**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr. September 26th, 2021**

**Jesus, I Shrunk The Church**

Mark 9:38-41

**Key Truth:** As Christians, we need to be careful not to make friends into foes.

**Understanding the Passage:**

1. John made the mistake of trying to define who was a

 legitimate follower of Jesus based on their affiliation to them.

2. Jesus understood the power of influence and friendships.

**What Defines A Person Outside the Circle Of Faith**:

1. A person who rejects Jesus. **John 3:16-19**

2. A person who claims to believe but preaches a different

 gospel. **Galatians 1:6-9**

3. A person who loves to argue and cause division among

 believers. **Proverbs 6:19, Titus 3:9-11**

**Lessons We Can Learn:**

1. Don’t let minor differences cause major divisions in the Body

 of Christ.

2. We don’t have exclusive rights to Jesus.

3. Don’t think that your way is the only way to follow Jesus.

4. Give grace to those you think may be wrong.

5. Remember, you are not the spiritual police. **Romans 14:10-12**

**Taking It Beyond The Walls**: Strive for unity with all believers. Be more concerned about your own spiritual life than with others.

**Connection Group Homework**

Looking back at your notes, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Mark 9:38-41: Why did John try to stop another person from trying to drive out demons? Why did Jesus approve of the other man’s actions?

What final point of application does Jesus make in verse 40 and 41? How does it apply to us today?

Jesus drew circles but always included more people than anyone else would. As you read through the following stories, how do you see Jesus bringing someone into his circle that most people would leave out?

Luke 19:1-10

Mark 5:25-34

Luke 18:35-42

What might be some modern-day equivalents to the people we see Jesus reach out to in the verses above?

It can be hard to avoid “playing favorites,” especially when there are certain co-workers, family, children, friends, etc. who we get along with better than others. What can we learn from God’s view on favoritism that could help us when we’re tempted to play favorites?

Acts 10:34-35

Romans 2:6-13

Romans 10:12-13

How do you feel you’re doing in this area of not playing favorites?