



Mark 1 & 2 - January 2024

Introduction

Mark 1: 29-45 The Authority of Jesus

(sermons: Jan 21)



Mark 1: 29-34 Jesus Heals Many People

- v.30 *Simon's mother-in-law – Simon (Peter) was married and his mother-in-law was probably living with him and his brother Andrew (not just visiting); perhaps his father-in-law had died.*
- v.31 *she began to wait on them – the healing was instant and complete*
- v.32 *That evening after sunset – It was the Sabbath (v.21) which ended at sunset, so people may have waited to perform the 'work' of carrying people to Jesus until then.*
- v.34 *he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was – as in verse 25, Jesus did not want to be acknowledged by evil spirits, even if they knew the truth about him. He may have felt that they were the wrong sort of witness to who he was, or he may have felt that the people were not ready to know the full truth about him – they might misunderstand what God wanted him to do.*

1. Does anything strike you about the way Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and so many others?
2. Have we seen, or heard about, healings today like any of those in this passage?
Do we believe things like this still happen today – often? occasionally? never?
Is there a difference between 'being open to' healing, 'expecting' healing and 'demanding' healing?
Are there other sorts of healing than the immediate and physical examples in this passage?
How can we help each other to live with the experience that sometimes God answers our prayers for healing in the way that we hope for – and sometimes he doesn't?
3. *'When the synagogues were closed and the official business of worshipping God was over, then, in the open air, the real work of the kingdom began!'* (Donald English, in *The Message of Mark*)
Do we sometimes see the same pattern today? Do we recognize how God works outside the church?

Mark 1: 35-39 Prayer and Preaching

3. Why did Jesus go out to a 'solitary place' when people were looking for him and needed his help?
Does it surprise us that Jesus needed to do this? What can we learn from his example?
4. What did Jesus say was his priority at this point in his public ministry?
How did he demonstrate his message, as well as speak it?

Mark 1: 40-45 Jesus Touches the Untouchable

- v.40 *leprosy – means a range of skin diseases, including leprosy, some more contagious than others. People suffering from these conditions were often quarantined, so could not work or socialize. It was seen not only as physically disfiguring but as religiously defiling; sufferers were 'unclean'.*
- v.40 *if you are willing – perhaps the man thought that Jesus would have to touch him in order to heal him and that Jesus wouldn't want to this. Or perhaps he had got too used to being rejected.*
- v.44 *go show yourself to the priest – Leviticus 14 (see below) gives details of what would be involved and how the priest would then publicly declare that the man was 'clean' and could rejoin society. Jesus was following the Old Testament Law by telling the man to do this.*

5. In what frame of mind, do you think, did the man with the skin disease approach Jesus? What did he hope for? How did Jesus treat him that would have been different from what he had grown used to?
6. Jesus told the man to go to the priest and offer sacrifices. Why did he do this when he had already healed the man? What would it show the man? What would it show his neighbours? And why did Jesus order the man not to tell anyone what had happened before he went to the priest?
7. What can we learn from this incident: about Jesus? from Jesus's example? from the man's example?

Leviticus 14: 1-4, 7, 11

The LORD said to Moses, ²“These are the regulations for any diseased person at the time of their ceremonial cleansing, when they are brought to the priest: ³The priest is to go outside the camp and examine them. If they have been healed of their defiling skin disease, ⁴the priest shall order that two live clean birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the person to be cleansed..... ⁷Seven times he shall sprinkle the one to be cleansed of the defiling disease, and then pronounce them clean. After that, he is to release the live bird in the open fields..... ¹¹The priest who pronounces them clean shall present both the one to be cleansed and their offerings before the LORD at the entrance to the tent of meeting.