

A Compassionate Christ

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this morning, with the Lord's help, turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the gospel according to Mark, in chapter 1.

And if we read again at verse 40, Mark chapter 1, at verse 40. And there came a leper to him, pleading with him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If you are willing, you can make me clean.

Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him, and said unto him, I will be clean.

Jesus moved with compassion. Jesus moved with compassion. In our study of Mark's gospel, we have come to see that Mark has one purpose and one aim in writing his gospel.

Because Mark has an announcement of good news that he wants to give to this world. And it's an announcement to all who are willing to hear him, and to all who are willing to listen.

[1 : 18] And as we've seen already, that Mark's announcement, and Mark's purpose, and Mark's aim in writing his gospel, is to present to us one person.

He only wants to tell us about one person. But for Mark, he wants us to know that this one person is unique. And that this one person has authority.

He has authority. And he has authority over sickness. He has authority over Satan. He has authority over sin. He has authority over creation. And he has authority over death.

And Mark declares to us in his gospel, this is the good news. This is what I have to say to you. And it's the greatest news in all the world. Because this is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

But when Mark begins his gospel, he tells us that the gospel, who is Jesus Christ, he appeared not only as the gospel, but he appeared preaching the gospel.

[2 : 21] Because Mark tells us that when Jesus appeared on the scene, he appeared saying, The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel.

But more than that, Mark explains that when Jesus appeared as the gospel and to preach the gospel, he appeared in Galilee. And as we've said before, Galilee is a key location for Mark.

Because the first seven chapters of Mark's gospel focus upon the region of Galilee, which was the region which Jesus came from. Where Galilee was in the region to the north of Israel, north of the Sea of Galilee, when you look at it on a map.

And so around the Sea of Galilee, there were fishing towns and fishing villages, which built their livelihoods and the thriving fishing industry. And as we saw before, it was when Jesus was walking along the shores of Galilee that Jesus called four fishermen to follow him.

What he called Simon, who would be later called Peter and Andrew and James and John. And Jesus said to them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.

- [3 : 39] But in his gospel account, Mark not only wants us to see what kind of people followed Jesus. He also wanted us to see how people respond to the message of Jesus.
- Because when we find Jesus in the synagogue casting out demons, Mark tells us that the response that those who gathered in the synagogue towards Jesus, he tells us the response that they had.
- He says that they were astonished and they were amazed at the authority of Jesus. And in their astonishment and their amazement, they began to ask, what is this?
- What new doctrine is this? And what authority does this man speak? And Mark wants us to see that the response towards Jesus is that they were all asking, who is this Jesus?
- But not only that, Mark wants us to be asking, who is this Jesus? And who is he and why does he want me to believe in him?
- [4 : 43] But as we walk through Mark's gospel, we move into the section that we were just reading. And Mark now wants us to ask, not who is this Jesus?
- But he wants us to ask, what is this Jesus like? Because Mark's going to show us in this passage that this Jesus is a compassionate Christ.
- This Jesus is a compassionate Christ. We've already heard what Jesus said in his preaching that he taught with authority. But now Mark wants to show us what Jesus does.
- And in this section, Mark is showing us that this Jesus is one who moves with compassion. He moves with compassion. And I'd like us to see that Jesus moves with compassion on three different occasions in this passage.
- Because first of all, he moves with compassion towards a woman who is lying down. And then we see Jesus moving with compassion towards those who were looking for him.
- [5 : 53] And then thirdly, Jesus moves with compassion towards a leper who was longing to be healed. And so by asking the question, what is Jesus like?
- Mark wants to tell us that this compassionate Christ is one who moves with compassion towards a lying woman, a looking people, and a longing leper.
- A lying woman, a looking people, and a longing leper. So we look firstly at this woman who is lying down. A lying woman.
- It says in verse 29. And when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever.
- And they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. And immediately the fever left her. And she ministered unto them. And having amazed and astonished the crowds gathered in the synagogue during the morning service.
- [7 : 06] That was what was in the previous section. He amazed all the crowds on the Sabbath morning service in the synagogue. And with his fame now spreading throughout all the region of Galilee, Jesus, along with his four disciples, they left the synagogue in Capernaum.
- And they went to the house of Simon and Andrew. But when Jesus entered into their house, probably to enjoy his Sabbath meal, he was instead confronted with Simon's mother-in-law.
- And perhaps Simon would have been a bit apologetic towards his guests because his wife had to care for her mother, which left her unable to entertain her guests in the usual manner.
- But what really struck me when reading this passage wasn't the fact that Simon Peter was a married man with a mother-in-law.

Because we can often forget that the disciple who was a great preacher in the early church was actually a married man with a family. But that's not what struck me. What struck me was when the service in the synagogue was over, both Simon and Andrew not only brought their friends, James and John, into their home, they not only brought their friends home with them to enjoy fellowship over a meal, they also brought Jesus home with them.

[8 : 39] They brought Jesus home from the church service. But you know, there are many people in this congregation who have a habit of leaving Jesus in the church service.

Because when you go home from church, you might take your friends with you, you might take your family with you, but you always seem to be leaving Jesus in the church service.

You always seem to be leaving Jesus behind. And for some reason, which I can't understand, is that you always seem to be leaving Jesus in the pew, where every Lord's Day you're sitting here with Him.

And He's speaking to you, and He's talking to you about His miracles, and His authority over sin, and death, and His ability to save you from hell. And you hear a lot about what He has to say to you.

And you know that what He's saying to you is what you need to hear. And you know that He's speaking the truth. And that He's telling you that you need to seek His forgiveness.

[9 : 50] And maybe there are times when you're sitting here with Jesus, and you're astonished as to what you hear from Him. And maybe there are other times that you're amazed at the love and the forgiveness of this Jesus.

And sometimes what you hear from Him, it pierces your heart. And other times it moves you to tears. And you know what Jesus is saying is true.

You know it's all true. It's all true. But what amazes me is that when you go home, you keep leaving Jesus here.

And you have this habit of leaving Jesus in church. But what you can't see, and what you're missing out on, is the great privilege of taking Jesus home with you.

For every time you leave Jesus here, you're losing out on the greatest honor to have Jesus come home with you after the service. because just like Simon and Andrew, you have the opportunity to take Jesus home.

[11 : 01] And when He comes home with you, when you take Him home with you, you can present to Him all your burdens. You can explain to Him all the illnesses that are affecting your family.

You can present to Him all your problems. You can highlight to Jesus all the issues and all the brokenness and all the heartache that may be going on behind closed doors that no one else knows about or even understands.

And yet the beauty and the compassion of this Christ is that He is willing. He is willing to come home with you. He's willing for you to share with Him anything that is going on within your home.

Oh, will you not take this compassionate Christ home with you? Don't leave Him here any longer. Don't leave Him in church at the end of this service.

Don't leave Him in the pew. But take Him home with you. Take Him home with you. Because when you take Jesus home with you in your heart, He's one who will deal with all your burdens.

[12 : 16] And He will transform your home. And that's what Simon and Andrew came to discover. They came to discover the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

Because as Jesus was confronted with the illness of Simon's mother-in-law, He went to her as she lay in bed with a fever. And Mark tells us that Jesus took her by the hand and He lifted her up and she was healed immediately.

But what's interesting about the actions of Jesus is that the other gospel writers, they describe different actions of Jesus. Matthew says that Jesus touched Simon's mother-in-law and she was healed.

Luke says that Jesus only spoke a word to Simon's mother-in-law and the fever left her. And what's interesting is that the gospel accounts with all their different perspectives.

It's that their different perspectives on the actions of Jesus, they don't conflict with one another. Their purpose is, instead their purpose is only to enhance the characteristic of Jesus.

[13 : 28] They present this 3D view of the actions of Jesus in order that we'll see the care and compassion of Jesus towards those who are in need. And is that not what we want Jesus to do with all the people we care about?

Do we not want Jesus to take those in our homes and in our families? Do we not want Jesus to touch them and to take them by the hand and lift them up and speak to them?

Do we not want Jesus to do with what, do we not want Jesus to do that with all those in our home? Well my friend, here is Mark and he's showing us what Jesus is like and he's showing us what Jesus does when we take him home with us and he's telling us that Jesus will do for us far beyond our asking or even our thinking.

But what we also have to see is that Mark is presenting to us this urgency because there is this urgency he says to take Jesus home with us and present him to our families and to our community.

And I say that because in four consecutive verses Mark uses his trademark word the word immediately. immediately. As we said before, Mark repeatedly uses the word immediately to emphasize the urgency of his message where Jesus does something and then immediately he does something else.

[15 : 08] And in verse 28 we're told that the fame of Jesus was spreading immediately throughout the region of Judea. In verse 29 it says and immediately when they came out of the synagogue they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew.

In verse 30 we're told that Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever and they took Jesus Jesus took her by the hand and they told Jesus about her immediately.

And then in verse 31 although it's not in the English translations it's in the original language we're told that Jesus moved with compassion towards Simon's mother-in-law took her by the hand lifted her up and immediately the fever left her.

Everything happened immediately. And so what we must take note of is that Mark is urging us to see that this compassionate Christ is one who needs to be brought face to face with the needs that are prevalent in our homes and our families and our community.

Because it's no use keeping Jesus in church. It's no use having Jesus just in the church services. He must be taken into the community.

[16 : 26] He must be presented to this community. He must be made known to the people in this community as those as one of whom we were singing. He is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy.

And more and more people in our community need to know this. We need to tell them. We need to explain to them. We need to show them because we need to point them to Jesus.

But how else will they know who Jesus is and what Jesus is like if we don't take Jesus home with us? And you know when we look at this woman, all we should see is one who had experienced the compassion of Jesus and the transforming power of Jesus.

And we should see that it initiated a response because her immediate response was her desire to serve. Her desire was to serve Jesus.

You could say in a sense she was saved to serve. She was healed to help. And she desired to serve Jesus because she was so thankful for what the Lord had done for her.

[17 : 49] Her desire wasn't to sit back and relax and enjoy the fact that she had been healed. Her desire was to serve. And it's so true, isn't it?

Far too often we would rather relax in our church service. And in a sense go into retirement mode and leave others to do these things.

Instead of having the desire to serve Jesus because he has moved with compassion towards us. Oh my friend we need to take Jesus home with us.

We need to take this compassionate Christ with us everywhere we go. He's not to be left in this church service. He's not to be left here.

Jesus moved with compassion towards a woman who was lying down. A lying woman. But secondly we see a looking people.

[18 : 53] A looking people. It says in verse 32, And that evening when the sun was set, they brought unto him all that were diseased and them that were possessed with devils.

And all of the city were gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of different diseases and cast out many devils and suffered not the devils to speak because they knew him.

So we see that Jesus didn't have peace for long after his meal in Simon and Andrew's house. For as soon as the sun had set, people started to show up at the house looking for Jesus.

God and what Mark wants to show us in this section is that the compassion of Jesus demonstrated towards Simon Peter's mother-in-law is now extended to the people who came looking for Jesus.

And looking at what happened here, it shows it that it didn't take long for the news to travel throughout the town or the city of Capernaum and the surrounding region of Galilee.

[20 : 02] it didn't take long for people to hear about what had happened during the morning service at the synagogue. It didn't take long for all the crowds to know where Jesus was to be found.

And as the fame of Jesus spread throughout Galilee, the inevitable reaction is that more and more people would come and see Jesus for themselves.

But what we must notice is that Mark hastens to point out to us that those who came to Jesus didn't come until the Sabbath was over. He says to us that those who were looking for Jesus didn't come to Simon and Andrew's house until the evening when the sun was set.

Because the Sabbath extended the Sabbath day, it was from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. And during that time Jewish law stated that Jews were forbidden to work or to travel.

Which explains why the people who were looking for Jesus only started gathering at Simon and Andrew's house in the evening after sunset. And this is interesting because in a sense as soon as the curfew was lifted the people came looking for Jesus.

[21 : 23] As soon as the access was open for them to come, they came looking for the one who could help them. And Mark tells us that all types of people came to Jesus.

There were some who were sick, there were some who were injured, there were those who were possessed with demons. And inevitably some of the people who were looking for Jesus, they would have come off themselves and others would have been carried and maybe some who were demon possessed had to be dragged to Jesus.

But what they all had in common is that they all came looking for Jesus. And as they gathered outside the home of the Scalilean fishermen, Mark says that the place was so full, it was full of the whole city.

The whole city had gathered together at the door. And when Mark says that the whole city gathered at the door, he's not using a figure of speech to try and emphasize the mass crowd who appeared looking for Jesus.

Mark isn't exaggerating. He's saying that literally the whole city was there. The whole of Capernaum turned up at the door.

[22 : 44] And they all came to this one door seeking access to Jesus. And when they came looking for Jesus, they found him.

They found him. When they came looking for Jesus, they found him. And when they found him, Mark says that Jesus healed many of them.

But Mark's use of the word many in verse 34 isn't to be understood as that Jesus healed some of the people at the door and not others. Mark's use of the word many is to be understood as the whole community.

In other words, everyone who came to Jesus was healed. No one was exempt. No one was turned away. No one was rejected.

No one was excluded from coming to Jesus. And what Mark wants us to see is that that's the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

[23 : 48] Because this whole event of people looking for Jesus reveals what Jesus is really like. And that he is a compassionate Christ who doesn't turn anyone away.

There is no one who is exempt from the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. There is no one who will be rejected. There is no one who is excluded if they come looking for Jesus with their whole heart.

God because the promise of the gospel is that everyone who comes to Jesus will be healed. Everyone who asks for healing, they will receive it.

Everyone who seeks Jesus, they will find him. Everyone who comes knocking on that door, the door will be opened to them because that's the promise. That's the promise.

Jesus says to us, whosoever will, let him come. Let him come. Because the gospel offer is for everyone.

[24 : 54] This good news is for everyone. It's for everyone who is looking for Jesus. It's for everyone who is looking for the meaning to life.

It's for everyone who knows that they are lost. It's for everyone who knows that they need to be saved. it's for everyone.

It's for everyone. My friend, the gospel offer is for everyone who is in this building today. And it's for everyone who is not in this building today.

Because the compassion of Jesus is such that it reaches out to everyone. And the wonder of his compassion is that there are many times in the gospels where we are told that Jesus had compassion on the multitudes.

The multitudes which came looking for him. And this occasion, it's no different. But one of my favorite occasions when Jesus shows compassion towards the multitudes is in the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000.

[26 : 12] Because we're told that when Jesus saw the multitudes who had come looking for him, he was moved with compassion because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

Jesus moved with compassion because they were lost. They were lost. And the compassion of Jesus is such that he is compelled to help those who are lost and without hope.

And you know there are many types of people who can be bracketed within that multitude because for Jesus no one is too old to be helped.

For Jesus no one is too young to be helped. for Jesus there's no one too sinful. There's no one who is unforgivable. There is no disease too great for Jesus to deal with.

There's no problem too difficult for Jesus to address. And the door and the access to the compassion of Jesus, it's open for all who are willing to come.

[27 : 28] it's open for all who are looking for Jesus. My friend is that you today? Are you looking for Jesus today?

Are you searching for Jesus? Have you come to the realization yet that there is nothing else worth clinging to apart from this Jesus?

And do you not know that the opportunity to be healed and to be forgiven, it's available for you today. In fact, it's available right now because the gospel message to us from this compassionate Christ is now is the accepted time.

Today is the day of salvation. salvation. Today is the day of salvation. My friend, are you looking for Jesus?

Are you looking for Jesus? A looking people. So we've seen Jesus move with compassion towards a lying woman.

[28 : 52] We've seen Jesus move with compassion towards a looking people. But lastly and briefly we see Jesus move with compassion towards a longing leper.

A longing leper. If we read again at verse 39, it says, And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee and cast out devils.

And there came to him a leper, pleading with him and kneeling down to him and saying to him, If you are willing, you can make me clean. And Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him and said to him, I will be clean.

So as Jesus continued to preach the message of the kingdom of God, he encountered more and more people. And what we're told, what we read earlier on in verse 32, is that the people of these towns and regions, they brought all who were sick and demon possessed.

They brought everyone to Jesus. But they didn't bring this man. They didn't bring this leper to Jesus.

[30 : 08] And we might well ask, why wasn't this leper brought like everyone else? Why wasn't he given the same opportunity? Why was everyone else brought to Jesus and this leper left behind?

And the simple reason for that is that lepers were the outcasts of society. Because for a leper, their disease was far more than an illness.

It was a life sentence. It was this debilitating disease, not only in the physical sense, but it was debilitating socially. Because when you possessed leprosy in the ancient world, you were robbed of your name.

You were robbed of your occupation. You were robbed even of your family. You were robbed of your identity. Because if you were a leper, you were nothing. You were a nobody in society.

Nobody cared for you. And as a result of your illness, you were required to make your appearance as repulsive as possible. And this was according to the instructions in the book of Leviticus.

[31 : 14] Leviticus. Because it says that a person with leprosy was to wear torn clothes and have their hair unkempt and cover the lower part of their face so that they wouldn't breathe on anyone.

And they were to live alone. They were to live separately from the community. And as a leper would move from place to place, the only words that you would ever hear from their lips would be the words unclean, unclean, unclean.

And for this leper, who was considered to be an outcast, he had this longing to be cleansed. He had this longing to be free from his disease.

He had a longing to find a cure. And when Jesus was passing by him, this leper took his only opportunity and he ran to Jesus, and falling down before him, he cried, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

If you are willing, you can make me clean. And there was no doubt in this leper's mind of Jesus' ability to heal him. But there was a doubt as to whether Jesus was willing to heal him.

[32 : 35] But what we've seen of Jesus already in this chapter shows us that there was no doubt in the mind of Jesus that he was willing to cleanse this leper.

And the willingness of Jesus to cleanse this outcast of society is all because Jesus was full of compassion.

He was full of compassion. If you are willing, you can make me clean. God God and Mark tells us that Jesus moved with compassion and touched this leper who longed to be healed.

Jesus moved with compassion. And you know, I think that they are some of the most beautiful words given to us in the Gospels. things. That this Jesus doesn't leave us in our sin and misery.

He doesn't leave us in the disease that is going to kill us. He doesn't leave us because the wages of sin is death. Instead, Jesus is one who moves towards us in compassion.

[33 : 48] And he stretches out his hand and he touches us in order to make us clean. And my dear friend, the marvel of his compassion is that he is more willing to cleanse you than you are to ask him.

He is more willing to cleanse you than you are to ask him. This compassionate Christ is more willing to cleanse you and heal you and wash you and take away your sin.

than you are to ask him. And so the question is not is Jesus willing? It's clear to see that Jesus is certainly willing.

The Bible tells us he's not willing that any should perish but that all would be saved. And if that's the case, my friend, then the problem of willingness is on your part.

The problem of willingness is on your part. For you know he can cleanse you. You know he can save you. You know he can change you.

[35 : 05] You know he can convert you. You know he is willing. But the real question is, are you willing to ask him? Are you willing to ask him?

Oh my dear friend, the wonder of the compassion of Jesus is that he is more willing to cleanse you than you are to ask him.

This compassionate Christ is more willing to save you than you are to ask to be saved. Then should that not cause you to ask?

Should that not cause you to ask him? Because he is willing. He is willing. But are you willing to ask him?

Are you willing to ask him? You're willing to lose everything? To lay aside all your pride and everything else? Just to ask Jesus?

[36 : 14] Because he is willing. What is Jesus like? He is a compassionate Christ.

He is one who moved with compassion towards a lying woman. He moved with compassion towards a looking people. And he moved with compassion towards a longing leper.

God. But the marvel of it is this compassionate Christ is still moving. He is still moving towards people.

Still moving towards us. And he is willing to cleanse us. He is willing to cleanse us if we are willing to ask.

ask. He is willing to cleanse us if we are willing to ask. Are you willing?

[37 : 21] Are you willing? May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord our gracious God we give thanks to thee for the compassion of Christ that he would look upon us at all that he would take pity upon sinners such as we are.

But we thank thee that he is one who moves towards us. He is one who calls us to himself. Help us then Lord not to be stubborn but to be willing not to hold back but to go forward to seek him with our whole heart knowing that when we ask it shall be given.

When we seek we shall find. When we knock the door will be opened. Bless us we plead. Help us to take Jesus home with us in our own heart that we might not leave him here but take him for time and for eternity.

or do us good then we plead and go before us for Jesus' sake. Amen. We shall conclude by singing in Psalm 111 on page 391 in the Scottish Psalter.

Psalm 111 Psalm 111 from the beginning praise.

[39 : 07] Praise ye praise. Praise ye the Lord the Lord of the just and congregations are. The whole works of the Lord our God are great above all measure.

So doubt they are of everyone that doth that doth therein take pleasure. His work most honourable is and most glorious and pure and his untainted righteousness forever doth endure.

His works most wonderful he hath made to be thought upon. The Lord is gracious and he is full of compassion. May the Lord shall sing these verses of Psalm 111.

Praise ye the Lord with my whole heart. I will God's praise declare. To God's praise. Praise ye the Lord with my whole heart.

I will God's praise declare. Where the assembly of the just and competition are.

[40 : 28] The whole works of the Lord are God's hiring above all and God's love bist of the Tuft■■■
un Most glorious and pure And His untainted righteousness Forever doth endure

Whose works most wonderful We have made to be thought upon The Lord is gracious As He is Full of compassion The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ The love of God the Father And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit Be with you all Now and forevermore Amen