

Lesson 08: The Beginning of Popularity

Objective: To know that to *spend time alone with God daily* in reading his Word and in prayer enables us to keep our priorities straight.

Background: The Sabbath day, a weekly holiday begins at 6 p.m., Friday to 6 p.m., Saturday, was a day of rest and no Jews were allowed to work. They attended Synagogue service to receive religious teachings and instructions. Since there was no permanent teacher in the Synagogues, Jesus was often invited to teach there. The teachings of the Scribes, the Jewish teachers, were mechanical, consisted mainly in quoting the authorities of the past.

Instruction: Read carefully Mark 1 :21-39, 40-45 over a few times first.

Let's Think: Imagine yourself following Jesus through one day.

1. Scene 1 -Saturday morning (Sabbath day) in the Synagogue of Capernaum, Mk. 1 :21-28.
 - a. How do you describe the audience as they listen to Jesus' teaching? and why?
 - b. Why were they amazed at Jesus' exorcism since the Jews also practice it? (Mt. 12:27; Mk.9:38) By the way, what does the coming of Jesus signify? (Mk 2:23-24; I Jn. 3:8)
2. Scene 2- Saturday noon (Sabbath day) at Peter and Andrew's house, Mk. 1 :29-31.
 - a. How did Jesus learn that Peter's mother-in-law was sick with fever?
 - b. And, how did He heal her? Was there evidence that she was healed?
3. Scene 3 -Saturday evening in front of Peter's house, Mk. 1 :32-34.
 - a. Why was the courtyard of Peter's house turned into an "evening clinic"? Had Jesus run an ad for a "healing" ministry? Explain.
 - b. Why did the crowd come in the evening and not earlier in the day? (Read also Jn. 5:8-10)
4. Scene 4- Where do you expect to find Jesus since He must have worked till late in the night?(Mk 1: 35)
 - a. What glimpse of the personal life of Jesus do you catch from Mk. 1 :35, Lk. 5: 16?
 - b. Why did He turn down the invitation of the people? Did He let the "popular demand" dictate His ministry? (Read also Lk. 4:42-44)
5. Conclusion -Look back the day and explain:
 - a. How did Jesus rise to "popularity"? Had He promoted Himself, His image?
 - b. Did Jesus know the purpose of His life and ministry? What was His priority? And how did He keep His priorities straight in the midst of activities and popularity?
6. Lesson -Reflect on the example of Jesus.
 - a. Do you have a time set aside daily just to be alone with God in His Word and prayer? If so, share your personal experience.
 - b. Do you have a goal/direction in life or are you just drifting? Reflect!

Let's Remember: "But Jesus withdrew to the wilderness and prayed." (Luke 5: 16)