

When Should We Keep A Secret?

The *International Sunday School Lesson* for Sunday July 13, 2008
Mark 1:29-45

“After sternly warning him Jesus sent him away at once, saying to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them’” (Mark 1:43-44—NRSV).

“And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them” (Mark 1:43-44—KJV).

Jesus did not seek celebrity status, honor, or praise from people. He healed people, but not because He wanted to be widely known as a faith healer. Early in His ministry, after He made a significant impact upon a town and the multitudes began searching for Him, Jesus moved on to new towns. Teaching the truth was His primary focus of attention. He wanted people to hear what He said; not just come to Him for what He could do for them (see Mark 1:36-39). Nothing could be more important to Jesus’ followers than learning what Jesus taught and striving to do what He said. Can we say that of ourselves today?

The words Jesus spoke are “spirit and life” to those who believe (John 6:63-64). His disciples recognized that Jesus had the words of eternal life (John 6:68). Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record Jesus’ declaration that, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Mark 13:31; Matthew 24:35; Luke 21:33). How seriously do most people take Jesus’ words today?

These facts explain why Jesus told the leper He had cleansed, “say nothing to anyone.” If the crowds became too large and too many came only for Jesus to meet their physical needs, many would not hear His words of eternal life. Indeed, after the healed leper disobeyed Jesus, “Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country.” Still, “people came to him from every quarter” (Mark 1:45).

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