

**Mark 1:29** Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. **30** But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. **31** So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them. **32** At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. **33** And the whole city was gathered together at the door. **34** Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him. (NKJV)

Last week Jesus cast out a demon from a person attending the synagogue gathering. His fame was spreading as we go from verse 28 to 29. So Jesus goes home with Simon and Andrew. I can't help but bring attention to the hospitality that Peter shows, not only to Jesus, but also to James and John.

Now, look at this. Peter does this probably knowing that Peter's wife's mother is very sick. And it is very likely that Peter's wife is taking care of her mother. It looks like Peter and his wife and her mother and Andrew all live in the same house. Maybe Andrew had a wife living there too. We don't know.

Think about this. This is a real life situation. Peter chooses to bring Christ home with him for lunch.

This scenario could have played out a whole lot of ways. This is **family**, after all. We could have read that Peter's wife was terribly upset with Peter for bringing home company when Peter's wife was obviously busy taking care of her mother. Peter could have come home **alone** with the very good reasoning that he did not want to be an imposition on his family. We could go on and on. But look at what DID happen. Peter brought home guests, guests that may have been, on the onset, unwelcome. But pretty soon it is understood that Peter made a good choice.

**30** But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.

Dr. Luke gives us more specifics. He says she had a high fever. The fact that she was bed ridden is a good indication that she was very sick. The fact she had a high fever may indicate that it was a life threatening illness. So they tell Jesus about this very quickly, more than likely with the hopes that He would heal her.

**31** So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her.

We are given the details here of how Christ healed her. There really doesn't seem to be anything informative about it. He came to Peter's mother in law who is lying in bed with a high fever. Luke says that Jesus stood over her and rebuked the fever in Peter's mother in law. That is interesting. I have rebuked a number of inanimate objects to no avail. But when Jesus rebuked the fever it had an

immediate effect because He is Lord of all. Then He takes her by the hand. He probably pulls her up to a sitting position. Luke tells us that she arose so this must mean that he lifted her up, but not to a standing position.

So, she gets to a position where she is sitting up and what happens? She instantly feels better. The fever is gone. I would guess we all know what it is like to feel the effects of a fever. Our muscles ache. We frequently get headaches. It is just miserable. Have you ever had a severe 24 hour bug? How do you feel the next day? Doesn't it take hours before you can exert any energy? And then at least a day before you are really up to speed again where you can do a full day's work? Well what happened to Peter's mother in law?

**And she served them.**

Peter's mother in law went from flat on her back to perfectly well. Isn't that impossible? Of course it is. But that is the kind of thing that Jesus does.

We need to keep this truth in mind. This is not to say that Christ will deliver us this way **from every illness**. But it **is to say** that He has the power to enable every act of service that He desires. We can easily get discouraged when we suffer. We can easily think that it is simply part of the world we live in. And that is true. But we also need to keep in mind the power of Christ. If He wants a change in your condition, this is not something **hard** for Him. He simply wills it and it happens. There are some people that God uses in their suffering. And there are some people that God has a purpose for them free from their suffering. We are not free to make that determination. But we must always keep in mind that the Christ we serve has this awesome power. He can grab us by the hand, sit us up. And by the time our head hits vertical, we are healed.

Mike told me a story of a man he had read about. It was a story about a preacher that had somewhere to go. He was in a very serious auto accident. They took him to a hospital and checked him into the emergency center. He told them that he would be leaving soon. They assumed he was delusional because his injuries were very serious. But he told them that he had a ministry appointment that he needed to keep and that it was God's will that he do so. They simply thought he was a nut or delusional. But the next day, when they looked at his xrays they realized they were wrong. All the things that were wrong with this person were fixed during the night and he was well enough to leave the next day. And so he did. This man wasn't being overly dramatic. He just had a job to do that He believed His Savior wanted done. And He trusted that His Savior would enable him to continue.

That is a little like our story today. Peter's mother in law had a service to perform. She may not have known it, but her Savior did. And so He raised her up and she waited upon Him.

I think the application here is that we should never underestimate God's willingness to provide for His servants. He has the power to enable any act of service that He regards as important.

It is also important to notice that Peter's mother in law made very good use of this blessing of God. We cannot assume that every woman in that culture would have used this blessing to serve the Lord and her family. Things were not terribly different then than they are now. Selfish people still did selfish things. But Peter's mother in law did not choose to do a selfish thing. She chose to serve. What a wonderful thing to do with the blessings of God.

**32 At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. 33 And the whole city was gathered together at the door.**

Mark points out the fact that the sun had set because that was very important to these people. This meant the Sabbath was over. This meant they were free to carry their ill on stretchers without violating the traditions about the Sabbath.

And what do we see?

We see people being people. This isn't the best of people. This isn't the worst of people. This is just people.

Back in this day there was very little entertainment. There was no tv. There was certainly nothing digital. In fact, there was very little reading material. So about all they had was human relationships. Well, what happened in the Synagogue, with the demon possessed person being healed would have spread quickly. And it is likely that news also spread about the man's son who was healed. So naturally, everyone wanted to gain an advantage by this. They wanted everyone that they knew healed. And those who did not have a demon possessed person or an ill person to bring would want to watch the show.

Think about this. This had never ever happened before. And these people would have understood just how rare this was. It would have truly shaken their world.

So it is no surprise that they showed up at Peter's house.

There are some who blame demons on all sicknesses. In this account Jesus differentiates the two. There are the sick. And there are the demon possessed. We see in other scriptures demon possession often portrays itself in a way that we might call MENTAL illness. But even **that** was something Jesus could discern.

He knew what demon possession was. He knew the difference between that which was caused by a chemical imbalance, that which was caused by wrong patterns of thinking, and that which was caused by demon control. It seems to me those things are often difficult to discern. But Jesus had no trouble at all. He knew what was in the hearts of men.

We live in a world that fancies itself **too sophisticated** to have demon possession. Everything has its explanation in the here and now. So even the most bizarre

behavior is going to be blamed on something humans do to themselves. Jesus was not limited by that view. When Jesus determined that a demon was the problem, getting rid of the demon was the solution.

So we can picture this setting. It is dark. Jesus has spent the day with Peter's friends and family. It has been a quiet day. Then there comes a knock at the door. And another. And another. Pretty soon all the space around the house is filling up. This would probably have been a very unusual event at the Simon Peter household. They had just started officially following Christ and already they are the center of attention. They are where stuff is happening. Can you imagine how they would have felt? They were in the inside circle of the biggest thing in town, or in the whole region.

Well this was just the beginning for these guys. They are going to see things and do things that they would have never imagined. They are going to be the **right hand** men to the most important work that God had ever done on this planet. And they were fishermen.

I find that amazing.

Now, keep in mind what this crowd is. It is a combination of sick people with their caregivers and demon possessed people with their friends or family. Odds are very good that some with demons really did not want to be there. One can easily imagine a very restless crowd and one with a good deal of conflict in its midst.

**34 Then He healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He did not allow the demons to speak, because they knew Him.**

And what did Jesus do? He healed the ones that were sick, and there were many of them. We are given very little detail about this event. How long did he take with each person? We know from Luke that Christ laid hands on each one. How many is many? We just can't know. But by the time the crowd went home there would be one thing known for sure. The crowd would know that Christ has power.

Christ has spiritual power. Christ commands evil to get lost and it does. He tells the devil what to do and he does it. What a contrast that is to the temptations that the devil gave to Christ. No wonder the devil wanted Christ to worship him. He probably knew this kind of thing was coming, where Christ would show His superiority over the devil.

So a huge impression was made on this day.

But still, look what he does to the demons. **Luke** says that the demons came out of people crying "You are the Christ, the Son of God." I cannot imagine a showy faith healer in our day shutting up a demon for something like this. Nowadays the speaker would probably count on his tv ratings and his income raising dramatically over something like this. He might even interview the demon.

But Christ wanted none of it. He did not want demons preaching, even if they were preaching the truth. He wanted them to shut up.

And why? They knew who He was. And He knew them. He knew they were up to no good. He knew no good would come out of it. I am not aware of Jesus ever shutting up a human who was praising him, even when it was insincere. But He would never receive any affirmation from Demons.

When we look at the other gospels we pick up a few more things. It says that Jesus cast out demons with a word. Maybe the word was “out” or “scat” . But He told them to go and they went.

Now Matthew, the gospel for the Jews, gives us some added insight. Matthew says that Christ healed them that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying “He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses”.

That is from Isaiah 53:4,5

Let’s take a look at the rest of that passage. Brad read it a few weeks ago but I would like to finish today by looking at it. We have a little time and this passage really helps us see the difference in **what the Jews expected** in a Messiah and **what God planned** to give in a Messiah.

Clearly Matthew refers to this as a passage about Christ, the Messiah. We will soon see that the Jews viewed Christ as being punished for His sins on the cross. But Isaiah 53 tells us what was really going on. Matthew alludes to the fact that Christ healed sicknesses, but more than that **He bore our sicknesses**. He bore the weight of all that was wrong with us.

**Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.**

This is clearly saying that God is not going to do things the way people figure they will be done. Isaiah asks to whom has the strength of God’s doing things, His arm, been revealed? **Who has God told how He is going to do what He is going to do?**

It is going to be difficult to believe. In fact, to many it will be unbelievable.

So how is God going to carry out this project?

His representative that is sent by God will not be what people expect. He is going to be like a tender plant. He will appear vulnerable. He will be like a plant growing up where it is difficult for plants. Not a place where you would **expect them** under conditions that one would not think **would produce such a thing**.

There will be nothing about this person that would draw flesh. He will not be impressive looking or acting. He will not be the person **to be with** to be part of the **upper echelon** of society. He will not be the best looking man. And he won’t be

the most attractive. Essentially we are gathering from this that he will just be somebody **like anybody else** in a normal crowd in Judea.

**3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

Wow. When we think about this we ought to be amazed. It is no wonder that it is hard to find someone who has believed this report. How will God's chosen one be treated? How will the Messiah be received... the promised one?

He will be despised and rejected.

Isn't that odd? That is how God is going to carry out His plan to save His people. This is the last thing that any proud people would expect. Our world **worships** power and prestige. We naturally think that God would come to us valuing the things we value. If **we** were all powerful, we would **use that power** to elevate ourselves. So we expect that God would do the same.

But no. The Messiah is a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. This man is a man that knows what suffering is like. He will not be like the politicians who successfully gain the approval of the crowd by presenting a carefully crafted image. No. He will be more like a soldier returning from fierce warfare. There is a suffering he carried that only His Father could understand.

And how do we ultimately respond to this Chosen One of God? We hide our faces from Him. When Christ was on the cross, and all hopes for what we may have wanted in a Savior died, he became nothing more than a dismal display of futility to most humans. He became a reminder of hopelessness to us. We would look at Him and have no hope. He was a disappointment. He was a disgrace to what we selfishly want for ourselves.

And not only did we not see the Glory and value of what He was doing, we despised it. We were revolted by it. And our fleshly nature still feels the same way.

That is the response that humans naturally have when they hear the Gospel but aren't quickened by the Spirit to receive it. Listen to many skeptics on tv and you will hear him put this into words. Our world does not esteem **the real** Christ.

They despise **the real** Christ. Unless God does a miracle on them like He does to all of His children they will remain that way.

**4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.**

The griefs and sorrows that our Lord carried were the worst kind. They were the grief and sorrow **born of sin and guilt**. When He took upon Himself our sin, He was taking that which was ruining His creation and taking it inside of His Holy life.

Have you ever considered that it is not fair that you must pay the consequences for someone else's evil? Have you ever paid a price for something **someone else has done**, knowing that you are not free to repay evil with evil? You are not free to carry out **the same kind of evil** that you are currently paying the price for. Maybe someone you love has caused you harm and you are just struck with how unfair that is.

Let me ask you, which is more unfair? What others have done to you, or what you have done to Christ? Have they ever harmed you in the way that you have harmed Christ? Were you ever completely innocent of any sin and then had the sin of another laid upon you?

The wounds that Christ received were for us.

The bruises that Christ received were for us.

We deserved them.

It was our sin that He received them for. Not His own.

We need to consider the grace we have received when we are interacting with others. We need to keep it in perspective. The world will harm us. Brothers and sisters will harm us. It is not right. But they will never hurt us like we hurt Christ. And Christ has every right to command us to respond in whatever way He commands it. We cannot say to Christ, but you don't know how this feels. He does. We cannot say you did not have to deal with this kind of mistreatment. He did. And it was by our hands that this was dished out to Him.

Will we allow this break our hearts? Will we allow this to temper our treatment of wrongs done to us? Will we obey Christ when faced with abuse that we don't deserve, simply because Christ has the right to demand it?

**He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities**

And look at what the normal human fleshly evaluation of Christ was by onlookers. **we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted**

The Jewish nation, as a whole, regarded Jesus as someone who got what **He** deserved, not what **WE** deserve. They thought that if these horrible things happened to Him, He must have deserved them. They did not understand the reality of this existence at all. They had simple formulas about spirituality that were very wrong, very incomplete. But as long as **they** weren't the one suffering, they all worked out. They bought into the theology of Job's friends. And they were wrong.

The world will often evaluate the ministry of Christ and His people wrongly. And many will **join in with assent** when Christians suffer for their affiliation with Christ.

**6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

Here Isaiah tells us our contribution to this whole drama. We only provided one thing. We provided the guilt. That is all that we have ever contributed to our salvation. The guilt. We have done our own thing our own way. We knew the way to go but we went another way, the way that most appealed to us. None of it accomplished any lasting good for anyone.

And so what did Christ get from us?

Just guilt. That is all.

**7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. 9 And they made His grave with the wicked-- But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.**

Here is the report. And who is going to believe it? Here is God's Holy One, His Chosen One. And what treatment did He accept? Oppression, affliction, injustice...for what? For loving us. That is all. He hadn't lied. He hadn't raised His hand against the government or any people. All the things that deserve death He had not done. But He willingly accepted His plight, even refusing to defend Himself, because that is what He came to do.

And now look what comes next. Really, who **will** believe this report? What Jewish resident expecting a Messiah, or what human looking for self improvement will ever be impressed by this? Who will think this is the answer he or she is looking for in his or her life?

**10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put *Him* to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul, *and* be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. 12**

**Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors. (NKJV)**



Look what this says. God was pleased to accomplish all of this through Christ. It was the Father who sent Christ to do all this. And it pleased God to do it. Why? **When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see *His* seed, He shall prolong *His* days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.** It is all about Christ's seed. It is all about the kids. It is all about the children that God will call to Himself through Christ. This is the gospel and we cannot forget it. We cannot forget it when we look at other brothers and sisters. Christ died for them and God was glad to have it done, no matter what it cost. We cannot forget this when we continue to reach out to those who don't know Christ. Because maybe they too, are one of those that Christ did all this for. And we must honor our God by inviting them to share in Glorifying God. Look at what believers are referred to as. They are called the pleasure of the Lord. Is that how we live? Do we regard ourselves that way? Do we see God's wonderful love toward us in this? He wants us with Him, not because we are so lovable but because He is so loving.

**By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.**

Jesus was ministering to the Jews. And both He and they were going to fulfill this prophecy. We will continue to see this as we continue on in our study of Mark. Most people were not going to believe God's report. They were not going to receive God's way of saving us, because it would require a death of pride to receive the fact that all we have to offer is guilt. But for those of us **who believe it**, what a glorious opportunity we have... to become **God's pleasure** after having been **Christ's torment**.

How can this wonderful gospel not change our whole lives.