

Coming Into Focus: Out of the Way, Mark 4:35-6:6

Small Group Discussion Guide—2/3/2019

Have you ever been on a road trip and made a special stop for something? If so, how far out of your way did you go, and what was it you were willing to stop for? If now, what is something you would you be willing to go out of your way to stop for?

Read Mark 4:35-41

- Imagine you are one of the disciples – you’ve spent the day listening to Jesus teach, being around lots of people all day, etc – what would you be thinking when Jesus says “hey I’m not done for the day, let’s get in a boat and row ourselves 6 miles away.” Would you ask him any questions, just go along with it, or what would your response be?
- As the storm engulfs the little boat, the disciples don’t have time to devise a strategy, or work out the right thing to do, but rather they go with their instincts, which is to wake up Jesus. Why do they do this? What are they hoping to accomplish? What would be your reaction?
- Have you encountered any storms in your life recently, big or small? If so, was your reaction similar or different to that of the disciples? Does Jesus’s response to the storm in Mark’s story– of total calm, trust in God, perfect faith – help you navigate any storms in your life today?

Read Mark 5:1-20

- Imagine the dirtiest, nastiest, place you can think of, and what it might say about a person if they lived there. What do we see about God’s heart for humanity that Jesus would go so far out of his way to find even the grungiest of people?
- When Jesus starts talking to the evil spirits, He asked their name. Why do you think that is?
- Why does Jesus give in to the spirit’s request to be sent into the pigs?
- We don’t get to learn about the spiritual outcome of the pig farmers, but how do you think they responded to Jesus? What about when they heard the man’s account of the exorcism?
- The healed man wanted to be with Jesus in the boat, but Jesus said no. What fruit came of the man obeying Jesus and going back to his people?
 - We learned that this man became, in a way, the first Gentile missionary – that’s a pretty cool alternative to getting to join Jesus in the boat! Has God ever told you no for something you wanted to do, and then led you to do something even better?

Read Mark 5:25-34

- We read that *after* the woman was healed Jesus chooses to stop and talk to her. Why does he take the time for this?
- What do we again learn about Jesus's priorities?

Read Mark 5:22-24. 35-43

- In other stories we see religious rulers scoffing at Jesus, hating him, etc. What does it mean that this synagogue ruler seeks out Jesus for help?
- What if Jesus had gotten to the house earlier, before the little girl had died – how would this have changed the story?
- Since she was dead, it was “unclean” for Jesus to go in to see her. What do we again see about his heart for humanity?

Read Mark 6:1-6

- What caused the Nazarenes to “take offense” at Jesus?
- What “amazed” Jesus about this interaction?
- Pastor Josh suggested that these people were too familiar with Jesus to put their confidence in him. How can familiarity keep us from responding to Jesus in faith?

Bring it home:

- We see in all of these stories that Jesus will go far out of his way to restore a broken person—but that the restoration we long for only comes when we put our total confidence in him.
 - How has Jesus gone out of his way for you?
 - In what area are you having a hard time putting your confidence in Jesus?
 - Is there a character in one of today's stories with whom you most identify? Why?
 - Is there someone God is nudging you to go out of your way for?

Pray as a group for one another, in response to what you have discussed today. Ask God to open your eyes to the people He loves so deeply, who need you to go out of your way for them.