

Hearing God's Voice In The Circumstances of Life, pt.2, Mark 6

Introduction

1. Willow Value
2. Modern Story
3. Mark 6 summary
 - a. They still didn't understand the significance of the miracle of the loaves. Their hearts were too hard to take it in – Mark 6.52.
 - b. How the story was supposed to go

How God gets our attention through circumstances:

- I am not suggesting that He is always speaking through these circumstances, but you will never know until you begin reflecting deeper.
- Problems, Worries, Hardships & Trials
 - Crossing the sea of Galilee in a windstorm
 - I believe Jesus wanted them to rebuke it
 - Persecution for spreading the gospel
 - The HS would give them the words to say
- Frustrations & Confusions
 - The time they were supposed to spend time alone with Jesus
 - They had to adapt
- Insecurities, Uncertainties & Fears
 - Jesus walking on water late at night
 - Jesus assures them of his presence
 - Peter walking on water and he grew afraid
 - He had little faith so there is an opportunity to grow; he realized the level of his faith.
- Hurts & Woundedness
 - We tend to deal with all these things at a surface level. They are like mini fires that we extinguish and then move to the next. It's an annoyance that we get past
 - We tend to have the same approach over time and God wants to awaken that in us
- Challenges & Opportunities
 - Feeding 5000
 - They could have multiplied the bread
 - Relationship challenges
- Recurring Themes & Experiences
 - Second time they had been caught in a windstorm
 - First of two times that Jesus would feed a multitude
 - First of two times they would go on missionary trips without Jesus
- Growing Edges
 - Going out 2 by 2 to heal and cast out demons

- Joys
 - Returning to be with Jesus
- Observations
 - In the Matt account (Mt.10) Jesus said to look at how the Father takes care of the birds and aren't they more valuable than birds.

The Great Inhibitors to Hearing God's Voice in Circumstances

- Noise, Clutter & Constant Activity
 - Phones, social media, instant access to everything – it is creating a society that does not pause and ponder; it's creating people who no longer wonder or collectively think deeply. Everything has to be short, enjoyable, and not too challenging.
 - I think the increase of indifference towards following God or grappling with eternal issues is partially due to clutter of light pollution. Our sky is so filled with man-made light that we no longer see the galaxy as it truly is. When you see the night sky as God intended it absolutely causes you to pause and think.
 - Part of the reason the disciples did not grasp the miracle of the loaves is b/c they were so busy that they did not stop and follow up with Jesus when he said, "You feed them." They just saw the huge need and thought they needed to disperse the crowd. They could have done the miracle if they had just stopped and inquired, but they just jumped to conclusion
 - I believe this is a reason why God built the Sabbath into the weekly cycle. You have to stop, pause and reflect.
 - With tithing, it's the pause that makes it more than paying another bill. It is remembering He is my source.
 - Weariness of the soul. It's the constant wind with no rain that leads to a desert.
- Pain, Hurt, Fear & Woundedness
 - With these realities, we automatically get into a defensive mode while God may be trying to speak to us. He understands the reaction, but over time it shuts us off from hearing Him other than the comforting things.
 - Our fear drives us away from the deeper work of God. We automatically move into resistance when other options are available.
 - The disciples were terrified when they saw Jesus walking on the water. They reflexively proclaimed from a point of fear that Jesus was the son of God, but they didn't get the second half of the communicate which was it was possible for them to do this
 - The trauma of that experience kept them from hearing the deeper message.
 - The same happens with us. I have witnessed too many rebound marriages. A person is hurt and instead of allowing God to heal, renew and reimagine a person they just jump right into another relationship b/c of need or fear and it ends up disastrous.
 - Elijah did this with Jezebaals threats. He just ran away when his life was threatened, when God wanted Him to stay. Eventually, he came around but only after his mind and emotions were settled. God could not talk with him, b/c he was so unsettled with fear.
 - Stephanie's direction with Parkinson's disease. There was the initial fear, but she didn't just accept the diagnosis and take her medication. She opened herself to God speaking to her through these circumstances. She dealt with deep underlying fears; renewed her mind concerning the way she should think and her perspective about this disease

(seeing it as an enemy and not a friend), working on her diet, going to counseling, stress management, sleep, physical body with exercise and massages, etc.

- **Not changing the frequency.**

- Traveling away from a radio station and not scanning the radio to hear the broadcast elsewhere. We just shut off the radio rather than search for another station.
- It's what we do with circumstances that don't seem to have an answer or where our current responses are not working. This is especially true with ongoing or long term circumstances.
 - We get into a closed off mindset and we discount or down play other options or voices or we assume there are no other options.
 - WE might dabble around with a new response, but we do not give it enough time to really take root which will lead to long term change. We become impatient.
- Not challenging old mindset & patterns. If after a period of time you are still responding in unhealthy ways to the negative circumstances in your life – drinking, anger, isolation, escape, depression, compulsive behavior, apathy, self-centeredness, codependency, etc, - it is time to change the channel. God is trying to speak to you through you on a different channel.
- The disciples needed to change the frequency to see that this was possible for them. "We can't feed these people" was the wrong answer! When you keep going back to the same answer for your negative circumstance then you are missing the voice of God.

Why hasn't God spoken yet?

- **Maybe He has and it didn't take root.**
 - Mark 6.52 – Their hearts were too hard to take it in.
 - Parable of the soils in Mk 4.13-20
- **He is waiting for you to diligently seek the answer – Mt.7.7-8.**
 - We want an answer or direction quickly and God wants us to seek for it. God sometimes does not release the word until He knows that you will treasure it - The Parable of the Treasure in the Field.
 - God doesn't always come to the door the first time you knock. He waits to see if you're really ready to act.
 - He's not responding b/c He is bothered by you or uncaring but b/c he knows you just want a quick fix to a deep issue.
- **You want answer to your circumstance and God is giving you an answer for your heart.** In other words, it is not about our circumstance, but about our lives that God is working resolution to a circumstance. We are looking for an answer to resolve a problem on the outside, when God is working to renew us from the inside.

The Antidote

- John 20 – How did John realize Jesus had resurrected before all the other disciples? The ladies who went to the tomb saw the angels and Jesus. Later, Jesus appeared to all the disciples, but John believed he had risen just by observing the circumstances.
- **Separation/Pause**

- You have to shut down the inhibitors. Peter saw the exact thing John did, but he did not know what it meant. He was in full forward momentum crisis mode (reacting), while John was physically and mentally pausing.
- Get quiet; create space – quiet lunches, mini retreats for an afternoon, Sabbath keeping, intentional breaks

- **Reflection/Ponder**

- John paused and reflected on what he saw in the empty tomb, the testimony of the ladies and then the resurrection Scriptures which until then made no sense to anyone.
- Probe – What does this circumstance reveal about God...His plan for me...the condition of my interior life...my relationships...similar themes in my life...etc?
- The reflection can take on many forms: Journaling, reading, going deep into a subject, listening to others, life coach

- **Digestion/Process**

- When God speaks to us through a circumstance its application is usually far wider than just that circumstance.
- What did the resurrection mean to John? The ramifications of the resurrection were far greater than just having Jesus back for the disciples. It meant the salvation of mankind.
- As we discern God's voice in life's circumstances, we have to let a truth work its way through our lives. This takes months and years of digestion