

The Gospel of Mark Thou Art All Compassion

Interpreting the Text:

1. How do the characters in these healing stories exhibit their faith? What is Mark trying to teach its readers about faith?
2. Mark's storytelling has come up a number of times, but is especially notable here with his use of a 'story sandwich.' What does the positioning of the story of the woman with the flow of blood inside of the story of the healing of Jairus' daughter do for our understanding of Jesus' healing abilities? Does this storytelling strategy tell us about how Jesus operates in the world?
3. What is the relationship between power and mercy in Mark's Gospel? How are these two ideas different between the story of the woman with a flow of blood and the story of Jairus' daughter?
4. How is Mark's story of John the Baptist's death similar to and different from that of Jesus' death?

Applying the Text:

1. The Gospel of Mark is full of miracles. How can we understand these stories in modern times? Do we need to reconcile the miracles with modern science?
2. With whom do you identify in these healing stories – the fearful disciples, the distraught man, the insistent woman, the grieving father? Why?
3. The stories in this section of Mark feature, what Dr. Bartlett and Dr. Hinton call "insiders and outsiders." How can we think about these examples as we interact with people in and around our own communities? How does Jesus model engagement with those considered by society to be 'insiders' or 'outsiders'?