

## THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING

In chapter six of the gospel of Mark, while we see many miracles performed by Jesus, we also see that teaching was at the center of everything He did. The opening of the chapter tells us Jesus was in His home country and *“He began to **teach** in the synagogue”* (Mark 6:2). When He was rejected there, He then *“went about in a circuit, **teaching**”* (Mark 6:6). When Jesus sent His disciples out two by two, *“they went out and **preached** that people should repent”* (Mark 6:12), and later they came back and reported *“what they had **taught**”* (Mark 6:30). To cap it off, when Jesus and His disciples tried to find solitude, the multitudes ran ahead to meet them. When Jesus saw the multitude, Mark tells us He *“was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd, so He began to **teach** them many things”* (Mark 6:34).

What is this teaching and why is it so important as to be at the center of all Jesus did? We begin to answer this question by looking back to the very beginning of the gospel. After Jesus was baptized and identified as God’s beloved Son (Mark 1:9-11), and tempted in the wilderness for forty days (Mark 1:12-13), He began His public ministry. Mark tells us, *“Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel’”* (Mark 1:14-15). This summary statement at the outset of His ministry indicates the centrality of teaching to His mission.

Why, of all the things compassion could motivate one to do, did Jesus’ compassion motivate Him to teach? He had compassion because He knew their spiritual condition: lost in sin, separated from their heavenly Father, and destined for eternal condemnation. What is the answer to their condition? The teaching of the gospel. Jesus’ disciples stayed with Him when others left Him because He had *“the words of eternal life”* (John 6:68). Paul tells us the gospel *“is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes”* (Rom. 1:16).

How is this message to continue to be brought to those who need it? Through teaching. Paul asks the question, *“How shall they hear without a preacher?”* (Rom. 10:14). However, this teaching is not limited to those who hold the title “preacher.” In Acts 8, when the Christians in Jerusalem were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria due to persecution, we read that *“those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word”* (Acts 8:4). Paul tells Timothy, *“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”* (2Tim. 2:2). The Hebrew writer rebuked those who had been Christians for a while and yet were unprepared to teach others: *“For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God”* (Heb. 5:12).

What is the importance of teaching the gospel? It is the only hope for salvation to a lost and dying world. Who should be involved in teaching the gospel? Everyone who has been saved by the gospel. It is that important!