

Jesus' Healing and Preaching

February 7, 2021

Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church Pastor Tyson Labuhn

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today, we're continuing our sermon series during this season of Epiphany, discussing the second part of our mission statement, "*Experiencing Jesus Together.*" And through our Gospel readings, we're continuing to see how Jesus reveals how comprehensive His ministry is to us. Just last Sunday we heard that He began to teach in a synagogue and ended up casting out an evil spirit. And as a result, St. Mark tells us, "***...His fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.***" (v. 28)

In our Gospel reading today, which is a continuation of last week's reading, St. Mark shares with us that Jesus didn't have a lot of time to rest. Our text begins, "***And immediately he left the synagogue, and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.***" (v.29-31)

Today, as many of you know, a fever is associated with the Coronavirus. I could only imagine how many people would come from all over if they knew that someone could actually heal just by taking their hand and lifting them up. It's no wonder that after Jesus healed the man possessed by an evil spirit and healed Simon's mother-in-law, that as the Sabbath day began to end, people began to gather where He was. As

our text says, ***“That evening at sundown, they brought to Him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons. And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew Him.”*** (v.32-34)

You might say that Jesus’ first couple of months in public ministry were successful. So successful that people began to pursue Him. As we heard in the next verse, when Jesus got up early to pray before the day started Simon Peter found Him and said to Him, ***“Everyone is looking for you.”*** (v. 37b) You can only imagine how many people wanted to see or touch Him and wanted to be whole once again. And while Jesus had the power to heal, exorcise demons, and perform miracles, His primary purpose at the time was to share the message that the Kingdom of God was standing right there in front of them! The power that He was displaying was secondary to what He wanted to share with them. How do you know this? Because Jesus replied to them, ***“Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.”*** (v.38)

Jesus didn’t need to respond to every need. In fact, it’s odd that many imagine Jesus met all needs for everyone. When Jesus was in Capernaum, He wasn’t in Bethsaida. The people in Bethsaida could’ve been healed! And when He was in the wilderness, people were still suffering. Jesus could’ve dedicated Himself to meet all needs, but He didn’t. Coming to terms with our human limitations in time and space and energy is important if we, as individuals, are going to minister on His behalf. And Jesus didn’t minister based on His need to be needed either but rather based on what He could do as a bearer of the Spirit of God. And while that’s enough, it also

seems as if it's never enough to meet all needs. However, when we fail to acknowledge our limitations, we tend to deny just how large the human need is in this world.

So we can do what we can, when we can, because of Jesus, but what seems to be more important to Jesus in our Gospel reading is that He wanted people to hear the message, ***"The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the Gospel."*** (1:15) People were afraid, anxious, and were thinking of their own healing and the miracles that they wanted for themselves. Most likely they were more concerned with their own situation and weren't open to hearing and understanding His ministry. Because Jesus came to preach the message to people that they should turn away from their sins, believe the Good News, and follow Him by serving others. (v.15)

Each of us can become consumed with our own afflictions and none of us want to be sick or become afflicted with a disease or illness that might lead to death. The Lord wants us to lay all our needs before Him because He's willing and able to help us. He knows us and cares for each of us individually. And yet, His priority was to preach the Good News of God to all so that all people might turn from their sins, believe, then follow Him by serving others. And what a different place this world might be if that were to happen! It would be better than the Superbowl!

You see, Jesus made preaching the Gospel His primary concern. God's reign is here. Turn away from your sins and believe in the Good News so that in Jesus, God will provide peace and forgiveness. He has the ability and the power to heal and has power over life and death itself. And as we know from His suffering, death, and resurrection, He doesn't leave us alone in our sins, but rather out of great His love and mercy for each

one of us, He fulfills God's promise to be with us until the end of the age. It's through our Lord Jesus that we receive the healing that comes from God Himself, and we come to know the deep abiding love of God the Father. And it's by His unlimited love and mercy that He sends us the Holy Spirit to make us more like His Son, because the real healing that we need most, as you already know, is within us.

Receive and believe the promise so that you might receive the inward spiritual health from our Lord Jesus Christ. We experience the Gospel healing that He came to provide, experiencing Him together as His believers, then sharing His message by caring for the health and well-being of those around us. The healing balm of the Gospel is powerful. It can heal the brokenness within us as well as the brokenness of this world. So we witness that powerful message through our acts of kindness, compassionate listening, and share the Good News to people who are in despair or in need of His love. But this isn't easy to do unless we continue to make sure that His Gospel message has been thoroughly applied to our own hearts and minds. This is Jesus' priority, and it should be ours as His church, and then as the Healing balm of the Gospel heals our inmost being so that we might be possessed by Him, we go forth as His hands and feet to minister to a world sickened by sin.

In Jesus' name, Amen.