

It's Impossible

Part 1: Impossibly Willing

Mark 1:40-45

INTRO

Young- Anything is possible! Believe in yourself and chase your dreams!

My Kids- Army spaceman.

But... **As we get older, our list of what's impossible gets longer**

And we settle for just getting through life... stop dreaming... stop trying... stop believing... stop risking... stop living

What happened to us?

Grew up? Faced reality? Maybe a bit. But sadder than that...

Been disappointed too often, seen the same scenarios play out over and over, life is harder than we ever thought, believing in ourselves can only take us so far...

We can only do so much... The life we actually want can't happen...

The inevitable conclusion we eventually reach? It's impossible.

- They will never change
- I'll never get it right
- It's hopeless... there's no way out.
- It's too late

I'd agree... except for one person...

An obscure, jewish rabbi in the ancient middle east. Who did impossible things and said even more impossible things... things like...

John 10:27-30 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

"Give eternal life, guaranteed... the Father (God) and I are one."

- Not just in essence, purpose... actually sharing the same divine quality... both equally God.

Now THAT's Impossible. Sounds like the ravings of a mad man... "I'm Theodore Roosevelt!"

If you are not totally convinced about this whole Jesus thing, I understand! It's a lot to swallow. But what if there's even the tiniest chance that it's true? What if Jesus really was/is God... what does that mean... what does that show us about who God really is? What does it say about who we really are and can be?

Eye-witness accounts- full of impossible things...

But if we take a deeper look we will see... **with Jesus, impossible is the only thing that's actually possible.**

Disclaimer- talking about miracles. Skeptical? Good reason to be... just give yourself a little open mindedness... if Jesus was who he said he was why wouldn't he do things like this?

GOD- Mark/Peter- Earliest biography. Mid-60's still eye-witnesses to ask.

Jumps into impossible stories... one of the first is about a man with leprosy...

V. 40 A man with leprosy came and knelt in front of Jesus, begging to be healed. "If you are willing, you can heal me and make me clean," he said.

Leprosy- Incurable at time. Contagious. **Leper colonies.** "Unclean!"-Outcast from society/religion...

Leprosy probably not an issue for you... but there's something that is... isn't there?

- Might be physical... but for most it's an emotional pain/sickness.
- Broken relationships...
- Some might be your fault... for many it's not your fault... but it feels somehow like it is.
- Been hurt, rejected, alone, not understood, manipulated, not loved the way you needed/deserved.
- Long for healing... to be clean, be rid of the hurt, physical or otherwise.
- But given up... just going to be a part of you forever... impossible to ever really be gone.
- And if you ever really let someone in and see the mess that's going on behind the scenes they would never look at you the same, they would run- either physically or emotionally.
- Result- isolation/separation.

Man made the right first step... He didn't fully understand everything about Jesus (I don't either) but knew that... "You CAN heal me and make me clean."

- 'I don't know much about you but if what you say is true... if you are willing, you can do the impossible.'

He didn't know Jesus well enough to know if he was willing to heal him... Which many of us can relate to, because...

Sometimes it's easier to accept that God is ABLE to do the impossible than that he is WILLING

It's not hard for us to accept that if Jesus is who he says he is he can do the impossible (pretty logical actually)... it's often much more difficult to accept that he is willing to do the impossible for us.

You could heal this... but do I deserve it? Have I made too much of a mess? Do you even care?

Is it possible for GOD to actually care about little us, dirty us, rejected us, to do anything about it? Seems impossible...

V. 41 Moved with Compassion...

Jesus proved that God is not distant. God is not waiting to judge. He is compassionate... so much so that it moves him to act.

Jesus shows us God's heart.

Sees what we go through, understands it better than we do... sees his beloved child hurting... is he willing? He is more than willing... he is filled with compassion...

V. 41-42 Moved with compassion, Jesus reached out and touched him. "I am willing," he said. "Be healed!" Instantly the leprosy disappeared, and the man was healed.

Touched him- Nobody would have done that... contagious...

Often the pain/hurt/dirt inside of us makes us try to avoid, even run from, God... afraid of being exposed.. He'd judge us... won't accept us... Refuses to be defiled by such filth...

BUT When Jesus touches unclean things... they become clean.

In the story of the Adam and Eve- when they first sinned... shame made them hide from God (our natural reaction)... God comes to garden and asks "Where are you?" He knew... it was for their benefit... "Why are you hiding... I'm the one who can heal."

Good question for all of us... Where are you? In relationship to God? Where are you hiding? What impossible would you like Jesus to touch and heal?

Didn't have to touch him to heal him... why do you think?

Jesus then sends the man on his way saying, "Don't tell anyone. Just go show the priest so he can see you're clean and you can go back to your community..."

Jesus still concerned about the man's restoration... not his own fame.

V. 45 But the man went and spread the word, proclaiming to everyone what had happened.

The man just couldn't help himself. Would YOU be able to keep this a secret?

Seemed impossible minutes before... death sentence, outcast, isolated, unclean forever... b/c of Jesus now able to talk to EVERYONE.

When Jesus touches your life (hurt/pain/all) it becomes clean... and can be used to show his love to others. "Look what he has done for me... he can do it for you."

YOU: What seems impossible?

- Relationship, guilt, fear, loneliness, etc...

Jesus IS willing to heal and restore.

No, it won't always look the way we want, or happen the way we want... what we actually need healed might not be what we think it is... but

when Jesus touches the impossible anything is possible.

And he might use something other than instant healing... counseling, a book, a friend, an unexpected event...

Story- Friend: guilt/fear of explaining life to God... Liz- "he already knows and already accepts you." Watched before my eyes the healing/cleansing/life.

Like the man... Be willing to come to him...

Prayer: Jesus this is impossible. Please do your thing.

WE:

We all face so many impossible situations... both externally and internally...

What is it that you have given up on? Who is it?

What impossible thing comes to your mind right now?

And if we are left on our own they ARE impossible...

But Jesus is willing to step in and make the impossible happen.

If Jesus were to say to you, "I am willing," what impossible thing would you want to ask him to make possible?

If Jesus is who he said he is, what does that make possible now? Who could we be? How could we live?

If nothing is truly impossible, what's possible for you?

Questions

1. What personally stood out to you in this message and/or passage? Why do you think that is?
2. Jon said, "Sometimes it's easier to accept that God is ABLE to do the impossible than that he is WILLING." Do you agree or disagree, why? How do you think Romans 8:31-32 helps with this idea?
3. If Jesus were to say to you, "I am willing," what impossible thing would you ask him to do? How can your group pray for you in this?