

## Mark 1:29-45

### “The Healing Hand Of Jesus”

As our time came to a close last week we were taking note of the very powerful and profound fact that Jesus changes lives. Once you've had an up close and personal encounter with Christ you will never be the same, He will take you and transform you removing your sin *from* you and giving His righteousness *to* you. He's in the business of changing lives, that's what He does. and The glorious part of that is that it doesn't matter where you've been or what you've done, the things you're perhaps currently engaged *in*; you don't get any deeper into the spiritual slums of life than where this guy was at in Vs 23-24 of Mark Ch 1. By his very position of being possessed by a demonic spirit he couldn't have been any more polarized from Christ, you don't get any farther away from Jesus than when you're physically inhabited, controlled, defiled and demoralized by a demonic spirit. Yet for all of that none of those things moved Jesus, meaning those things didn't deter Him from coming *to* this man, reaching *out* to this man and setting Him free. The bottom line is that if you're a sinner (which we all are) then that makes you a candidate for salvation. and Jesus will meet you right where you are, forgive your sin, set you free and make you brand new.

Perhaps you recall when Jesus called Matthew, (the one who wrote the gospel) prior to his encounter with Christ he was a despised tax collector. Tax collectors were notorious for being crooked, extorting from people more than what was proper. Well, as is common once Christ called him he was topped out, excited, he'd met Jesus! and So he invited Jesus over to his place for dinner and he invited all his friends, which translates into more tax collectors and other sinners. and We read in Matthew's gospel, *“Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, ‘Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?’ When Jesus heard that, He said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”* Matt 9:10-13 This man who was demon possessed went to church that day as one thing, but he left something completely different, he'd met Jesus Christ and had been set free from the chains of darkness.

and I don't know perhaps a word for you today, you're in bondage to some sin, you've been enchained, shackled by the enemy having been taken captive by him to do his will, Jesus can set you free today, He'll meet you right where you're at and make a difference (for the eternal good) in your life.

As you may imagine what those people witnessed that day in the synagogue blew their minds, and word got out *fast* regarding the work that Jesus had done. It doesn't take long, when Jesus makes a change in you people find out about it, there's no hiding it, word gets around. and Because of that often times friendships fade, people quit calling you, they no longer want to be around you. Jesus draws a line and people have to decide on which side to stand, for Him or

against Him. and People who stand *against* Him, won't want to be *around* you. But it's not *you* they have a problem with, it's Christ *in* you. Before Jesus was in your life there was no problem with that friendship, or that relationship, but now things are different. They're not rejecting you, they're rejecting Jesus in you. However you'll find that the friendships and family that you gain *in* Christ will more than compensate for any worldly loss you incur *because* of Christ. It's in Christ that we discover what true Koinonia, true camaraderie, true family and friendship is all about.

### **Vs29-31**

Few things here that I think are worth drawing your attention to #1 we noted last week that Jesus went to church. and We spoke of the necessity of corporate and collective interaction as a body from a biblical perspective. What we see here is that the disciples brought Him home *after* church. and Believe me when I tell you that it's critical that when you leave here, when you leave your place of worship that you "keep Christ" with you and "take Him home" with you. I think that we're often times too guilty of coming to church, worshipping the Lord, learning of Him in His word, but then we just sorta check out when we leave like our duty is done now we can get back to life. and It ought not be. We do well to maintain that cognizant, conscious awareness of Christ with us. Now we know He'll never leave us nor forsake us, you can't literally leave Him behind, but you can cease to allow Him His proper place in your life. You can just sorta do what you want and not really give way to the work and way of the Spirit. and I don't know if it's common to man, or just something about our culture, but we treat church like going to work, or going to a movie, we do what we need to do while we're there, but when we're done, we're done. But what goes on in the fellowship should be forming, and fashioning our lives, it shouldn't end here it should continue on when we leave here.

It so important that Jesus constantly be your priority. That you and I stay near to Him, continually walking *with* Him, including Him in our everyday activities. Because I have discovered (perhaps you have to) that invariably when you're seeking the Lord, spending time *with* the Lord, wanting to learn *of* the Lord that the enemy will bring the "*heat*" to your home. That's what we're seeing here, now I'm not saying that all illness is due to some sort of attack of the enemy (the scriptures are careful to distinguish the two). I'm simply making an application out of the information that's supplied to us here. When they came home they found Peter's mother in law in bed sick with a fever, and the word fever here speaks of a *burning heat*. When you're serving and seeking the Lord, you need to know that the enemy will bring "*heat*" into your home. and That's one reason (among many) why it's so critical that you don't "depart" from Jesus after church, take Him home with you, let Him deal with the heat that surfaces in your home.

Something else I want you to see here is that Jesus didn't just "perform for the crowds." He didn't need, or feed on the "energy" of crowd dynamics. He didn't shine only in the spotlight, He was interested in the individual. Here He is ministering to a single person in a private home. He wasn't about promoting Himself, but serving the legitimate needs of others... that they might be drawn *to* Him and changed *by* Him. Over and over again throughout the gospel accounts you find Him (even in the midst of multitudes) taking the time to stop everything that He might be there for and meet the needs of 1. and Again we note no fanfare, no hype in His healing of her, He just touched her; took her by the hand and lifted her up. and

I'm just telling you that what we're going to see over and over again throughout the gospel of Mark is that when Jesus touches you things change, you're different and people see it and are often times blown away by it. They don't necessarily commit themselves to Jesus *because* of it, but they can't deny it nonetheless.

Finally with regard to these particular Vs we can't move on until we've drawn attention to her response to Christ and His work in her life. "She *served* them." From suffering to serving, what a fit and proper response to the touch of Christ upon your life. So often we think "How could I ever repay Jesus for the work He's done in my life?" Well, you can never repay Him for the enormity of what He's accomplished in your life, my life. But we can demonstrate our gratitude and our thanksgiving to Him through *servicing* Him.

By seeking to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of us. God wants to use your life. The bible says, "*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" Eph 2:10 Commit yourself to serving the Lord; not out of a legal attitude, but out of a sincere and heartfelt gratitude in response to the fact that He's touched you, and lifted you up, and made you whole. Jesus said, "*Freely you have received, freely give.*" Matt 10:8 If He's served you, then it's only right and proper that you serve others in His name.

#### **Vs32-34**

Now remember that this had all taken place on the Sabbath, and it was unlawful for people to carry a load, or travel passed a certain distance on the Sabbath. and So Mark notes that it was after the sun had set that people began to come out of the woodwork to find Him, because our day starts at sun up, their day began at sun down. When the sun went down the Sabbath day was over, so they're looking Him up from all over the place. and We note that He healed many (meaning as many as were brought to Him) who were sick with various diseases, He cast out many demons, but taking authority over them He didn't allow any speech from them. We talked a bit about that last week if you weren't here you might pick up that cd. Jesus didn't engage the enemy in conversation, He wasn't interested in their lies, He didn't allow them to state who He was, He didn't need the testimony of the demonic. The witness of the Holy Spirit is what we're to look for, and if people wouldn't receive the witness of the Holy Spirit, then He sure wasn't going to allow the witness of a demonic spirit.

But what a beautiful scene, the Messiah moving and ministering in their midst. and This went on well into the night, they didn't even begin to bring people to Him until after the sun had gone down...But as beautiful as this is on *His* behalf, again we shouldn't be naïve regarding what was going on concerning the *crowd's* behalf. It's like we seen with the people in the synagogue last week, they were *astonished* at His words, *amazed* at His works, but they weren't *assured* of His witness. They weren't falling on their faces *before* Him, committing their lives *to* Him, or coming to believe *in* Him as the Messiah. They were there because they wanted something *out* of Him, they were using Him for personal perks and gain. and There's a sense in which we can't really blame them, any one who's been ill or afflicted for an extended period of time, or who lives with an ongoing disability can certainly sympathize with their position. However that doesn't diminish the fact that they (like countless millions down through the ages) were only seeking Him for what they were hoping get out of Him or receive from Him.

Jesus addressed that motive when He fed the 5,000. He said, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.*” John 6:26 “Not because you’re convinced of who I am, but because of what you’re hoping I’ll do for you.” and That’s what’s happening here, they really didn’t care about the spiritual implications behind His *miracles* or His *teaching*, they were hungering for the *material* and the *temporal*. What a heart check, why are you seeking the Lord? What’s the purpose of my wanting to be in the presence of the Lord? To learn *of* Him, be a blessing *to* Him, give my life wholeheartedly *to* Him? Or to get something out of Him, am I seeking personal gain from Him? Jesus was being used...yet it’s against that backdrop that we see the reality of His heart toward humanity. He genuinely cared about the physical plight of people, regardless of *their* motive. Their motives were obscure (at best), His motive was pure...hoping to awaken some to spiritual reality as He moved *through* them, laid His hands *on* them and ministered *to* them. Wasn’t too tired for them, just stayed there and ministered to them, tireless in His ministrations.

Jesus always had time for people...there He was sinking into exhaustion at the well in Sychar. Far more spent physically, mentally and spiritually than His disciples due to the increasing demands of the crowds, finally away from the masses He sent the disciples on into town to get some food and finally...He sat down. Alone at last...no questions to answer, no crowds pressing in on Him, no Peter! Then He hears the footfall of a needy, and hurting Samaritan woman. How easy it would be to just pretend your asleep, to rationalize away the opportunity. But not Jesus, in the words of one commentator (Hughes), “...He launched into one of the most beautiful cases of spiritual aggression ever recorded!” and It was *that* heart that beat far into the night there in Capernaum, it’s that heart that beats for you and me today. Tirelessly ministering both to His own, and to those whom He seeks to woo unto Himself.

It was both a long *and* demanding day, finally hitting the sheets you would think it would be time for some serious snoozing, “don’t wake me up in the morning whenever I surface we’ll get going.” But notice.

Vs35-39

We don’t know how late Jesus was up the night before, but I think we can conservatively say He was ministering for hours and hours. You don’t have an entire community show up at your doorstep and meet all their needs in 15 minutes. and Yet we read that in the morning, having risen *a long while* before daylight He found somewhere He could be alone, and He prayed. and Don’t be confused, His praying wasn’t a *sign of weakness* it was the *source* of His *strength*, time spent with the Father, communing *with* Him, receiving *from* Him His desire and direction.

I think if we were to be honest most of us would say that we see time in prayer as sort of a goal that we’re reaching for, not that we don’t pray but we’re not praying as much as we should. Our lives are so busy, our schedules are so crazy that we just don’t have time to pray like we’d desire to. Be that the case it seems that Jesus would say to us, “Then get up earlier.” Can I just say that if our lives are too busy for prayer then our lives are just too busy. and The fact is a heavy and hectic schedule shouldn’t take us *away* from prayer it should drive us all the more *toward* prayer. and I’m not talking about that “praying on the go” kinda prayer but the

isolated, “alone time with God, pouring out our heart before Him” kinda prayer. Alone time with God is a non-option for the believer, it has to happen.

Every now and then you run into Mr. Super spiritual who says that he’s just always praying, prays with out ceasing as the bible directs us to. and That’s wonderful, we should be leading lives in tune with the Spirit, just always offering up prayer and petitions *through* the Spirit unto the Father as we go about our day, at work, or in the car, whatever. But let me ask you something, don’t you think that Jesus led His life in tune with the Spirit in a “praying with out ceasing” kinda way? If there was anyone in tune with the Spirit, leading a life in harmony with the Father it was Jesus. and Yet He still saw the need for isolated, non-distracted alone time with the Father. and If *He* needed to get alone before God, how much more do you and I need to get alone before God? Until you’re more in tune with God than Jesus was then you need to be cultivating alone time with God; seeking Him, receiving from Him.

Do you realize that the bible teaches a sin of prayerlessness? Samuel when he was addressing Israel at Saul’s coronation said, “*...far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.*” 1 Sam 12:23 If you’re not praying and spending time that way *with* the Lord you are sinning *against* the Lord. Charles Spurgeon said, “Secret prayer is the secret of prayer, the soul of prayer, the seal of prayer, the strength of prayer. If you do not pray alone, you do not pray at all.”

When the disciples got up and around they went looking for Him, and when they found Him they were all, “Where have You been? You’re a hit, everyone is looking for You, let’s get back there and pick up where we left off!” “Your approval rating in the polls is way up!” Look at Vs 38 (read)

It’s true that Jesus always had time for the individual in need, but equally true was His devotion to the Father’s direction. and I think this is so important in ministry, because you will both freak out and ultimately burn out if you’re constantly giving in to everyone who’s seeking *after* you, or wanting to get something *from* you. Jesus didn’t give in to every voice that was pulling on Him simply because it was pulling on Him, He stayed true to the Father’s agenda for His life. We’re to do the same, it doesn’t mean that their needs weren’t legit, it means that God had a specific plan for Him that He needed to obey.

Remember there in the book of Acts when a need arose and they sought the apostles because certain widows were being neglected in the daily distribution? It was a real need, legitimate cause. But the apostles said, “Hey, it’s not good for us to leave the word of God and serve tables.” It didn’t mean that they were too good for it, it meant that they couldn’t be distracted from God’s specific plan for *them*. So they found others to meet the need, they delegated the need to others who could meet the need adequately. You can’t be everywhere and do everything that everyone wants you to, focus on what God wants from you and He’ll see to those needs around you.

But again it would seem that the people weren’t committing themselves *to Him*, so He didn’t commit Himself *to them*. They wanted a “magic Jesus,” handy to have around, and take care of their problems. They didn’t receive Him as a Mediator and Savior, so He left. He seeks to woo us, gives opportunity *to* us, but ultimately He knows what’s in us, and if we won’t commit to Him, He won’t commit to us.

and You might note again the underscore regarding His purpose in coming, not to work miracles and occasionally give a message, but to preach the gospel and prepare people to receive His work for them upon the cross. His primary purpose in being here was to show us our need for repentance and to draw us to Himself as our Savior. The miracles were apart of the prophesied “credentials” (if you will) of the Messiah, they were underscoring the fact that Messiah was among them, reaching out to them. But His primary priority was to proclaim the gospel and die for the sin of the world.

Vs39-40

Leprosy isn't something we hear a whole lot about today in our country though it still impacts about 15 million people in the world (mostly in 3<sup>rd</sup> world nations). But it is a horrific disease that generally runs its course in about 9 yrs and completely destroys a person from the inside out.

and What leprosy does is attack the nervous system destroying the body's warning system of pain, and so it brings numbness to extremities. You can't feel a cut, or infection, you don't feel the need to blink so you go blind, ulcers break open on the skin, your hair falls out, your eyebrows fall off, it can be horribly disfiguring, your gums recede and your teeth begin to fall out, stiff muscles cause your hands and feet to become deformed. It's not uncommon to find vermin feeding on the face or hands, or feet of a sleeping leper in a 3<sup>rd</sup> world scenario. Nodules will swell up on your face, the smell of rotting flesh accompanies you wherever you go. It's just horrible, and probably worse than the physical effects are the psychological and social effects. Complete isolation, the law told them to shout “Unclean, unclean” so that no one would come near them.

and Leprosy was a death sentence, you didn't just “get better” and the day you were diagnosed would more than likely be the last day you ever felt the touch of another human being.

But that's why leprosy is such a powerful picture of sin, because of how sin numbs you, desensitizes you to that which is destroying you, and it attacks you from the inside and only manifests its ugly nature on the outside. and Its fowl, it carries the sent of death, as a matter of fact lepers were cast off as the living dead. and Luke tells us that this man was “full” of leprosy meaning he was toward its end stages. Hadn't been able to feel for yrs, mutilated from head to foot, rotten, stinking, repulsive, living in a “painless hell.” and Most people felt that leprosy was a judgment from God, therefore they were all the more repulsed by them. It was to them in many ways the way AIDS has impacted our culture, you would think such a horrible disease as leprosy would invoke compassion from people, but it didn't, they were disgusted and stayed as far away from them as they could.

We can't even begin to imagine the humiliation, and isolation that this man had endured, he hears Jesus is in the area, and he makes his way through to Him, falls down before Him and begging Him he says, “Lord, if You're willing, You can make me clean.” He didn't doubt Jesus' ability, but wasn't sure if He would be willing, after all the “judgment of God” was upon him right? Perhaps he was such a sinner that there was just no hope for him.

and Again that's the way sin is, on one hand people can't feel any problem and so they think they're ok, no harm no foul. On the other hand they feel so dirty, so repulsive before God

that they think, “there’s no hope for me, God won’t want me, oh I know He *could* forgive me, but I’m not sure He *will* forgive me.”

Vs41

I wish I could share the heart of this Vs in a manner worthy of it because if I could we’d all get down on our faces and just worship the Lord with all that we are... Jesus was “moved with compassion.” Understand that this is a visceral reaction on Jesus’ part. He felt for this man way down in His gut, it was a reaction that went beyond pity, or sympathy or even empathy, it was stomach for stomach, blood for blood, gut for gut, He felt His way down into this leper’s needs, it was gut wrenching compassion. This is a revelation of the heart of your Jesus for *you*, take this to your heart and hold it there with all that you have. Jesus has compassion for your leprosy heart for heart, gut for gut. He does more than understand, He felt the full weight of your sin upon the cross, and in this one sweeping motion He sends the signal to all mankind... “God cares...” He cares for you, has compassion upon you, and there is no sin so repulsive in His sight but that He won’t reach out and touch you.

When Jesus reached out to this man, and laid His hand on him, that was the 1<sup>st</sup> human touch that he’d felt in yrs. We’re programmed in such a way that we need touch, and Jesus was meeting his need on the deepest level, I’m sure that touch surged through him, and worked healing *in* him in more ways than we could possibly know.

Vs42

This man was instantly healed, fingers grew back, teeth appeared, his skin was soft as a baby, the stench was gone, he was made brand new. What’s the bible say? “...*if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*” 2 Cor 5:17

Vs43-45

Can I just say that even the most well intended disobedience is still disobedience.

I admit it would be difficult to keep quiet about this, I mean this is unbelievable. Yet in disobeying the Lord he hindered the ministry *of* the Lord. Jesus told him to head off to Jerusalem and show himself to the priest and go through the ritual Moses commanded as a testimony to them.

and What a testimony it would be, because they’d performed that ritual...oh...uh... never! Because leprosy was incurable, you don’t just get better, the only way you would be cleansed from leprosy was Divine intervention, God doing something for you that you could never do for yourself. and So after the man convinced them that he really *was* a leper they’d have to blow the dust of that part of the scroll and figure out how to do the ceremony. and Basically they’d take 2 birds, some hyssop, scarlet, and cedar wood, they kill one of the birds in an earthen vessel over running water, and dip the living bird, along with the scarlet, hyssop, and cedar wood into the blood of the bird that had been killed, sprinkle it 7 times over the man who’d been cleansed and then let the living bird go. and The picture is that of the death, shed blood and resurrection of Christ.

Then (8 days later) they’d sacrifice a lamb as a trespass offering, take some of the blood of the lamb and put it on the tip of his right ear, his right thumb and his right big toe. The idea being that you would have ears to hear what God is saying, that your hands would be engaged in His work, His will for your life, and that you would walk in His ways. Then the oil would be

placed over the blood, the oil speaking of the Holy Spirit which can't come upon your life until you've 1st had the blood of the lamb applied to you, washing over you, cleansing you.

and Knowing that the only way this would happen was through a work of God, it would be a witness against the priest for him to acknowledge the miracle but reject the One who worked it.

Jesus looks upon you, and He cares *for* you, He's willing to touch you, to make you clean, the question is are you willing to humble yourself before Him, casting yourself upon His mercy and ask Him? He's available to you, you've got to come before Him, and say, "Lord, here I am, with all my sin and shame...please...make me clean."

#### Prayer Points:

Lord Your grace is overwhelming, You are so good, willing to meet our deepest need. Touching us, taking our sin upon Yourself that we might be cleansed, made whole, a new creation. Now may we respond *rightly* to You, in *obedience* to You, *servicing* You...A fit and proper response to Your touch and Your healing hand upon our lives, Help us to seek You, to realize we don't have time to *not* seek You and spend time with You in prayer and private devotion. Help us to be Yours wholly in private that it might shine forth and You might use us in public, that our light might so shine that people see the good works and glorify You.

If you don't know Christ, and Jesus is stirring you, wooing You seeking to minister to you that He might touch you and bring healing to your soul, that He might make you a new creation, then let me encourage you to come before Him and cry out *to* Him today. You may feel so full of sin that you're not sure if He would even be willing...But He wants to touch you, cleanse you and bring healing and wholeness to your empty and hurting life. Let Him do it today.