



July 12

Zach Kreeger

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Mark 7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What has been your best vacation ever? (short answers... light info to get folks talking... but move quick... we've got deeper work to do)
2. Zach mentioned the context of the book... the original audience being Roman Christians who were, for the first time in the book of Mark, catching a glimpse of where they fit into the story. Put yourself in their shoes (ironically, you are almost exactly in their shoes). How would the original audience have reacted? Measure your reaction to theirs and talk about it!
3. Jesus chose to go to a place where he was not naturally supposed to be. This woman, in turn, also chose to go where she wasn't supposed to be. For both, we can assume that each went there because something needed to be healed. What are things in your life or in our country (or even world) that need to be healed but that are uncomfortable places to 'go?' Think about teenagers, racism, sexuality, etc... Where are you not only carrying an opinion, but where are you personally interacting with people in that place? What does it look like to 'go there?' To 'displace' yourself?
4. Take a second to read the beginning of Mark 7... Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees over 'that which defiles.' What does this story have to do with the story of the Syrophoenician woman?
5. Jesus, for the first time, heals despite distance. Up till now, he's touched people or has spoken healing over them... but here, from a different part of town, he heals this woman's daughter. How does this point to his power? Does this personally affect you in any way?
6. Jesus is putting on display this idea of 'ministry' and 'withdrawal.' He was literally trying to go on vacation here. How are you doing with this rhythm in your own life? Are you engaging ministry well? When time to rest, do you rest well?
7. Mark's ultimate project in these first 8 chapters leads up to the question he will ask of Peter... "Who do you say that I am?" How has who you understood Jesus to be changed in this last season of life? Is he static in your life or are there ways that he's continuing to 'grow' for you? Are there places where, like Reinhold Niebuhr ("racism is wrong"... but never getting personally involved) or Peter ("you're the Messiah"... but then completely missing it till much later) where you have an inkling that you know the right words but actually don't understand them? What's the invitation to know him differently... bigger... in this next season?