terribly selfish thing she has done. She has made the prophet unclean. She has hijacked Jesus' mission to save the life of a young girl from a leading family!

Jesus' response is not rebuke, but acceptance. He calls her *daughter*. It's more than a term of affection: she belongs in the family, in the community of God's people (as in Luke 13:16). Her trust in Jesus' leadership has made her whole, and now the king gives her his blessing of shalom: peace, wholeness, freedom from the physical and social suffering she has endured for more than a decade.

But what about the sick girl Jesus was supposed to be helping? The crowd are still wondering whether Jesus can continue that task when bad news arrives. It's too late:

Mark 5:35-43 (NIV)

³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?”

³⁶ Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.”

³⁷ He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly.

³⁹ He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” ⁴⁰ But they laughed at him.

After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was.

⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum!*” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Again, Jesus touched the dead body (*took her by the hand*). But instead of being defiled by death, the little girl has life from Jesus.

4.6 Conclusion

What stood out to you from the parables Jesus told in Mark 4? Have you noticed how Jesus’ parables describe the kingdom growing organically? What do you think of the suggestion that Jesus is the sower, explaining his frustration and his hope for the world?

Why do you think all three Synoptic Gospels weave together the stories of Jairus’ daughter and the bleeding women (compare Matthew 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56). They’re not people whose stories would normally go together. Jairus’ daughter is young, from a well-regarded family, influential through the synagogue. The bleeding woman is older, with chronic suffering that’s reduced her to poverty, isolated from others and the synagogue. What do they have in common?

Or perhaps the question should be, “Who do they have in common?”

At the heart of the story is the way Jesus saw them. Everyone saw Jairus. The whole crowd flowed towards his house. People hadn’t noticed the bleeding woman. “*What do you mean, ‘Who touched me?’*” the disciples asked (verse 31) *But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it* (verse 32).

Jesus saw her. Jesus waited for her to show herself and tell her story. Jesus saw her not as an unwelcome intrusion of uncleanness but as a daughter of Abraham (verse 34). Father, I pray for eyes like Jesus, to see the people who are often overlooked.

In preparation for next week, read **Mark 6:1–7:23**.