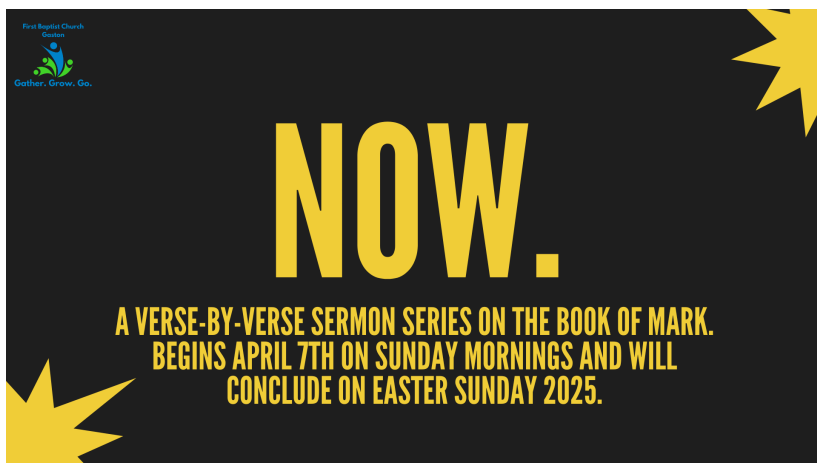


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‘Now!’ Sermon Series

Sermon #12

Sunday, July 7th, 2024

‘Pressure Points of the Ministry!’

Mark 3:7-21

Last week in ‘NOW’ sermon series:

- Last week Pastor Steve filled in for me and continued his mini-series through the book of Jonah. I am thankful for him and his willingness to fill in recently.
 - *It’s been two weeks since we’ve been in our ‘NOW’ sermon series.*
 - The last time we were in Mark, we looked at Mark 2:23-3:6 with a sermon entitled **‘Preying on Someone to Fall!’**
- I asked the question: ***How do the Pharisees give us an example in this passage of what it looks like to prey on someone (Jesus), and looking for His mistakes?***

- **Point 1: *An Addiction to Following Others. (V. 23-24)***
- **Point 2: *An Absence of the Facts. (V. 25-28)***
- **Point 3: *Awaiting Failure. (V. 1-2)***
- **Point 4: *Appeasement is Forfeited. (V. 3-6)***
 - Since it’s been two weeks since this message, you’ve had two weeks to be able to realize if you are preying on others or praying for others that God sends in your path.

‘Pressure Points of the Ministry!’

Mark 3:7-21

Sermon in a Sentence:

We can find the Pressure Points of the Ministry in this passage by seeing the Bombardment of People, the Battle with Demons, Befriend those that can help you, and the Blasphemy you will receive.

Intro:

- All throughout Mark’s Gospel we have progressively seen how the demands of and on Jesus continued to increase.
 - ***After each miracle and encounter that He had with someone, it led to more and more people wanting to follow Him and see what Jesus might could do for them.***

- What I believe we find in our text this morning are the pressure points of the ministry that Jesus was experiencing.
 - *Anyone who serves in any kind of ministry, whether vocationally or simply in the Church, will experience these pressure points.*
 - Dr. Daniel Aiken summarized it well when he said *‘Leadership, teamwork, and fatigue run throughout Mark 3:7-21. They are always present when trying to handle the pressure that comes with faithful ministry.’*
 - *Anytime that an individual is trying to be faithful in what the Lord has asked of them and called them to do, you can expect pressures to arise.*
- I believe that we can all better deal with the pressure points that arise in ministry if we know what they are, specifically from the life of Jesus.
 - *When we know what they are, we can seek to try and deal with them the way that Jesus did, as He gives us a good example in this text.*
 - **Read Mark 3:7-21**

Question to Ask:

How does Mark’s summary of Jesus’ ministry in these verses show us the specific pressure points that those serving in ministry will face?

Pressure Point #1: *The Bombardment of People. (V. 7-10)*

- My mentor and Father in the ministry (Rev. Larry Baldwin) would tell me the following when I first entered into the ministry, *‘Ministry would be easy if it wasn’t for the people.’*
 - This quote is not meant to be rude or to say that we don’t want people in our Churches.
 - *Anytime you deal with people, no matter the vocation, it can be quite draining. There’s no doubt that this is even so in the ministry.*
 - *If you’re going to do ministry, and do it for a long time, then you better get ready to have to deal with people constantly.*
 - In verse 6 we were just told that the Pharisees and the Herodians were coming up with a plan to destroy Jesus.
 - *But that did not stop the crowds of people that were coming to see Jesus.*
 - They had heard so much, and now they wanted to see.
 - If you are going to do anytype of ministry, you are going to have to deal with the bombardment of people.
 - I believe there are **4** things from this text that show us how Jesus responded to the popularity he was receiving.
- *Rest is Necessary. (V. 7a)*

- ‘Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea,’
- The use of the word ‘withdrew’ is very interesting here.
 - *Jesus had been healing, dealing with the Pharisees and teaching large crowds. So, what does it mean that He withdrew to the sea?*
- **Word Study**
 - The word for ‘withdrew’ here in the greek, comes from the greek word **‘Anachoreo’** ἀνεχώρησε which at some of the 14 times that it occurs is used to mean ‘flee from danger’.
 - Some scholars believe Jesus was getting on this boat to avoid danger.
 - Others think it symbolizes his rejection of Judaism.
 - *I personally believe that Jesus didn’t want to extend the ministry farther, without a break, a time to be able to breathe.*
- *Now, we must also know that the Pharisees were developing a plot to kill Him, and Jesus was aware of this, so He’s also retreating because His time had not yet come to be crucified.*
- *This is not the only time in scripture that Jesus shows us that rest is necessary.*
 - When you do ministry, people will exhaust you.
- *So I do think it’s important to remember that it’s okay to withdraw, to get away, to breathe, and to seek rest.*
- *Recognition from Everyone from Everywhere. (V. 7b-8a)*
 - ‘and a great crowd followed, from Galilee and Judea 8 and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon.’
 - Even though Jesus tries to leave and get rest, a great crowd follows him.
 - *We must remember, these people do not necessarily want an encounter with Jesus, they want what Jesus can do for them.*
 - Dr. Daniel Aiken said *‘They did not care about Him but only what they could get from Him. They were not concerned about His privacy, His need for time alone, or His need for food and rest. They only wanted to use Him for His miraculous power.’*
 - Jesus knew their hearts and intentions which is why in verse 9, Jesus gives His

disciples directions to get a boat ready, to get out of here.

- *So far in Mark we know everyone wants to see Jesus, but what's very intriguing about verse 8, is that people came from a variety of regions to see Jesus.*

- 'from Galilee and Judea **8** and Jerusalem and Idumea and from beyond the Jordan and from around Tyre and Sidon.'
- Not only did this crowd of people come from Galilee and Judea, they also came from Idumea.

- *This is remarkable because it was 120 miles south of this location.*
- *Tyre and Sidon were 50 miles to the north.*

- *Jesus had gotten recognition from a variety of geographical locations, but also different ethnicities.*

- Scholar James Edwards said, 'Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem were principally Jewish territories; Idumea and Transjordan were mixed Jewish-gentile regions; and Tyre and Sidon were largely if not entirely Gentile regions.'

- *Jesus is breaking cultural norms and barriers that would have been unprecedented for this day.*

- Which is another reason as to why the Pharisees were so upset.

- So, Jesus is getting the attention of people from all across the region...

- *Reasons that they Bombarded. (V. 8b)*

- 'When the great crowd heard all that he was doing, they came to him.'

- *Notice that the text says 'when the great crowd heard all that he was doing,'*

- Not that they wanted to hear what He had to say, who He was, or even what He was teaching.

- *They wanted to see what they could get from Him for their own personal benefit and gain.*

- *In ministry it's important to remember that not everyone has good reasons for wanting to be close to you.*

- I'm not saying that ministers, Pastors, or those in ministry shouldn't or can't have friends, but they have to be careful and keep in account the motives of other people.

- *If we aren't careful, we can spend too much time with people who have the wrong*

intentions for our time, than ministering to those that truly need it.

- Obviously because Jesus was and is omniscient, He can easily discern this, but we must ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us in this discernment.
 - ***Don't let people take advantage of your time and ministry that only want what you can physically give them, instead of the Gospel that you seek to share.***
- ***Ready to Leave. (V. 9-10)***
 - 'And he told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, lest they crush him, **10** for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed around him to touch him.'
 - ***Jesus was crowded and crammed in by these crowds.***
 - They wanted to touch the Hem of His garment, so that their outside might be changed, but they didn't want their insides to be transformed by Jesus.
 - A fishing boat is more than likely what was used for Jesus to get away from this crowd, he tells the disciples to get it.
 - ***Archaeologists found a well preserved fishing boat in this area back in 1986.***

- It was 27 feet long and 7.5 feet wide. The planks were made of Lebanese cedar and the fram was made of oak.
 - A boat this said was said to be able to carry up to 15 people.

○ ***Often when you and I think of Jesus in how He is portrayed in the Gospels and in our SS literature from when we were kids, we are tempted to think of Jesus holding a lamb and welcoming all the children into His arms.***

- Here, we get an accurate picture of what ministry is really like.
 - It's not a cake walk and it's not a time to go and smell the roses.
- Ministry is full of the hustle and bustle of people. The prayer room, the study, the hospitals, and every nook and cranny where people need to hear of Jesus.
 - ***So, Jesus is ready to leave, but as He leads this Bombardment of people, He is about to have a battle with the demons...***

Pressure Point #2: *The Battle with Demons. (V. 11-12)*

- ***If you follow Jesus, then you better get used to battling demons.***

- *Spiritual warfare is a part of the life of a believer, we know that Ephesians 6 makes this very clear.*
 - *Battling demons and spiritual warfare is not discussed in our Churches as much as it should be.*
 - *I'm convinced that many of us don't face as much spiritual warfare as we should, because we aren't doing enough for the Kingdom of God for satan to be concerned about our ministry.*
 - When you face spiritual warfare and battle demons, you can be rest assured that the devil is aware of your ministry, and wants to stop you.
 - *Are you the kind of Christ follower that when your feet hit the floor in the morning the devil says 'oh no, he/she is awake!'*
 - *In Mark 1:24, 34, the demons knew who Jesus was and in Mark 1:24, here's what they said about Him.*
 - "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God."
- I believe we find **2** important things to remember when it comes to battling demons and engaging in spiritual warfare.
- *Battling Demons can be Oppressive. (V. 11)*
 - 'And whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God."'
 - Verse 11 is so strong and significant.
 - *While it can be oppressive and depressive to fight demons in spiritual warfare, it's so important to remind them that God is the one who is in control!*
 - *The demons see Jesus, and they fall down before Him.*
 - *In Mark's Gospel, we need to see that this is one of the highest Christological confessions in Mark's Gospel.*
 - **Word Study**
 - Verse 11 in the Greek text supports the fact that this is a strong Christological confession of who Jesus is because of the wording that is used.
 - The phrase '*fell down*' in the english text comes from the greek word '*Prospipto*' *προσέπιπτεν* which occurs 8 times in the NT and in each of the 8 times it occurs, means to it conveys the

image of an inferior prostrating himself in homage before a superior.

- To fall or impinge upon or against.
 - *Even the demons are crying out to Him and bowing down before Him because of the power that He has.*
- Again in Mark 5:7, demons will call Jesus by His name, the Son of God.
 - *Jesus Himself does not affirm this as His title until He is put on trial later on in Mark 14:61-62.*
 - ‘But he remained silent and made no answer. Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” 62 And Jesus said, “I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”’
 - *Jesus’s response to these demons in verse 12, will show us why Jesus waited until He was on trial to be crucified, to disclose His true identity as the Son of God.*
 - *But for those of you that are here today and you’ve fought demons and been in spiritual warfare before, I know it can*

be tiring, oppressive and can even lead to depression.

- *But knowing that demons bow down to God, and that our God is in authority over them, should give you encouragement today that you can cast them out in the name of Jesus Christ.*
- In verse 12, Jesus shows us how we can be obedient to Him and fight demons...
 - *Battling Demons takes Obedience to God. (V. 12)*
 - ‘And he strictly ordered them not to make him known.’
 - Now, we may be puzzled by the fact that Jesus does not want the demons to make Him known.
 - *Jesus commands the demons to be silent, but why?*
 - *A Demonic Declaration of His deity is not going to help His mission right now.*
 - Later on, in Mark 14:61-62, His deity and divinity will be fully revealed.
 - But for now, the demons would distract others from the mission that Jesus was trying to accomplish.
 - *He already had a bombardment of people all around Him who*

had the wrong idea and intentions.

- Dr. Daniel Aiken said *'It is both the wrong source and the wrong time. Jesus will be fully revealed not by demonic confession but by the cross of Calvary.'*
 - **Jesus was not going to allow the demons to dictate His ministry.**
 - He would be revealed, but it would be on His terms, and not the demons timetable.
 - The demons must obey Jesus, and the must obey you when you cast them out in His name.
 - So far this morning we've seen the bombardment of people, the battle with demons, next we see...

Pressure Point #3: *Befriend those that can Help You. (V. 13-19)*

- **God gives us other people in the ministry to come alongside us and help us.**
 - Now, I want you to know that this is something that I do struggle with that the Lord is seeking to refine in me.
 - **Allowing others to help you in ministry can be tough due to betrayal, burnout, bickering, and a host of other things.**
 - But what is so amazing here, is that after Jesus gets out of the bombardment of

people by boat, He goes up to the mountain to have a conversation with 12 men that would and could, help Him.

- I believe there are **2** important things to look at concerning befriending those that can help us to do the ministry that God has called us to do.
- **Acknowledge your need for Help. (V. 13)**
 - 'And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.'
 - Notice here that Jesus makes the call to summon those that He wants to be near and around Him during this time.
 - **It's also important to mention the significance of Jesus going up to the mountain. In Matthew 4:8-11, we are told that Jesus experienced the climax of His temptation from Satan on a mountain. Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, on a mountain (Matthew 5-7). The transfiguration that we see in Mark 9:2, happened on a mountain. The Olivet discourse occurred on a mountain in Matthew 24-25. The great commission was given on a mountain, in Matthew 28:16-20.**
 - **Surely He was still exhausted and tired from the ministry He had just done, but He realizes He needs to talk with His disciples, the ones He has chosen.**

- Scholar James Edwards said *‘The greek is more emphatic in the sense that He summoned those whom He willed. Jesus determines the call.’*
 - *The disciples were not following Jesus and doing Him a favor by any means, Jesus is choosing to use them in the work of ministry although He does not have to do so.*
- *Jesus didn’t NEED the help, but decided to summon these disciples so that they may benefit by being apart of Jesus’ ministry.*
 - You and I need to constantly and frequently pray and ask the Lord to send us people to help us.
 - *You and I are not Jesus, and we need the help of fellow believers.*
- *May we seek to be approachable and open to helping those in their ministries as others also come alongside and help us.*
 - Sitting on the side is not an excuse at any time.
 - There’s too much ministry to be done and too many people to help!
- *Actually Allow others to take a load from you. (V. 14-19)*
 - ‘And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach 15 and have

authority to cast out demons. 16 He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18 Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot,[a] 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.’

- *Acknowledging your need for help and actually allowing others to help you are two totally different things.*
 - *Jesus does not just call His closest disciples up to the mountain, but gives them a specific job to do to expand the reach of the ministry.*
 - *You and I can do so much more when we’re willing to work together, than when we choose to do things solo.*
- Jesus allows them to take a load from Him and gives the 12 disciples two important tasks.
 - *#1: Preaching. (V. 14)*
 - *#2: Casting out Demons. (V. 15)*
- *Jesus is giving these 12 the ability and authority to carry out His mission.*
 - *Now, these disciples are going to spend three years with Jesus and they get to*

watch Him and learn from Him, and are under His authority.

- ***These 12 are going to become the Church. The leaders of the Church. These are the first Pastors, preachers, Church planters, and leaders.***
 - Christ will create and cultivate something in these men that only He can do.
- ****Word Study****
 - The word ***'appointed'*** in verses 14 and 16, comes from the greek word ***'Poieo'*** ***ἐποίησε*** and in the greek it literally means ***'He made twelve.'*** ***(This greek verb occurs 568 times and literally means to make, form, and construct.)***
 - So, in most of our English translations, the word ***appoint*** here, is a poor translation.
 - ***Appoint is to select from an existing group.***
 - But, to ***make*** means to bring something into existence.
 - ***This is remarkable because the same verb here, is the same greek verb that is found in the Septuagint in Genesis 1:1.***
 - Based on the word choice that Mark chose, it is highly possible that Mark is wanting to recall his

readers to the opening lines of the Bible.

- 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.' Genesis 1:1
- ***In doing this, Mark is showing us that the twelve were a new creation in Christ. It is the creation of the NT Church and Christ is the head of it.***
- Scholar James Edwards said ***'Discipleship does not consist in what disciples can do for Christ, but in what Christ can make of disciples.'***
 - The same is true for you and I.
- ***In the NT there are four lists given of the apostles.***
 - We find them here in Mark 3:16-19, Matthew 10:2-4, Luke 6:14-16, and Acts 1:13.
 - Of course, the number 12 is significant and symbolic.
 - ***It takes us back to the 12 tribes of Israel.***
 - Scholar Eckhard J. Schnabel calls these 12 ***'the nucleus of the new messianic people of God'***
 - A new nation is born with the disciples.

- ***Lastly, I want you to know that Judas is listed last in verse 19 on purpose by Mark.***
 - In every time that Judas is listed, he is listed last and his betrayal is also mentioned, every time.
 - We must remember that Judas was chosen by Jesus to serve. He gave evidence along the way that he was loyal to Christ, and served as the treasurer of the group.
- ***Judas is a great reminder to each of us that when we allow others to help us in the work of our personal ministries, people will disappoint us, fail us, and betray us.***
 - As much as that hurts, it's important to remember that Christ is faithful.
- Dr. Daniel aiken said ***'You would let them guard your back, believing they would take a bullet for you, only to discover the knife in your back has their prints on it.'***
 - So far this morning we've been able to see the Bombardment of People, the Battle with Demons, and befriending those that can help you.

Pressure Point #4: *The Blasphemy that you will receive. (V. 20-21)*

- 'Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. 21 And when his family

heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind."

- ***Being betrayed by friends is rough, but it's hard to accurately describe the pain in having a family member betray you, and turn their back.***
 - Verse 20 shows us that the crowds have gathered around Jesus again, and are most likely smothering Him, again.
 - ***In verse 20 it got to the point that He (Jesus), could not take care of His physical needs, such as eating.***
 - Which brings us to verse 21, and the actions of Jesus' family.
- ***Your Family may not Understand your Calling.***
 - ***This is the first mention of Jesus' family in Mark's Gospel.***
 - If Jesus' own earthly family didn't understand His calling, then why do we expect to always be understood by others?
 - ***Don't expect everyone to understand the calling that God has on your life.***
 - ***John 10:20 gives us the impression that they think He went crazy.***
 - It's very disturbing that they even went on to say 'He is out of His mind'
 - Jesus' family believes He is a religious freak/fanatic who is hurting the name of the

family and bringing shame upon them. They want Him to be stopped, they had no idea what He came to do and what He was seeking to do on their behalf.

- *People in your life may not understand why you share the Gospel with every waiter/waitress you have.*
- *People may not understand why you regularly attend an imperfect Church with imperfect people.*
- *People may not understand why you spent an entire week going to Church every night for VBS.*
- *People may not understand why you spend your 'free time' serving the Lord in different ways and ministries at the Church.*
- *People in your life may not understand these things and that's okay. They weren't meant to and they don't have too.*
 - You need to know what God has called you to do and be confident in that.
- Does the blasphemy and betrayal of those in our lives that we are close too hurt? Absolutely! Should it make us stop in our work and mission that Christ has given to us? Absolutely not.

Conclusion:

- *This morning it is my hope and prayer that you are able to see the Pressure Points of ministry straight from the life and ministry of Christ Jesus.*
 - I hope this morning that you were able to see that working and living for the Lord is not always easy.
- *You're going to have times where you need to take that break, take a rest, and let others help you.*
 - No matter what your ministry is, it's imperative that you know these pressure points, and learn from Jesus on how to deal with them, not if they happen, just when.
 - 'I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.'" John 16:33
- *The pressure points of the ministry that we looked at this morning from God's Word were:*
 - **Pressure Point #1: *The Bombardment of People. (V. 7-10)***
 - **Pressure Point #2: *The Battle with Demons. (V. 11-12)***
 - **Pressure Point #3: *Befriend those that can Help You. (V. 13-19)***
 - **Pressure Point #4: *The Blasphemy that you will receive. (V. 20-21)***