

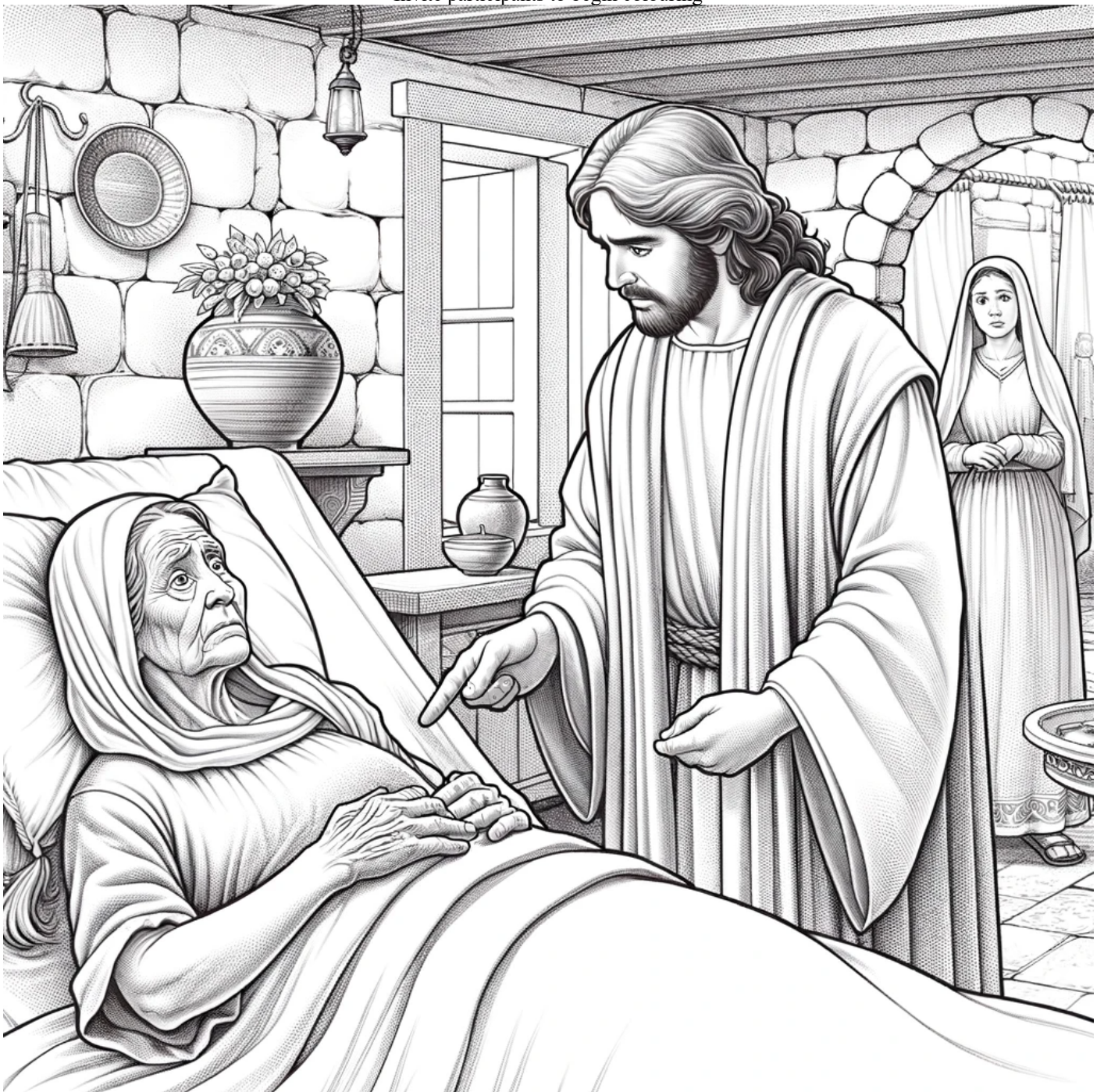
Mindful Colouring

The Paradox of Jesus' Hidden Power

As we light this candle
And ring the bell
We pray that God is with us this day.

Close your eyes
Place your hand on your belly. Notice your breathe as your belly moves.
Breathe in through your nose and out
Through your mouth.
Breathe in and breathe and out
Repeat for 1 minutes.

Invite participants to begin colouring



Scripture - Mark 1:29-39

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Scripture Reflection

Mark's Gospel is notably concise, presenting Jesus as a man of swift and decisive action. In Mark 1:29-39, we see Jesus healing, praying, and preaching - his ministry is dynamic and urgent. Unlike the other Gospels, which often feature extended teachings, Mark focuses on Jesus' deeds, inviting us to ponder the unseen: the faith behind the actions.

For the early Christians, these stories were living oral traditions, stirring deep discussions about Jesus' miraculous works and the nature of his healing power. They wondered about Jesus' return, reflecting on his life and ministry post-resurrection. These reflections were not mere historical inquiries but were deeply personal and communal, engaging with the profound mysteries of faith.

Jesus' healing in Mark is not a display of worldly power but an exhibition of God's strength manifesting through perceived weakness. This paradoxical power flows through Jesus, setting a pattern for us to follow. It invites us to let go of our preconceptions and worldly ambitions, to embrace humility, and to allow God to work within us, often in mysterious ways that defy our understanding.

In today's context, we are faced with the same fundamental questions: Are we ready to open ourselves to God's transformative presence? Can we relinquish our desires to construct personal kingdoms of material wealth and instead allow Jesus to touch and shape our lives in unanticipated ways? This journey towards faith requires a surrender to the mystery of God's workings, a leap into the arms of grace.

As we reflect on Jesus' actions in Mark's narrative, we are called to embody the humility and service shown by those who were healed by Jesus and immediately began to serve others. The kingdom Jesus proclaimed was not built on dominance but on loving service, on the healing of bodies and spirits, and on the shared life of the community.

In emulating Jesus, we, too, are invited to live out our faith through acts of love and service, embracing a life of prayer and openness to the divine. It is a faith that acts, a belief that breathes through the very fabric of our being, transforming us and our communities in the process.

Silent Reflection

Silently reflect on the today's scripture passage and its meaning for us today. Reflect on the questions for reflection.

Discussion

1. Who is Jesus to us personally?
2. How does Mark paint Jesus as? What does Jesus look like? Give 3 examples.
3. What role does faith play?
4. Why do you think Jesus wanted to hide what he had done and move on?
5. How might material wealth or power get in the way?
6. How do we enter God's kingdom?
7. How can we be like Jesus?

Prayers of the faithful

1. We pray that in the footsteps of Christ, who healed and served without pause, Teach us to embody true humility, To serve others with the love Jesus showed. May our hands become extensions of your healing, Our lives a testament to your unfathomable grace. Lord hear us.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

2. We pray in a world that prizes certainty and control, Help us to embrace the mystery of your ways. Give us the courage to ask, like the early Christians, "Who is Jesus?" and "How might we live out His message?" Open our hearts to the whisper of your Spirit, That we may grow in faith and love. Lord hear us.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

3. We pray and recognise that Jesus you walked the earth healing, praying, and serving. Guide our steps to follow your path, To seek not the kingdoms of earth but of heaven. Mold us into your likeness, That in every action and every word, We may declare the coming of your kingdom. Lord hear us.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

4. God, your ways are not our ways, your thoughts not our thoughts. In the spirit of the early believers, we seek understanding, Yet we stand in awe of the mystery of your works. Help us to trust in your unseen hand guiding our lives, To live in faithful anticipation of your divine touch, And to find peace in the mysteries of your kingdom. We pray to the Lord.

ALL - Lord hear our prayer.

5. Are there any other prayer?

Closing prayer

Heavenly Father, We come before You with hearts open to the teachings of Your Son, Jesus, as captured in the Gospel of Mark. We marvel at His swift and decisive actions, His healing touch that brought comfort to the afflicted, and His quiet moments of prayer that connected heaven and earth. Lord, we are inspired by the urgency of Jesus' ministry, the dynamic expression of Your love through His deeds. Help us to embody the same sense of purpose in our lives, to act with compassion, and to serve those around us with a humble heart. In the challenges we face today, stir in us the same fundamental questions of faith. Open our hearts to Your transformative presence, and give us the courage to relinquish our desires for control, making room for Your divine touch. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Healer and Redeemer, we pray. Amen.