What Matters

Mark 1: 9 – 20

**Introduction:** You know, I’m not getting any younger. I find that as I get older I tend to reflect more on my life. I like to look at where I am and where I am planning to go. I like to think about how I am doing now and how can I do it better the next time. I am usually trying to see what I can learn, but also know that it is important to evaluate things. It’s wonderful to reevaluate what’s most important in our lives and to determine what deserves more of our attention. I am pretty sure we all evaluate the things in our lives and we also have to evaluate where we are in our faith. Do you ever wonder if you’re doing enough for God? In our passage today, Jesus gives us some great guidance as to what matters. Let’s look together at Mark 1:9 – 20 and see what Jesus shows us that really matters.

1. **Pleasing God in the Ordinary Events of Life (vv. 9–11).** There is so much we can look at in this passage, but understanding the context gives us great insight.
   1. Jesus hadn’t preached a sermon yet (unless you count His excursion in the temple at age 12 in Luke 2); He hadn’t performed any miracles; He had done nothing in the category of “full-time” Christian work!
   2. What had He done? He worked in a carpenter’s shop.
   3. So what really matters here? It is that it doesn’t matter what our occupation is, but what matters is our obedience in whatever we do. Jesus was obedient to His father and was baptized even though he was without sin.
   4. This can be seen as a commissioning scene, where God authorized him for His future ministry.
2. **Following God Even When Tempted to Turn Away (vv. 12–13).**
   1. What really matters? Following God even when tempted to turn away, saying no to the draws of sin.
   2. We need to understand that temptation is not sin (Heb. 2:14). Jesus Himself was tempted, but He followed God even when tempted to turn away.
   3. We can apply the ideas here by asking ourselves some difficult questions:
3. What are my most difficult temptations?
4. When do they most commonly strike?
5. Why do they come at that time and place?
6. How can I avoid them?

We must be “pro-active” in dealing with temptation, and not simply “re-active.”

1. **Telling Others about God’s Wonderful Salvation (vv. 14–15).**
   1. Jesus preached repentance and shared the gospel, the Good News.
   2. Repentance is turning away from our sins. The gospel would be incomplete, however, if we had nowhere to turn to: That’s why Jesus preached the Good News, too!
   3. He once told the story of a woman who lost a silver coin and the desperate search which followed. What did she do when she found it? She rejoiced and called together her friends to celebrate! You see, good news is for sharing; there’s no better news than the gospel of Jesus Christ!
2. **Living as a Disciple (vv. 16–20).** These verses show us how Jesus called His disciples, unique in some ways, but very much the same as He calls us to discipleship today.
   1. **The Call to Discipleship.** Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee. But this was more than a casual afternoon stroll. Jesus was looking for people. He found Peter and Andrew, James and John. They were fisherman. They were not from the religious elite. They were not scribes, or Levites, or priests, or rabbis. They were not Pharisees or Sadducees. They were common people, ordinary individuals like you and me. In choosing these individuals, Jesus is making a statement to us. He can use ordinary people if we are willing to follow Him.
   2. **The Meaning of Discipleship.** The word *discipleship* has been used in a variety of different ways in our culture. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ? Jesus asks us to *leave other things behind and follow Him.* Christ’s call demands that we give Him our supreme allegiance (Luke 14:26). Scripture teaches us that *who He is demands that we follow.* Jesus is no ordinary man: He is God come in the flesh. How could we do anything but follow Him?
   3. **The Rewards of Discipleship.** First, *we are transformed by His power!* Our job is to follow; His job is to transform. As we follow Jesus, He gives us the power to become what He wants us to be. Secondly, *we are fulfilled beyond measure* (John 12:24). One of the ironies in Scripture is that if a person seeks to save his or her life, they will lose it.

It is only in losing our lives that we find them. Only as we turn our lives over to Jesus wholeheartedly can we find true fulfillment in life.

**Conclusion:** Jesus began His ministry exemplifying these four things that really matter. During His ministry, He taught them to be His followers in what we know from our Bibles as the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. The Great Commandment is to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:37–38). This leads to the Great Commission, to tell the world about Christ (Matt. 28:18–20)! You see my brothers and sisters, you glorify Christ in all that you do, even in the everyday stuff. Let the joy of Christ fill your hearts and lead you. Take this joy and share it with those around you. Today, I want to challenge you to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with another person this week. It can be a family member, a friend, a colleague… anyone. Remember what really matters when the day is done. I’ll give you a hint…..it starts with Jesus and ends with Christ.

Eph. 6:23 – 24 (NRSV)

|  |
| --- |
| ‎‎23 Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith,  from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. |
| ‎‎24 Grace be with all who have an undying love for our  Lord Jesus Christ. |