

THE REAL JESUS
A Series on the Book of Mark
“Living Supernaturally”
Mark 6:30-44
New City Church of LA
December 28, 2008
Speaker: Kevin Haah

I. Vision of New City

Welcome to New City. We’re a multi-ethnic, multi-socioeconomic come-as-you-are church in downtown LA. We’re a church where everyone is welcomed.

We’re in the middle of a series called THE REAL JESUS. We’ve been going through the Book of Mark a passage at a time.

II. Introduction

Share the title.

Why it is a hard sermon to preach. It comes not because I think I am good at living supernaturally. I find it very it hard in my life. I tend to focus on natural things. But, as I was preparing, the text spoke clearly that we should live supernaturally. So, I am preaching this message to myself as I am preaching to you. I believe it is something that Jesus wanted to teach his disciples and it is something that he wants to teach us today.

I also think it is a very appropriate passage as we evaluate 2008 and plan for 2009. How have we been living? Have we been living supernaturally?

III. The Background and Today’s Passage

Jesus sent out the 12 disciples two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits. And when he sent them out, he told them to, verses 8-9, “Take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in your belt. Wear sandals but not an extra tunic.”

Why did Jesus tell his disciples to take no provisions for the journey?

For now, let's see what happened? Verse 12: "They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them."

Jumping to verse 30:

"The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest. So, they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place."

I am sure the disciples were really excited. I am sure Jesus was pretty excited. They actually got to preach and people listened. They cast out demons, and the demons actually came out. They anointed the sick and the sick were healed. They experienced the power of the Kingdom of God.

Have you ever gone on a mission trip? It's exciting. When I was in college, I went on a mission trip to Dominican Republic. We had a great time. God was doing some amazing things there through the missionaries and we got to experience what it was like to minister first hand. But, it was nothing like the mission trip that the apostle went on. They saw God working supernaturally through them. They saw God providing for them. I am sure they obeyed Jesus and took nothing with them; but, they were provided for. God provided for them. Jesus commanded them to take nothing with them because he wanted them to experience the reality that God provides for their needs.

Let's continue the reading:

Verse 33ff:

33But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. 34When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

35By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late. 36Send the people away so they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."

37But he answered, "You give them something to eat."

They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages[e]! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"

38"How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see."

When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish."

39Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.

(this is an interesting detail: fifty was the smallest unit of community that Moses divided the people of Israel into—Jesus is showing us that this is not just going to be a supernaturally experience in eating, but a supernatural experience of eating in community)

41Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. 42They all ate and were satisfied, 43and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. 44The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

The title of the sermon is “Living Supernaturally” because Jesus, in the way he sent out his disciples and the way he fed the multitude, is training his disciples to live supernaturally.

This passage tells us three things about living supernaturally: (1) What is living supernaturally, (2) how to live supernaturally; and (3) blessings of living supernaturally.

IV. First, What is Living Supernaturally?

Living supernaturally means asking God to help us and asking God for a miracle instead of just relying on our own limited resources. It never occurs to us that we ask beyond what can we do and think what can God do. Invite God to come in a do only what God can do.

We have to remember that we believe in a God who is the creator of the universe, and therefore, he is the creator of all food. He is the Lord God Almighty become human being.

This miracle, like all miracles, has eschatological significance. Let me explain what that means. Most of us, if I talk about the Kingdom of God or heaven, we think of it as a future event or place. It's a place we go when we die. Yes, in the future, there will be total reign of the Kingdom of God. That's the heaven we talk about.

- It has not yet come.
- It will come one day.

But, there is also in the NT a present aspect of the Kingdom of God, right now. Jesus says: The time has come; the kingdom of God is near. We see signs, we see dawning, we see a breaking-in, a budding, of the approaching kingdom. Jesus says: The kingdom of God is among you.

The Kingdom (heaven) is something that can be discovered and experienced now.

These 2 diagrams will help you understand better.

- Look at the first diagram.
 - The Jewish expectation was that **this age** would come to an end, and then **the age to come** would start.
 - The Messiah would immediately inaugurate a completed Kingdom.
- Jesus' teaching was a modification of that. And you'll see it in the second diagram.
 - Jesus' teaching is that with the arrival of Jesus, *this age* continues.
 - But the *age to come* has already started.
 - So, we're living at a time when we're both living in the **old age** and in the **new age**.
 - *What has happened is that the powers of the new age have broken into history.*
 - The technical term the theologians use is that there is an "eschatological in-breaking of the Kingdom of God."
 - Let me give you an illustration of what that might mean.

- Let's say that we had a February day that was sunny and hot, you'd say "this is an eschatological in-breaking of the summer."
- You might not say that, but if you were a theologian.
- The point is that it is the foretaste of what's to come.

And Jesus' ministry was like a foretaste of what's to come, Heaven, the Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven.

So, because we live in between the times, the power of the Kingdom of God breaks into our lives. That's what Christian living is. That's what living in the Kingdom of God is all about. It is the New Jerusalem—New City—now. It's like saying: thou will be done on earth as it is in heaven. There is another church in Florida called New City Church and their catch phrase is "as it is in heaven."

If the New Age has been inaugurated, we should expect the power of the Kingdom of God to break in to our lives.

That was what was going on when Jesus came: It was an eschatological in-breaking of the Kingdom of God. That's why there were casting out of demons, calming of storms, healing of sick, and multiplication of food. It shows us a glimpse of what it is going to be like in the future.

The disciples saw casting out of demons and healings and even calming of storms, but they never saw anything like this. They never saw him multiplying food like this. It never occurred to them. They compartmentalized the kingdom: it's about casting out demons and sharing the kingdom of God, but not about food. They defaulted to the natural practical reasoning. Jesus had a very different approach to it.

How often do we limit what God does because we don't even put the possibility on the table? So, we get sick. We don't even think for a moment about asking God to heal us. Finances. Maybe we try to deal with it but sometimes it doesn't occur to us to put this to God. Job. Ministry opportunities. What can God do, not just what can we do. Do what is natural for us to do, but don't limit God. Do it all and saturate it with prayer. Kingdom of God is about all parts of your life, not just "spiritual" part of your life. The reality is that God is still in the miracle working business. Miracles still do happen. So,

living supernaturally means to live our lives based on what God can do, not just what we can do.

V. Second, How Can We Live Supernaturally?

When it got a little late, the disciples came to Jesus and told him to send the people away so that they can get food from nearby villages. There's probably about 10,000 people here. They are in a remote area. I don't know if there is a village that can handle 10,000 people for dinner. But, it's better than starving.

They're thinking, I don't have the food to feed 10,000 people. What can I do?

Since there is nothing we can do, we should just eat our bread and fish. It is "what can I do" mindset. This is how we think when we see the problem is too big. I might as well feed me and my family.

- Given how massive the problem is, what can I do?
- Given how massive the problem of homelessness is, what can I do?
- Given...AIDS...
- Given the enormity of the world's problem,

It is a convenient kind of thinking. We think that big problems can only be tackled by big organization. The government's job. I've only got 5 loaves and fish. It's their responsibility. So, we think the best thing to do is to tell the government what to do with the resources. Yes, this is a good thing. Of course, there is no agreement on how the government should deal with it as well. Democrats and Republicans disagree on how to deal with it. BUT, never equate the work of the Kingdom of this World with the Kingdom of God. The big problems of the world are issues of the Kingdom of God. These are our issues. YOU give them something to eat! YOU do something about it. YOU. Yes, you have 5 loaves and 2 fish. YOU do something about it.

The hope of the planet is in the kingdom people using its resources and trusting God to use these resources. Have your influence in the Kingdom of this World. But, for the Kingdom of God people, we are called to live supernaturally with our resources.

If you have 5 loaves and fish, don't just think about feeding yourself. Ask God who you should share it with. Who should I share it with? If you only have 3 shirts, ask how you are supposed to share? Your time. Money. We are called to take however

much or little we have, and share it with others. That's living supernaturally. That's bringing up there down here!

VI. Third, When We Live Supernaturally, We Begin to Experience His Blessings.

The disciples picked up 12 basket full of broken pieces. You'll find when you obey God, and share whatever you have, He multiplies it to meet the needs you have. It's can't be coincidental that it was 12. It is tapping into the OT symbolism. Each Apostle has food the share with someone else. This principle of sharing and multiplying is foundational to kingdom living. The more we share, the more we have to share. If we are willing to step out into faith and start practicing it, you will find that it works.

Seek first the Kingdom of God and trust that God will give you all that you need. When Grace and I were considering whether I should leave practicing law and go into full time pastoral ministry, we were worried about finances. Am I going to be able to support our family? We made some decision to cut our expenses. We sold our house and bought a cheaper house. God has provided us with everything we need.

The Kingdom principle is to share with one another supernaturally!

The more you share, the more you have to share. But, don't do this legalistically: "Each of you should give what your heart has decided to give, but not out of compulsion." Follow the leading of the Spirit in your life. God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all time, you have all that you need. The more you share the more you have to share. IT means you have to step out into faith. This is not a get rich principle. It's not name it and claim it principle. All these people did not have much ,but they blessed others.

I want to challenge us to rebuke what can I do mindset or it's someone else's problem mindset or I only have what I need mindset. And live supernaturally because God can do more with a person who is willing to share with 2 fish and 5 loaves than the leftover of the rich.

VII. Conclusion

I want you to understand that God know what you need more that you know what you need. Sometimes, what you need is not material things. You still have to trust God. To live supernaturally means that you are willing to go where Jesus went. You are willing to follow our God.

Think about Jesus. There is an irony here. He has all of the power that created the universe at his disposal, yet, he became the broken bread, going down all the way to the cross, to the weakest point imaginable. So, be careful about using this passage to get what you want. It's about following Jesus and his leading, wherever it leads, supernaturally.