**The Gospel of Mark -- A Disciple’s Mirror**

***Reflections on Following Jesus -*** From A Handbook on Cross-Bearing

Mark 4:35–6:6

***Profiles in Faith. . .*** Or, Real Life Believing in Jesus

**What’s (happening in) the story?** Jesus responds to faith / unbelief.

Faith is our link with God, so understanding what it is and how it works is vital. This section highlights different aspects of faith as individuals encounter life with Jesus. Their fears, failures, and problems are just like those we face, and so Mark gives us a true faith workshop.

**What’s the challenge in the story?** How is my confidence in Jesus?

In each story someone is confronted with a decision to trust or not. Mark wants us to see ourselves in the places of these people, asking ourselves, “Is my faith real?”

**What are the key elements in the story?**

No two people or situations are alike. The key is understanding that faith is a “now” response in which we apply God’s presence and promises in real time. Here are five profiles of faith we can compare our own:

Profile 1: Crisis Faith. Faith lives in the now. 4:35-41

“Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?”

 A Storm: The disciples woke Jesus to scold Him, not ask for help.

Profile 2: Vocal Faith. Faith witnesses to Jesus’ power. 5:1-20

 “The man began to proclaim how much Jesus had done for him.”

 Demons: The crowd dismissed Jesus, but this man treasured Him.

Profile 3: Persistent Faith. Faith perseveres. 5:21-24, 35-43

“Do not fear. Only believe.”

 Dead Raised: The crowd laughed at Jesus’ words, but Jairus did not.

 Profile 4: Desperate Faith. Faith draws God’s power. 5:25-34

 “Jesus perceived that power had gone out from Him.”

 Instant Healing: Many jostled Jesus, but hers was the touch of faith.

Profile 5: Anti-Faith. Unbelief rejects God. 6:1-6

“He could do no mighty work there. . . He marveled at their unbelief.”

 Hometown: Unbelievers cut themselves off from His grace.

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?**

Jesus’ comforting words and powerful works call us to trust Him to work grace in us and for us in every life situation, unlike those who reject His power, ignore His Word, and refuse His grace.

***So let’s take a look at ourselves in Mark’s mirror. . .***

* When I encounter “storms,” do I ask help of Jesus or scold Him?

(Financial, relational, temptation, or anxiety storms) 1 Peter 5:7

* When Jesus seems “slow” in answering, how do I respond?

(Health, employment, guidance, or project delays) Matthew 11:25-30

* Is my unbelief a barrier to Jesus’ power? Have I “touched” Him?

(Do I believe Jesus has power over addictions and emotional scars?) Matthew 23:37-39

* Is my relationship with Jesus something I share gladly with others?

 (Boldness in witness, courage to speak the truth in love) Ephesians 6:19, 20