

Mark 6:53-56 People Need Jesus Falls OPC PM Oct. 3, 2021

Do you know what is the most difficult thing about being around sick people? The most difficult thing about being around sick people, is to remember that the greatest need of that poor suffering patient is NOT their physical need, but rather their greatest need is their spiritual need. That is what this passage is about.

**People need Jesus, and serving them is why He came. (Mark 10:45)**

**1. The need is great. (v.53-55)**

The previous passage had Jesus walking on water in a strong wind storm. Remember? Mark 6:45-52. The disciples thought that they had seen a ghost, but then when Jesus identified Himself, He got into the boat with the disciples, and the wind stopped.

Now in these last verses in chapter 6, Mark gives details that are vivid and paint us a picture of what happened. For example, the only time that this phrase happens in the whole New Testament, is found in verse 53, that the disciples “moored to the shore.” This was a nautical term used only for boats by sailors. Another detail Mark gives us is in verse 54, that when the disciples and Jesus got out of the boat, the people of Gennesaret immediately recognized Jesus. Interesting that in the previous passage, the disciples had not recognized Jesus walking on the water, but instead the disciples thought that it was a ghost. But now, when the same Jesus steps onto land, the people recognize him immediately – a favorite word for Mark. This detail gives us the hint that the disciples were becoming slower than even the public to come to a full understanding of who Jesus is.

As if that were not disappointing enough for the goals of Jesus for His ministry, now we have the crowds only seeing the value of Jesus in His power to heal, and not in His amazing teaching, or in His future commitment to save them by dying for them.

So, let’s review. The disciples have hardened hearts, the disciples do not understand about the loaves that miraculously fed 5,000 men, and the disciples were slow to even recognize Jesus walking to them on the water. And the crowds – well, the crowds only run after the opportunity to have sick people miraculously healed, and do not seem to relish the opportunity to hear the teaching of the best teacher who ever lived.

Jesus was popular and in high demand among the crowds. But for the wrong reason. They wanted physical healing. No doctors could help their sick loved ones. No other rabbi was known to have the ability to work these miracles. How did these crowds find out? It is likely that the people had heard about the woman who had been bleeding, just as Mark reported to us in chapter 5:25, “...*there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but*

*rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment.”*

The people had heard that a bleeding woman, a woman beyond the help of any doctor, a woman who was desperate and sick and a hopeless case, touched Jesus’ garment. When she touched the garment of Jesus, she was healed. Listen to how Mark characteristically put this in Mark 5:29, “...*immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.*” The people of Gennesaret immediately recognized Jesus, and they knew that this Jesus had the power to instantly heal the sick.

The disciples knew that Jesus could walk on water.

The crowd did not know that. How could the crowd know that? It had happened in the middle of the lake in the middle of the night. Now it was morning on the other shore.

The crowd only knew that a woman sick for 12 years, who touched the garment of Jesus, was healed right away. Based on that knowledge, they gathered everyone.

With this knowledge, and with Jesus getting off the boat in their town, let me ask you – what would you have done?

Let me read what you would have done in verse 55, when they “...*ran about the whole region and began to bring the sick people on their beds to wherever they heard [Jesus] was.*” That is what they did.

That brings us to our second point.

## **2. Anyone can be brought to Jesus anywhere, anytime. (v.56a)**

Verse 56a, “*And wherever [Jesus] came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored [Jesus] that they might touch even the fringe of His garment...*”

Jesus was on the move from village to city to countryside. Why? What was Jesus doing? Jesus was not on a healing tour. Jesus was on a preaching tour. Jesus was preaching the gospel.

Listen to chapter 6:2, “...*on the Sabbath [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard Him were astonished, saying, ‘Where did this man get these things? What is the wisdom given to Him? How are such mighty works done by His hands?’*”

So, as Jesus was fresh off the boat here in Gennesaret, going from village to city, the people were not clamoring for His teaching, but rather for healing the sick.

The question remains for Mark. Mark is pressing home to us this main question – who is Jesus? Is Jesus simply a miracle-worker? Is Jesus merely the one we turn to for medical lost causes? Or, is Jesus more?

Is Jesus really a ghost? Is Jesus really a re-appearance of John the Baptist? Is Jesus really the prophet Elijah, or one of the other prophets?

Who is Jesus? What do you say? What is your need?

Why was Jesus the focus of a growing public interest in Gennesaret?

What are the disciples doing with the knowledge that only the disciples have, such as that Jesus can walk on top of water in a windstorm?

The disciples are not able to grasp the full significance of who Jesus truly is.

The crowds are not able to grasp the full significance of who Jesus truly is.

Are you?

Jesus is revealing Himself in miracles, such as feeding 5,000 men, walking on water, and stilling the wind, and now Jesus is revealing Himself with a constant backdrop of healings.

If you remember, the disciples were given authority to heal the sick. Mark 6:13, the disciples "...cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them." However, the authority of Jesus involved a power that was on another level altogether.

Who is this Jesus? It is a question that Mark will not let you ignore, as you read this Gospel account.

Jesus remains the focus of attention throughout the Gennesaret villages and greater area, for his miraculous healing power. But the teaching of Jesus is not mentioned in this brief summary passage. Interesting, neither is demon exorcism mentioned in our passage. Mark has covered that topic thoroughly, and need not repeat it here. Mark's focus is on another point.

In Nazareth, in His hometown, in the first six verses of chapter 6, Jesus was well known from his relationship to his mother Mary and his role as carpenter, and his siblings. But they did not honor Jesus as Jesus ought to be honored, and they had a level of unbelief that caused Jesus to marvel. Consequently, Jesus did not do many miracles there. Who did Nazareth say that Jesus is?

Here in Gennesaret, Jesus was well-known, but not for his family connections or his carpentry work. Rather, Jesus was well-known as a healer. Who did Gennesaret say that Jesus is? Would we call Gennesaret a success? Does this activity help the cause of Jesus and the Kingdom? Does this advance the goals that Jesus had for his ministry?

In Nazareth, unbelief was the norm.

In Gennesaret, belief seems to be the norm.

That brings us to our third point this evening.

### **3. Jesus blesses those who believe in Him. (v.56b)**

Notice something here – Jesus did not go looking for sick people. It was the people who took the initiative to have their sickbeds carried to where Jesus was, and it was the sick person who would take the initiative to touch the tassel of the garment of Jesus. It was not Jesus going after the sick. It was the sick seeking Jesus.

Mark wants us to understand that the woman bleeding for 12 years was the example, and more healings would happen like that. We can expect that to happen in other cases. She touched the garment of Jesus, and immediately was healed. Same for others. We read the last part of verse 56, “...*And as many as touched [the garment of Jesus] were made well.*”

What would make the people come to Jesus? Because of their need. The area of Gennesaret was an area of good soil, which resulted in nuts, palms, figs, olives, and grapes. But one thing the people of Gennesaret did not have – a way for loved ones to be healed. They needed Jesus.

When Jesus arrived, the people RAN to announce the presence of the Healer. They carried sickbeds to wherever Jesus was. News spread fast.

But was it the accurate report of Who Jesus is?

Why is Mark emphasizing the healing in these verses?

Mark is showing the presence of faith in the people.

Let’s go back once more to the poor woman who bled for 12 years. We were told in chapter 5 that when she touched the garment of Jesus, immediately she was healed. But what did Jesus say to her? Mark 5:34, “...*Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your disease.*”

The woman bleeding for 12 years had faith in Jesus. How do we know? Because she said to herself in Mark 5:28, “*If I touch even His garments, I will be made well.*” She had faith in the healing power of Jesus. She had faith in the sympathy of Jesus, that is that once Jesus power had healed her, that He would allow it and accept her, and grant her peace. She was right.

See the pattern? A person is threatened with sickness unto death, and no one else can help, so the person places faith in Jesus, and comes to him to express that faith. Isn’t that the whole point of Mark’s Gospel? We are persons threatened with sin – a sickness unto death. No one else can help us. So, we place our faith in Jesus, and we come to Jesus to express that faith.

The verb that Mark puts in the last sentence is the verb saved. So, the sentence reads, “...*as many as touched [the fringe of the garment of Jesus] were made well.*”

The verb made well, is the verb saved. If they touched it, they were saved. If we express our faith in Jesus, we are saved.

In Mark’s Gospel, the sick represent the spiritually sick.

Jesus blesses those who believe in Him.

Sometimes the simplest Christian can see spiritual truths to which the theologians are blind.

What is the point of all this?

The answer is who is Jesus?

The point is who do you say Jesus is? We are being shown what the disciples believe, and what the crowds believe. Next in chapter 7 we will be shown what the religious leaders believed. And at the end, it will be your turn to answer – what do you believe?

Do you see that people need Jesus? Mark is showing this to us in a consistent way. The point is to see that you need Jesus, and that you have Jesus.

Let's see this throughout chapter 6. Back in verse 7, the people had need for preaching on repentance, so Jesus sent the disciples two by two. The people had need for exorcising unclean spirits, so Jesus gave His disciples the authority to cast them out. (v.13)

Then Herod killed John the Baptist (v.14-27), and the disciples buried his body (v.29) and they were grieving. The disciples were also tired from all that they had done and taught at such a fast pace that they did not even have time to eat. (v.31) So, Jesus provided time away to rest. (v.31) Then the crowds had spiritual need, like sheep without a shepherd, so Jesus had compassion on the crowds and He fed them spiritual food by teaching them the truth (v.34). The crowds had such a need for teaching, that Jesus fed them until the time grew late (v.35). Then the disciples said to Jesus that the crowds had need for food, so Jesus performed the miracle (v.41) of multiplying the loaves and the fish to feed them, not to mention feeding His own disciples. There was plenty of food for everyone to be satisfied, with a large amount of leftovers.(v.43)

The disciples still had that need for that time away to rest, so in verse 45, Jesus sent His disciples into the boat, while He stayed back to dismiss the crowd. Then the disciples had need for prayer, so in verse 46, Jesus went up on the mountain to pray. Then the disciples were struggling to row against the wind, so Jesus walked to them on the water. Then the disciples had need of comfort for their fear, so in verse 50, Jesus immediately identified Himself to calm their fears. They had need for the wind to stop and their fears to stop, so Jesus got into the boat and calmed the disciples and calmed the wind.(v.51)

The disciples had hard hearts and lack of understanding, (v.52) so Jesus stayed with them until they reached the other side in the boat (v.53).

As soon as Jesus and the disciples reached the land at Gennesaret, the people had need for the sick to be healed (v.55), so Jesus healed them. (v.56)

Do you see that people need Jesus? Mark is showing this to us in a consistent way.

This one lesson is standing out to us in our study of chapter six. People need Jesus. Whether in the boat against the wind, or on the land, whether the middle of the night, or the next morning, whether in hectic times of ministry or in times of resting, whether in persecution of a great man, followed by a time of grief or in

terror at thinking they were seeing a ghost, or in times of medical hopelessness, we the people need Jesus!

But do we have a firm understanding of what is our greatest need for Jesus?

It was shown in verses 45-52, the passage about the disciples in the boat in a windstorm, and Jesus first prayed for them, and then Jesus did 2 miracles for their benefit 1) He walked on the water from the land to their boat in order to calm and protect them and 2) He calmed the wind for them. And what was the result? Verse 51, they were utterly astounded. Verse 52, they still did not understand the miracle of the loaves of bread, and their hearts were still hardened. What was the need of the disciples? The need of the disciples was for Jesus to soften and change their hard hearts, and for Jesus to grant them spiritual understanding of His miraculous power, so that they believe it. Apparently, as human beings, our condition is so needy, that it is possible for us to see the power of Jesus and experience gifts of Jesus, and to still have hearts that remain hardened.

We could be near to Jesus like the disciples were near to Jesus, and yet have hard hearts. We could be in places where ministry is obviously happening, and yet have hard hearts. We could be in places where heroic actions of Christian service are answered with colossal acts of persecution, and yet have hard hearts. In times of hectic service so busy that we don't even have time to eat and to rest. In times of effort against the wind that the effort is literally painful. Even experiencing supernatural power on display such that it causes us first terror, and then utter astonishment. And despite all of these things, we could still lack understanding, and we could still possess hard hearts. We need Jesus. We the people need Jesus. We the disciples need Jesus.

One of the things that we encounter in life is being near people who are sick. This passage is for us. Do you know someone who has come under the attention of medical doctors, but the benefit of the doctors and the treatments leaves the people worse off and perhaps also financially devastated? When you are the caregiver for such a person, you need Jesus. That person you are caring for, he or she needs Jesus.

Being near to the activity of Jesus does not guarantee that we truly trust in Jesus. Even being the recipient of blessings from Jesus, perhaps a wonderful healing from Jesus or another blessing, is not the same thing as receiving the blessing of the gift of faith in Jesus. Ephesians 2:8 tells us that faith is a gift from God. It is possible for us to be like Herod. To have the truth preached to us from as trustworthy a fellow as John the Baptist, and yet to remain unbelieving in response to that truth. Or, we could have Jesus or a disciple of Jesus, or a minister of Christ, present the Word of God to our hearing, and yet we could remain as people without faith.

Do you know what is the most difficult thing about being you? To remember that your greatest need from Jesus, the most important thing you need from God is the gift of faith. You need the blessing of trusting Jesus to get through this day, and this week, and the situation that you are now facing. I have good news for you. This is the whole reason that Jesus came. Mark is leading up to telling us this core truth in Mark chapter 10 verse 45, that Jesus came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for you.

**Concluding Application:**

*Remember that you need Jesus, and you have Jesus.*

Jesus came to serve you. But that does not make Him your servant.

He is your Master.

Jesus is the Son of Man. Jesus is God. Do you believe that?

Believing who Jesus is will re-orient all of the other things we are facing.

Knowing and believing who Jesus is, as Our Lord and Master, and as our compassionate Savior filled with power and mercy, will change the way we look at everything.

You need Jesus when you are working, and when you are resting.

You need Jesus when you are in danger, and when you are safe.

You need Jesus when your heart is hard, and when your heart is soft and worshipping.

You need Jesus when you don't understand and you need Him when you do understand.

You need Jesus when you are distracted by all of the other needs that you have, to remind you that the greatest need you have for Jesus, is for Jesus to save you from your sins.

Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine;

Living with Jesus, a new life divine;

Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine,

Moment by moment, O Lord, I am thine.

Never a trial that he is not there,

Never a burden that he doth not bear,

Never a sorrow that he doth not share,

Moment by moment, I'm under his care.