

THE COMPLETE CURE OF CHRIST
FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

MARK 1:29-39
FEB 8, 2015

²⁹ And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

³² That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴ 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.

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, ³⁷ and they found him and said to him, "Everyone is looking for you." ³⁸ And he said to them, "Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out." ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

If I were thinking ahead, would have given homework for today:

How would you briefly summarize the gospel?

What exactly is it Jesus has done for us?

What has he saved us from and how?

We wrestled with tis recently at circuit pastors conference,

topic to discuss was what is "Mission of God"

and how does this determine the mission of the church?

Question came to my mind again the other day

when school students packed food for the starving,

there was little paragraph, gospel message printed on bag.

If you were to write it, what would it say?

By the way, what does this have to do with food for starving.

What is gospel, what is salvation, is clearly important question

but not a simple question.

I think it is central issue in text:

JESUS WORKS COMPLETE HEALING

JESUS DEFEATS ALL THE WORK OF THE DEVIL

JESUS FULFILLS HIS WORK WITH FORGIVENESS

JESUS WORKS COMPLETE HEALING

³⁰ Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and immediately they told him about her. ³¹ And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

Are lot of people with colds & flu these days, some with fever.
If you have high fever, maybe should see doctor.
Are various causes of fever. If virus, medicine won't cure.
It just helps with symptoms while you wait to get over it.
But here, Jesus does more than help with symptoms.
He doesn't just make her feel better, he heals instantly.
Then, Luke tells us, she begins to serve them.
I am thinking, this poor woman, she was sick in bed
and now she has to jump up and fix these guys dinner.
I think she does this not because she is the mom
or because it is her house but because it shows
how she is instantly so completely healed and strong.
It also illustrates that when Jesus has helped us
the natural response is for us to serve others.
But main point is when Jesus heals, he heals completely,
not just symptoms but source of the problem.
Good news of the gospel is he does this for us too.
So, what is the source of the problem? Next we see...

JESUS DEFEATS ALL THE WORK OF THE DEVIL

³²That evening at sundown they brought to him all who were sick or oppressed by demons. ³³And the whole city was gathered together at the door. ³⁴And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons.

Reason Jesus & others came from Synagogue in v. 29
is it was Sabbath day. On Sabbath people had to rest
But as soon as day is over at sundown, they go to work,
carrying sick people to Jesus for him to help them.
because there is no real rest without what Jesus does for us.
What makes them think he can help them?
Not just that they already heard of healing he just did
but - in verses before this, heard last Sunday -
when he was in Synagogue he cast out a demon.
People see he has power over forces of evil & what they do.
So (v. 32) they bring those who are oppressed by demons,
- not necessarily possessed, but all oppressed,
that is pressured & made miserable by devil's work.
As John writes (1 Jn. 3:8) "The reason the Son of God
appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."

Main work of the devil, as shown in Genesis 3,
is leading us into sin has broken God's perfect creation
and not only results in spiritual and eternal death
but along the way is root cause of all suffering.
Jesus cautions us not to think that a particular problem
is always the result of a particular sin
even though our bad habits or foolish mistakes
too often do lead to physical suffering.

Think about who suffers from Ebola, not just the sick person,
but when a child's mother dies, sick father can't work,
people are quarantined, other countries send doctors,
Whole family, community, economy, world suffers as result.
The devil's work of sin is an even more deadly disease
which infects every person in the world.

It is root cause behind all symptoms of suffering in the world.
Because God has made us to be body & soul in one person,
there is intimate connection between sin & suffering.

When Jesus destroys the works of the devil,
he is not a specialist who deals with just one problem.

He deals with the whole patient and all our problems.

Our problem is not just physical or spiritual but both/and.

His miraculous healings reveal that he is God, that he loves us,
and that he can save from the power of death.

But they are more than just parables. They are real help.

When Jesus describes his mission he specifically mentions
sight for the blind and liberty for the oppressed.

This means when we serve in response to what he does for us,
like Peter's mother-in-law, our mission is also
both spiritual and physical.

But, as we see in the next verses, the job wasn't done yet.

There were a lot of people in Capernaum and Israel
who were not healed and not raised from the dead.

If you were on riverbank and saw children being swept by
struggling to keep from drowning, what would you do?

Probably do what you could to rescue them.

If more and more kept coming, so fast you couldn't reach all
you would try to figure out way to save more.

But what about finding a way to go up river to find out
how they were all ending up in river & prevent it.

Jesus goes to the root of the problem when...

JESUS FULFILLS HIS WORK WITH FORGIVENESS

³⁵ And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and those who were with him searched for him, ³⁷ and they found him and said to him, “Everyone is looking for you.” ³⁸ And he said to them, “Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.” ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons.

Those working with Ebola don't just work to help those sick
but also to keep people from doing things so they get sick
& also work on curative medicine & vaccine to prevent it.
Jesus helps us with consequences of sin,
and gives us his word & Spirit to keep us from sinning,
but he especially provides a cure to ultimately heal it.
The devil is not just working on others but on Jesus himself,
constantly trying to bog him down, throw him off track.
It is especially when this happens Jesus goes off
to desolate places to pray and to defeat the devil
by resisting his temptations himself.
Including the temptation to be successful in part
of his mission but fail to complete the whole mission.
Everyone is looking for him. There are so many needy people.
He sometimes tells those who are healed not to tell,
But it is not just because he doesn't need more work
but because that is not the whole story.
He is not finished healing people here
but will never be finished if he stays here.
He must go on to preach, and by his words to get at root
of problem: freeing people from the work of the devil
to tempt and deceive into sin and to accuse.
He is able to free from the consequences of sin
because he frees from captivity to sin by forgiveness.
And he is able to do this only because he goes on
to wrestle with devil in an even more desolate place
all the way to the cross where he takes all our sin
and all its suffering on himself by dying in our place,
and he keeps going on, defeating sin, death & the devil
by rising again from the dead himself
and he keeps going on to ascend into heaven
where he will also bring us to be with him.

This is how he finally finishes the job of dealing with our sin
and all the consequences that result from it.

If you have weeds in yard, you can chop them off every day
and you will still have more weeds,
until you pull them out by the roots
and ultimately until you stop seeds from germinating.

Jesus does constantly help us with our problems
including giving us strength to endure and healing.

But our physical healing is not yet complete.

as long as we live in this sin broken world

we, like everyone else, will continue to suffer.

Meanwhile, even while we grow spiritually & resist temptation,
we still sin. Our spiritual healing also is not yet complete.

Why doesn't Jesus just totally end all of this?

It is because our human nature is so corrupted by sin

that as long as we live in this body we are sinful.

To totally remove our sinful nature would be a surgery
that would kill the patient.

But even though we do not yet experience full healing,
we are in remission by the remission of our sins.

But Jesus, who died and rose again has finished his job
of overcoming the devil's work with sin

and he will finally be finished doing this work in us

when we have died live new lives with him in heaven.

Then at last, root of sin is gone. Jesus does cure completely.

This is why we rise and serve as we have been served.

Like Jesus, we help the suffering.

We should naively think we will totally end hunger, poverty,
poor education, disease, racism, war, crime, etc..

this side of heaven when Jesus himself didn't.

But while we deal with these symptoms

we don't let Satan side track us from dealing with the source,

going on to preach about God's grace & forgiveness.

JESUS WORKS COMPLETE HEALING

The Gospel is Jesus saves us from all the results of sin.

JESUS DEFEATS ALL THE WORK OF THE DEVIL

and sin which ruins all creation, both body and soul

JESUS FULFILLS HIS WORK WITH FORGIVENESS

He doesn't just deliver us from suffering and take away sin.

He delivers from suffering by taking away sin.