

Mark 1

Healing the crowds

1. Review

- a. According to the other gospels, Jesus starts his ministry in Nazareth, his home town. They reject him, even though they invited him to preach in their synagogue. The gospels tell us he could do few or no miracles there. They had offense toward him, the son of Mary and Joseph, a son of a carpenter, now a self-proclaimed rabbi. Their offense becomes unbelief and then becomes hostility, as they literally chase him out of town. So He goes on to Capernaum in Galilee where he preaches.
- b. It is in Capernaum (MAP) located along the Sea of Galilee that Jesus called his first four disciples (Simon and Andrew who were brothers, and James and John, sons of Zebedee who were business partners with Simon and Andrew's family). They leave their boats and join him.
- c. Last week we hear how he went into the synagogue in Capernaum and began to teach to the awe and wonder of the attendees, and when a demon possessed man interrupts Jesus, and Jesus frees him from the demon.

2. Mark 1:29-34 *“And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. 31 And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them. 32 When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. 33 And the whole city had gathered at the door. 34 And He healed many (many or all?) who were ill with various (translation of various) diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.”*

- a. Simon (who we know as Peter) was married, and probably had his mother in law living in the mother in law apartment upstairs (laugh). His brother Andrew is staying with them as well. For a simple fisherman's home, those must have been some crowded conditions.
- b. **NOTE: Authorship – The book of Mark was written from first hand witness accounts. We know that Mark gathered much of his first hand account information from Peter. So as we read the book of Mark, keep in mind, much of what you are seeing and reading is coming through the eyes and ears of Simon Peter.**
- c. Jesus decides to visit the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon and Andrew, upon coming home and realizing that Simon's Mother in law was sick with a fever, the passage says, *“immediately they spoke to Jesus about her.”*
- d. **This is a picture of intercession.** They brought the needs of someone they cared about to Jesus. That is what we do when we pray. We tell Jesus about a person's need. Or in a very real sense, we bring that need to Jesus. When we have testimonies, you might notice how many folks thank this body of believers for “interceding” for their loved ones or for their situation.
 - i. How many people have need of someone to bring their need to Jesus, either because they themselves do not know Him, or because they have no understanding of what He wants to do for them.
 - ii. I have had godly Christians ask me to pray for them, saying things like, “Pastor, I know God hears your prayers.”
 - iii. What is wrong with that picture? If you are a child of God, God hears your prayers the same way He hears mine! Bring your needs to Him!

3. Jesus comes to meet our need

- a. *V31 “And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them”*

- i. This verse says “he came to her.” We didn’t come to Jesus as much as He came to us. We weren’t too interested in God when He found us, were we? We were broken down, beat up, and God came to us and said, “won’t you turn it over to Me?”
 - 1. The bible says, “while we were yet sinners (estranged from God), Christ died for us.” While we were still God’s enemies, He made the first move to make us his friends.
 - 2. Do remember how He came to you? Do you remember what condition your life was in, do you remember how you lived before you let Him in your life? He came to you...And for someone here today, he is coming to you today, knocking at the door to your life, asking, “haven’t you had enough of running your own life? I can see it isn’t working out too good. Wouldn’t you like another way?”
 - 3. He knocks. He wants in. He gave His life for you. And the doorknob to your life, to your heart is on the inside. You must open it. He is a gentleman. He won’t force you to receive his love.
 - b. We should notice something about this passage. Jesus took her by the hand and the fever left her. She began to wait on them, she began to serve them. She didn’t even need a time of recuperation. She was totally restored.
 - i. I don’t know about you, but when I am sick with the flu or a virus, even when its run its course, I am weak afterward. We all need time to recuperate. But not Simon’s mother in law. She was not only healed, but restored. Made strong. Made whole
 - ii. That is what Jesus does. He lifts us up on angels wings, he makes us to not grow weary!
 - c. Notice something else...she got up and ministered.
 - i. She wasn’t self-focused. She saw the opportunity to meet needs and once made whole, she wasn’t going to belabor her condition any more. She began to meet other people’s needs.
 - ii. **When we are hurting, when we are sick or infirm, it is very, very hard to get our eyes off of our own suffering. It is extremely hard to think of others. Am I right?**
 - 1. Is it any wonder that God hates sickness and disease and death?
4. *32 When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. 33 And the whole city had gathered at the door. 34 And He healed many (many or all?) who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.”*
- a. This says it all. Jesus’ reputation goes before him. And unlike Nazareth where they tried to throw him off a cliff, the whole town gathers at Simon’s. Undoubtedly they had heard him speak. And they were impressed.
 - i. They heard about the demon exorcism at the synagogue.
 - ii. And maybe even heard about Simon’s mother in law. So they came to him seeking relief!
 - b. Why did they come to Him?
 - i. So far, he didn’t have the reputation as a healer. **Yet they came, because He brought hope.**
 - 1. **Jesus didn’t turn anyone away.**
 - 2. Unlike the rabbi’s who would read or recite a formula as a prayer for healing, he simply touched people or said a single word. And they would be instantly and totally healed.
 - c. This passage says that he healed many (some translate all) who were ill with various (properly translated “every kind of”) diseases.
 - i. This means that there was no disease that was harder for Jesus to heal/cure than another. The common cold and cancer were of equal difficulty. A sore back, an aching knee, an arthritic hand – none were more difficult than another.

- ii. There is no need in your life that Jesus cannot meet. He requires only an open heart and a simple faith and trust in who He is.

5. What about us? What is our role in ministering healing and wholeness to people?

- a. Jesus commanded his disciples to “heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons...” yet we act like they were more special, “special-er” than us. They were just people, like you and me. They were weak, struggling human beings who took a step of faith and prayed and laid hands on everyone who was sick.
 - b. As we will learn later, they too struggled with “why wasn’t this person or that person healed.” Isn’t that a struggle for you as well? (they asked “why could we not cast it out?” – notice, at least they took the blame on themselves instead of blaming God).
 - c. **When we pray for healing, we are tapping into what Jesus has already done.** What many of us tend to do is to try to convince God to do something He has already accomplished. .
 - i. He made a purchase on the cross. Everything you and I need for life and for eternity was paid for on the cross.
 - ii. So when we witness to someone, we are trying to deliver what Jesus paid for.
 - iii. When we pray for the sick, we want the person to receive what Jesus paid for.
 - iv. We don’t need to beg God for healing. We have the right to approach Him and to boldly declare His love over a person. We don’t need to add disclaimers “if it is your will” to a prayer of healing.
 - 1. **If you were leading a person to Christ, and you got ready to lead them in the sinners prayer, would you add to it, “save this person, if it is your will, amen.”**
 - 2. **No!** why not? Because you know it is not God’s will that any “*should perish but that all should come to repentance.*” 2 Peter 3:9
 - d. You can have doubts about whether God wants you to have a new car, a house or a spouse. But never doubt that God desires to give you what He paid for.
 - i. He paid for your soul, and paid for every sin you ever committed or will commit. He loved you enough to send His son to the cross so that His blood would cover your every last sin.
 - ii. He also paid for your healing with his stripes. Our healing was purchased with those stripes. That is how we are healed.
6. You and I, as the disciples of our Savior, wield the same power that the disciples of Jesus of the first century. We are the tools of Jesus to pray, speak healing and to minister eternal life to others. What are we afraid of...failure?
- a. Maybe there is something subtle attacking us, something called an “offense.”
 - b. **It might like this...you or your church has prayed over and for a person, someone we all loved very dearly...and they weren’t healed. In fact, they may have even died from a terrible disease like cancer.**
 - i. Disappointment forms in our hearts over the fact that what we asked for didn’t come to pass. In fact, if the disappointment comes too frequently, we carry an offense.
 - ii. That **offense can produce unbelief which ultimately shuts off the power of the Spirit.**
 - c. Disappointment and offense becomes evident in our prayerlessness and willingness to pray with boldness and authority for the needs of another.
 - i. The nature of an offended heart affects everything we do and say.
 - ii. It taints our words, it affects our thoughts and even spoils our relationship with our Heavenly Father.
 - d. Christians won’t often admit they are offended by God when a person they prayed for isn’t healed.
 - i. But they often deal with a feeling of being “let down.”

- ii. Sickness and healing are common areas of offense for Christians, who have been taught that its God's will that people be healed, and if the person they pray for isn't healed their faith falls apart.
 - e. Are you with me so far?
 - f. I have to admit, I struggled with this for a long time. As a young Christian, I boldly prayed for everyone I had the opportunity to pray for. I saw God do some amazing things. But gradually, over time, **I began keeping score**, keeping a count on when God didn't answer my prayers the way I wanted. I entered a phase of my life where I wanted NOTHING to do with anyone who taught about healing, because I had "enough" of that stuff!
 - i. I had reformulated my understanding of healing, figuring that God just heals some people and not others. Even though my beliefs didn't line up with the Word of God, I was trying to explain my experience. Here is the problem. **I tried to define my theology by my experience rather than by the Word of God.** Ultimately it **infected** my entire life, not just my belief or lack of it in healing.
 - ii. Folks, **we need to stand upon the word of God, not our experience.**
7. Let's look at the stumbling blocks of our faith in God's love.
- a. Why would a good God allow this to happen?
 - b. Why couldn't an all powerful God not prevent this from happening?
 - c. Why would a loving God allow someone to suffer in this way?
 - d. So what happens, we actually *blame* God for the evil things that happen.
 - i. We must be careful to never put God on trial.
 - ii. We can confess our lack of faith, our lack of devotion, but never should we doubt his love, His goodness or His power.
 - iii. We cannot legitimately accuse God of not meeting our expectations. (who is God then?)
 - iv. Consider Job, He struggled with his suffering but he never accused God. Job 1:22 says "In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing."
 - e. So what we do when we are disappointed with God, and we don't want to openly blame God, we simply say things like, "it wasn't God's will for him to be healed." Or "God needed him in heaven" or "God wanted to teach him something."
 - i. I hate that last one. Which one of us who has a child would infect our child with a deadly disease to "teach them a lesson?"
 - ii. Lets think through the silliness of the way we explain away our faith in a Good God who only does Good things!
 - f. When a Christian dies or is severely sick and isn't healed, we tend to ask, "Why didn't God heal him" or "Why did God let him die?"
 - i. What we should be asking, is:
 - 1. Why is our church (or our lives) so powerless?
 - 2. Why don't our elders have victory over sickness?
 - 3. Have we misunderstood or misapplied the gospel?
 - 4. Have we misunderstood or misapplied the promises of God?
 - 5. Did we get something wrong?
 - ii. The fault never lies with God. There is something on our end that isn't fitting.
8. Asking why God allowed a Christian to die is an insult to his character. God is good. He did not create sickness and there was no sickness in the Garden of Eden. Sickness was created by the devil after the fall. He invented cancer and tuberculosis. If anyone wonders why God did nothing about this, the answer is that he did. God send his some Jesus as a human. The flesh of Jesus back was ripped and torn by Roman whips.
9. *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed* (Is 53:5).
10. His wounds provided healing for anyone who will believe and receive. Jesus anointed his people with the same Holy Spirit and commissioned his church to heal the sick and cleanse the leper. Given what

God has done, **we should be asking a different question.** We should be asking why the Church had not fulfilled its commission.

- a. We must be very careful that we do not blame God for the actions of the devil or the failures of the church.

11. My First Thoughts

- a. Simon's mother in law healed, and she began to serve them.
 - i. Purest response to bodily healing. Serving is an act of worship.
- b. After the sun set, then people began to bring to Jesus people who were sick and demon possessed.
 - i. Why ? Well, it was the Sabbath (Jesus went into the synagogue).
 - ii. Most folks wouldn't consider asking for healing on the Sabbath, although that never stopped Jesus, including healing Simon's mother in law, who would have broken the Sabbath by waiting upon them.
- c. The whole city gathered at the door.
- d. He would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.
 - i. Why is that a big thing?

12. Robertson's Comments

- a. First of all, the gospel of Mark is written as a result of Peter's first hand testimony communicated to the author (Mark). So the accounts of these following verses can really be understood as being from Peter's point of view!
- b. Peter's Mother in law
 - i. Peter was married and both he and Andrew lived together in "Peter's house" (Matthew 8:14) with Peter's wife and mother-in-law. Peter was evidently married before he began to follow Jesus. Later his wife accompanied him on his apostolic journeys (1 Corinthians 9:5).
 - ii. Mark has "lay sick of a fever " (katekeito puresousa), lay prostrate burning with fever. Matthew puts it "stretched out (beblhmenhn) with a fever." Luke has it "holden with a great fever" (hn sunexomenh puretwi megalwi), a technical medical phrase. They all mention the instant recovery and ministry without any convalescence. In other words, she was healed so completely her strength returned to normal.
 1. Does God just heal us "just enough" to feel a bit better? Or when God heals, does He heal completely?
 - a. We can ask the same question about how God saves. Does He just barely save us from our sins, leaving us weak and feeble and unable to resist sin
- c. Evening came
 - i. The sabbath ended at sunset and so the people were now at liberty to bring their sick to Jesus. The news about the casting out of the demon and the healing of Peter's mother-in-law had spread all over Capernaum. They brought them in a steady stream (imperfect tense, eperon). Luke (Luke 4:40) adds that Jesus laid his hand on every one of them
 - ii. poikilov meaning many-coloured, variegated. All sorts of sick folk came and were healed.
 - iii. How powerful the Physician was; he healed all that were brought to him, though ever so many. Nor was it some one particular disease, that Christ set up for the cure of, but he healed those that were sick of divers diseases, for his word was a panpharmacon--a salve for every sore.
 - iv. So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her: In this healing of Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus shows both simplicity and power. Jesus healed with the same authority that He cast out demons.
 - v. "Peter's mother-in-law was suffering from what the Talmud called 'a burning fever.' It was, and still is, very prevalent in that particular part of Galilee. The Talmud actually lays down the methods of dealing with it. A knife made wholly of iron was tied by a braid of hair to a thorn bush. On successive days there was repeated, first, Exodus 3:2, 3; second Exodus 3:4; and finally Exodus 3:5. Then a certain magical formula was pronounced, and thus the cure was supposed to be achieved. Jesus completely disregarded all the paraphernalia of popular magic, and with a gesture and a word of unique authority and power, he healed the woman." (Barclay)

13. He came to where she was
 - a. Aren't you glad He came to where you were?
14. He took her by the hand...
 - a. He touched me! How did He touch you? What difference did he make in your life.
15. Immediately the fever left her...
 - a. Immediately. It didn't take hours.
 - b. He lifted her up. He wants to lift you up. He wants you to lift one another up! He didn't knock people down, He lifted people up. If you're knocking people down you won't be lifting them up.
16. She got up and ministered.
 - a. When I've been sick, it takes me time to get my strength back. But when Jesus touches you, you don't need to recuperate. Its supernatural power.
 - b. You and I wield the same supernatural power to heal...we are the tools of Jesus to pray, to speak healing and to minister life to others. What are we afraid of...failure?
17. Other verses:
 - a. *"But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture. On the day when I act, you will tread upon the wicked as if they were dust under your feet,"* says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. Malachi 4:2-3 (NLT)
18. Healing insights
 - a. He never told a sick person that their sickness had a usefulness (such as to teach them a lesson or refine their character). Jesus never treated sickness like a good thing.
 - b. Jesus never put off their healing until a later time.
 - c. Jesus never made a distinction between kinds of illnesses.
19. **We will see these things over and over again in the gospel of Mark. And we will hear the devil's whispers in our ears of "why God don't do that no more."**
 - a. We will hear the devil say, "ya, but so and so wasn't healed, so God really doesn't want to heal people."
 - b. We will hear the devil say, "that was back then and that was Jesus in person. You are just a sinner saved by grace, why should you be healed? Or why should you pray for someone's healing?"
 - c. Or we will hear the devil say, "You don't deserve healing, look what you did or are doing?"
 - d. The lies and suggestions to reduce our faith to ashes come like a flood when we are in need.
 - e. Let me ask you, do you believe it is God's will that every human being be saved? Of course it is. The bible says, *"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.* (2 Peter 3:9). Well if it is God's will why isn't every person saved? For the same reason that not everyone is healed. Because of the variability of the human heart and faith.
 - f. Lets not to confuse methodology with power and anointing. In each circumstance, Jesus had to hear from Father how to proceed. Power came from walking in tune with the Holy Spirit, not from a predetermined 3-step program.
 - g. You will also notice that when He healed these people, He did not pray a prayer asking for their healing. Rather, Jesus commanded healing to occur out of the authority that had been given to Him. Neither did Jesus use the "if it be your will" approach. Jesus came to these situations knowing that it was Father's will to heal - all the sick who were willing, any time they asked.
 - h. Finally, many of these passages illustrate the importance that God places on our faith. This is no different than the role of faith in receiving forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation. It is the same faith, in the same God. Healing is no more difficult for God than forgiveness. We never question whether God wants to save people. Why would we question whether He wants to heal them?
 - i. **Offense over lack of healing:**
 - i. Many Churches and Christian have prayed earnestly for sick people, but they have still died. This has produced huge disappointment. If disappointment comes too frequently,

people can get offended by God. The problem is that offence produces unbelief, which shuts out the power of the Spirit.

- ii. I believe that one of the greatest obstacles to healing in the church is unbelief that comes through offence at God for not doing what we expected. We have used our disappointment in the person not being healed to justify our offence.
- iii. When we are offended by someone, we often say nothing. The other person may not even know that we are offended. However, the offence still infects our relationship by eating away in our hearts and tainting everything we say and do.
- iv. Most Christians who are offended at God over sickness have never said what they feel out loud. They just have this feeling of being let down by God. The wrong attitude is often buried so deep in our hearts that we do not know it is there. However, it taints our thoughts and words and spoils our relationship with God. Buried offence makes faith difficult.
- v. Christians can get offended at God over many issues. Sickness and lack of healing is the main cause of offence against God in churches that have been touched by the move of the Holy Spirit. The charismatic renewal created great expectations about healing that has never been fulfilled.
- vi. 3. Turning a statement about the facts of a situation, into a statement about the nature and the character of God is dangerous. Sometimes when a respected Christian dies of a illness, Christians deal with it by saying, “God does not heal everyone”. That is true as a statement of fact, because this Christian was not healed. However “God does not heal everyone” is dangerous when it becomes a theological statement, because it suggests that God is capricious or fickle. The question insinuates offence at God. They do not say it out loud, but they are questioning the extent of his love, his goodness or his power. The following unspoken questions make this clear.
 1. Why would a good God allow this to happen?
 2. Why could a powerful God not prevent this from happening?
 3. Why would a loving God allow someone to suffer in this way?
 4. When we are offended by God, we tend to blame him for things that are evil.
- vii. We must never ask our questions in a way that puts God on trial. We can confess our lack of faith, but we must never cast doubt on his love, or his goodness or his power. We must never ask a question that blames God. We must never accuse him of not meeting our expectations. The Bible defines these questions as being offended by God, and offence leads to unbelief.
- viii. Our questions are often similar to those of the people of Nazareth. When our worship is a bit flat we say,
 1. Was the Holy Spirit here?
 2. The Holy Spirit is always there, so we should really be asking.
 3. Have we grieved the Spirit”?
 4. We can tell the Father about our feelings and our struggles. He can cope with honesty; but we must not tell God what he should be feeling or doing. Job is a good example. He let it all hang out, but one important thing that he did not do. He refused to accuse God.
 5. In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing (Job 1:22).
 6. When dealing with pain and death we can be honest with God about what is going on in our lives. He is glad when we are open with him and ask for help. However, we must guard our hearts lest our pain turn into disappointment or offence with him.
- ix. Disappointment can also lead to apathy, especially for those who are young. While disappointment causes some people get stirred up and offended at God, others slip into apathy. They respond by saying,
 1. I don’t care. I never expected anything to happen any way.

2. Apathy also kills faith, because apathetic people just give up expecting anything from God. In some ways this is worse. God can cope, if we are upset with him, but there is not much that he can do for those who do not care. Apathy also quenches the Holy Spirit.

20. When a Christian dies of cancer, we ask,

- a. Why did God not heal him?
- b. Why did God allow him to die?

21. Perhaps we should be asking,

- a. Why is our Church so powerless?
- b. Why do our elders not have victory over sickness?
- c. Have we misunderstood the Gospel?
- d. Have we misunderstood God's promises?
- e. Did we get something wrong?

22. We must deal with this issue, if we want to see the breakthrough in healing that many are seeking.

23. Bill Johnson notes

- a. When we pray for healing we are not asking Him to do something. We are asking to tap into something He has already done.
- b. He has already made the purchase. Everything you need, not just in life, but that you will need throughout eternity has been paid for. That's amazing! We pray for the sick because we want Him to get what He paid for. He made the purchase price. We want people to get set free from torment, because that's what He paid for. He got that crown of thorns right over the skull, right over the head, because He was making a statement: "I'm making a payment for all the torment that goes on in the mind. I'm breaking that thing loose!"
- c.