

**Mark 1:29-39** <sup>29</sup> Now as soon as they had come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. <sup>30</sup> But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. <sup>31</sup> So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them. <sup>32</sup> At evening, when the sun had set, they brought to Him all who were sick and those who were demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup> And the whole city was gathered together at the door. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. <sup>36</sup> And Simon and those *who were* with Him searched for Him. <sup>37</sup> When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." <sup>38</sup> But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." <sup>39</sup> And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.

### **Distractions**

Jesus was distracted from the main work He came to do, preach the gospel. Who knows what it is like to be distracted?

As a pastor you want to dedicate yourself to the study of God's word. I'd love to spend my time really doing a better job with bible class and sermons, but all of this other stuff gets in the way bb practice, meetings, scheduling, bulletins, phone calls, organizing etc, all these little things that in themselves aren't that big of deal but add up.

I'm sure it's the same for some of you, you like farming, but there are bills, and phone calls and business stuff you always have to take care of, and machinery you have to fix, somehow you spend more time inside in your office some days than you do outside.

What is it that distracts Jesus? Healing and casting out demons. His distractions put ours to shame.

It's not that he doesn't want to help, He does, and it's not as if it isn't a good thing to do. But He knows that He could easily spend all day every day healing and still there would be an endless supply. As He told a disciple once, "the poor are always with you."

Jesus wants to help, but he also knows, "I need to spend time in prayer."

I remember in India once I was there preaching and afterwards the people lined up to get prayers, Well half way through that line I had to go to the bathroom. I tried to wait, and it seemed like the line was ending, there were only five left, but then ten people later there was still five left, and 20 people later there was still five left. Finally there was only one person left in line. But I couldn't wait anymore I had to go, then I came back and of course there was only the one person waiting.

Jesus distractions put ours to shame. Jesus is distracted because he wants to heal people, why are we distracted? What excuses do we come up with not to spend time in prayer and worship?

How well do I remember the advice of one pastor . . . Satan is very good at distracting us . . . you go to prayer and you notice the curtains are askew, you think I'll just fix those, and suddenly its night and you haven't spent time in prayer at all

Jesus wants to help, he wants to heal, but he knows that He needs to spend time in prayer and in the word of God.

### **Jesus fulfills the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment**

“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy”

In bible class today we are going to talk about Jesus cleansing the temple. The Jews ask Jesus for a sign that he has the authority to do this. They don't argue with him on the basis of God's word but on the basis of miracles.

Later when he heals a lame man on the Sabbath, they argue against that miracle, saying God's word says not to work on the Sabbath. There they don't argue on the basis of miracles but on God's word. See how they use whatever benefits them.

Jesus can heal a lame man on the Sabbath and still be blameless, because as we see here clearly he does keep the Sabbath. The purpose of the Sabbath was not “do not work on the sixth day” the purpose was make sure you take time to pray and study God's word.

The fulfillment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment is not making sure you come to church every Sunday. The fulfillment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment is “taking time to find rest in Christ and his word.” Coming to church every Sunday is a good first step. It's an easy way of making sure you have at least one hour a week for Christ.

### **Preaches the Gospel**

Jesus rests in God's word and then he continues on to the next village to preach the Gospel.

Notice that everyone was looking for Him. No doubt they had more sick to bring to Him. But just as He knew it was time to spend time in quiet studying God's word and praying, so He also knew now it was time to move on to another village, to preach the good news there.

Again it isn't as if He doesn't want to help, he wants to heal and cast out demons, but he knows that He could be there for months and still there would be more sick, and more demons.

As Jesus himself once said, “The poor will always be with you.” Well the sick will always be with you as well. As long as we are on this earth, there will be sickness, death and disease. These are all the symptoms of a evil sinful cursed world. Jesus knows He needs to deal with the root of the problem, “sin” not just the symptoms.

This problem is ultimately to be dealt with by his death and resurrection, and the preaching of that message of the forgiveness of sins. And so He continues on to preach the message of the forgiveness of sins.

People often complain that preaching isn’t doing anything. One of the reasons that it’s easy to get distracted is because everything else actually feels like you are accomplishing something.

You have a lame man laying in a bed in front of you, what do you do?

- A. Heal his leg
- B. Announce the forgiveness of sins

Which one is actually going to feel like you have done something useful? Which one is actually going to look like you are helping the man?

Well hopefully you can do both. But the more important thing is to preach the forgiveness of sins for Jesus sake. That is what Jesus did.

That is what Jesus sends us to do.

Jesus didn’t descend from heaven to heal tuberculosis. He came down to forgive sins, and that is what He sends us out to do as well.

It’s for this very reason that that He wants us to spend time in prayer and in His word. So that through that word He can give to us that same forgiveness of sins. And rejoicing in that forgiveness of sins we can share it with others.

Amen.