

**The Mission of Jesus**  
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*Mark 1:29-39*

This morning the theme of the sermon is *The Mission of Jesus*. Some of you know that my wife and I just bought a house. In the process, there were many things we knew we wanted to do to the house. We needed to paint, remodel some rooms, and build some things. In the process [of remodeling], people would come see the house and say, “You guys are making it your own! You are making it according to your style.” Perhaps you have been there – buying a house or painting your room – you want to make it your own because it belongs to you. This morning we see the mission of Jesus and we see that his mission is something like this. That the mission of Jesus, when he comes to this world, is to remake this world according to his image. All the miracles, the work, and the teachings point to this reality. He is remaking this world according to his image. This is what we see in this passage. With every miracle, every healing, he is remaking this world according to his image. This is his mission.

In Luke chapter 4, we hear the mission of Jesus but here we see it in action. We see here that after an amazing service in the synagogue, Jesus and his disciples go home. They don’t go to Luby’s or Penland. They go straight home. They go home and find a harsh reality. There is someone there who could not go to the synagogue that morning. This person could not go worship and pray because she was sick. The bible tells us this is Simon’s mother-in-law. She is in bed and could not get up that morning. It seems like after this amazing service, the vacation is over, the honeymoon is over. But nevertheless, Jesus enters into the home with them.

The first thing we learn about the mission of Jesus is that he does not avoid suffering, he enters the suffering. He does not try to escape it; he engages it and he enters it. This is the case not just with suffering in general, but this is the case with those who suffer. Look at what he does here. He draws near and he touches. Throughout all the gospels this is what we see Jesus doing. He touches the sick and they are healed. He does not go around them. In our culture today, many of us are allergic to sinners and sufferers. If you have ever sinned or suffered you know that it can be a very lonely place because many people do not want to be with you in those moments. But Jesus is not allergic to sinners or sufferers, he draws near to them and he is with them. There are churches or pastors or messages that say, “If you are not always healthy or happy, maybe you are not holy enough.” But we know that this is a lie because here we see Jesus in the middle of the suffering, drawing near to the sinners and sufferers – not just here but in all the gospels. Beloved, God has not left you. HE IS WITH YOU. The passage also tells us that even though we may be walking with Jesus, and even though we have seen him do some amazing things, it does not mean our burdens will disappear. This was the case for the disciples. They go into the house only to find a burden in the house. Beloved, many of us have burdens in our home. Perhaps we or the people we love, are carrying some heavy burdens. In those moments, we have to know that God has not left us. He is with us. Just as he entered this home, he can come to our home as well.

Notice what else happens. The mother in law never asks for help. She doesn’t pray. She doesn’t stand up to receive Jesus. She never asks for help and yet she gets the help she needs. This tells us something else about the mission of Jesus. He comes to help the helpless. He comes to help those people. Notice too that the crowds don’t ask for help. In fact, they don’t even come.

Other people bring them. They probably could not bring themselves. This tells us, beloved, that in those times when we cannot even get out of bed, He helps us. He is ready to help us. It is all a gift. He comes and helps those who could not make it to church that morning – just like Simon’s mother-in-law. He helps those who cannot help themselves. He helps them because he is merciful.

Look what happens when she is healed, she begins to serve. She begins to work and do the normal everyday things. It is interesting that she is the first human in the gospels who serves Jesus. Some people, for this reason, have called her the first deacon. Beloved, when the Lord takes our burdens away, when the Lord heals us, the response is to serve him for the good things he has done for us. Notice that the sick here and demon-possessed begin to show up as the sun goes down, as the day is ending. It sounds a little scary. Why this detail about the sun going down? Why this detail? Well, if you remember, it was the Sabbath. And it means that the Jewish Sabbath ended when the sun went down. This is why there is so much work happening. People are now coming out because the day of rest is over. But maybe Mark is making a stronger point here. Maybe Mark is saying that even though they are no longer in the synagogue and even though it is no longer the Sabbath, God showed up in a powerful way that night and he worked miracles among them. Beloved, perhaps Mark is telling us that the mission of Jesus is not limited to a time and place. It is not limited to a few religious people. The mission of Jesus can happen in any time. The work of God can occur in any space. Yes, it is true, that God does some amazing things in holy times and holy places. But the mission of Jesus is to sanctify every place, every person, every moment – even today in your life. Beloved, his power is not limited to the first century. He can work miracles even today among us.

Finally, this passage tells us one more thing about his mission. Let us notice how this section closes. Jesus is praying in the dark in a remote place. The disciples come and they’re looking for him anxiously. They say, “Everyone is searching for you!” Notice what Jesus says, “Let us go to the surrounding villages that I may preach there also.” What does this mean? Well, if we back up to verse 28 from last week, we see that the fame of Jesus extended throughout all Galilee. This word for “fame” can also be translated as “rumor.” This tells us that there are some who have heard about this power, maybe they know him like they know a famous person. But Jesus doesn’t want to be a rumor in the lives of those people, he wants to be a reality in the lives of those people who have heard about him. Beloved, maybe this morning that is where you are at. You have heard rumors. He doesn’t want to be a rumor in your life. He wants to be a reality in your life.

So, what do we do in light of all of this, with all these realities? Could you join Jesus on his mission? How can we do this? Maybe Jesus wants to start in your home. It is interesting here that the word in verse 33 which says, “gather” is similar for the word for “synagogue.” The bible tells us that they gathered in the house. It is almost as if Mark was saying that on that night that house became like a church. And it all happened, notice, around the door. Beloved maybe this morning, Jesus wants to accomplish his mission at your door, in your home. Maybe it is literally at your door. This time of pandemic and coronavirus it is tough to go out and leave your house. But beloved, we would be amazed at the things God can do through us even without leaving the house. This is his power at work.

Thanks be to God.

Let us pray. Lord we thank you for your mission in Jesus Christ. Thank you because you have come to transform our bodies, our homes, and our world. Give us grace to join you on that mission. We pray these things through Jesus Christ. Amen.