

# Take ACTION

Weekly Sermon Insert and Devotional

LOVE • LEARN • SHARE • SERVE

## Week of January 18th

Action Point: Mark 4:1-34

**LOVE God and One Another:** This week we take a closer look at the parables and their ties to other passages of scripture.

**LEARN From the Journey:** Prayer for each day: *God, thank you for your Word. Help me to see new things today so I can love others in new ways. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

**SHARE the Word of God:** What would it look like to share the word in action and not “quotes?” Look for a passage this week that you can share that helps you better understand God’s love or God’s presence in your life.

**Monday** Read Mark 4:1 and Mark 2:13; 3:7. Why would Jesus spend so much time around the sea? Why was this a good teaching spot? 1. If you have been to Galilee, you know that it is beautiful and green. 2. Capernaum was his home, and 3. Sound travels better across water which is why he taught from a boat when the crowds got bigger.

**Tuesday** Read Mark 4:3-8, John 15:5, and Colossians 1:6. What does the parable of the sower have to do with these other two sections? How do they help you understand what Jesus is trying to teach while using these analogies/parables?

**Wednesday** Read Mark 4:11, 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; Colossians 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:12, and 1 Timothy 3:7. Who are the “outsiders” in our community? What do these passages teach us about how to treat those outside the church? What might this teach us about hospitality?

**Thursday** Read Mark 4:12, Isaiah 6:9-10. This sounds really harsh, but it is a truth we must wrestle with. There is light enough for those seeking to find, but ample darkness for those who are committed to selfish pursuits. How do we live and share the gospel in a way that helps others determine to seek with all their hearts? What pitfalls might we avoid to prevent folks from “wandering in the darkness?”

**Friday** Read Mark 4:19, 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17; 1 John 2:15-17. How do these passages look next to our continual obsession with a Powerball prize? Methodists are very publicly against gambling because of the idolatry of wealth but also the false hope it brings to those who are suffering. How do we avoid the temptation to jump in to the “fun” of pretending to spend money that will never come our way?

**Saturday** Read Mark 4:22, Jeremiah 16:17. We all love our privacy and with all the digital means for communication it continually comes to the forefront. But what about spiritual privacy? Can we do or think anything apart from God? Can we work on things where God can't see what we are doing? No. So why do we behave like we have the power to hide things? Deep down it is how we are wired, like Adam and Eve hiding in the garden, pretending God will not find them. Shame can be a good thing, not to define us but to hold us in check that the path we are on is destructive and harmful. I heard someone say at a concert once, “You might as well be up front with God on all your desires, especially the sinful ones, because God already knows it anyway and if you give in you'll just have to confess it later.” Confession is good. Communication with Christ is even better.

**SERVE:** Parables are stories that help us understand God’s love for everyone. Share a story with someone that might show God’s love or make them smile.