

Mark 1:29-45 | 3 Purposes of Jesus

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I have reached a new stage in parenting. I have reached the stage where Owen will sit down and watch TV or a movie for a little bit. He is almost 2 now, and in the past he was completely disinterested. So that meant if dad or mom needed to do something around the house, Owen had to toddle over and get in the way of it.

But now we have reached the stage of that beautiful HD Babysitter which is the TV. And I was needed to write a message for a school I spoke at yesterday, and so I was flipping through Amazon prime and saw that Veggie Tales had put out a Lord of the Beans movie. Being a LOTR fan, I put it on for him and overheard some of the dialogue.

In one of the scenes the Cucumber, who was playing Gandalf, failed to do something magical and said, "Sorry I'm really better at the fireworks." And it kind of made me chuckle because in fellowship of the rings, that is where we meet Gandalf, he is putting on wonderful fireworks like nobody else. Hobbits loved Gandalf's fireworks. But look at how Tolkien introduced Gandalf: "

"That was Gandalf's mark of course, and the old man was Gandalf the wizard, whose fame in the Shire was due mainly to his skills with fires, smokes, and lights. His real business was far more difficult and dangerous, but the Shire folk do nothing about it. To them he was just one of the 'attractions' at the party."

You see here is the thing about the Hobbits, they would have been completely content with Gandalf the firework master, but they didn't know what they really needed was Gandalf the great Wizard. The Shire would get by without fireworks, but the Shire would not survive if that was all Gandalf put his power towards.

I open with this illustration because we are going to see a very similar theme between Gandalf and Jesus tonight. We are going to see Jesus performing many great works, and we are going to see crowds clamoring for more, but in the middle of it, we are going to see the true power and purpose of Jesus.

What I want to look at tonight is to look at three reasons Jesus came, and I want those reasons to help us frame our view of Jesus, and I want them to set our priorities right as we come to worship Jesus. But first, let's **pray**.

So we are going to see three reasons why Jesus came, and we are going to see them as three separate stories which Mark wishes for us to know.

We see our first story in **Mark 1:29-33**.

Now before I introduce you to the first purpose, I want to point out that I am addressing these purposes chronologically, as Mark has addressed them. They are in order of appearance not of importance. We are going to let Jesus set the order of importance, and we will see that in purpose number 2.

But **Purpose #1: Jesus Came To Heal**.

Now I love the progression of this text. If you have your Bibles open just look at what has happened. In Mark 1:14-15, Jesus begins his ministry, immediately afterwards, in Mark 1:16-20 he calls his first disciples, of whom is Peter. Peter who may have a vague awareness of who Jesus is at best, obeys Jesus' command to

follow him, and then immediately they enter a synagogue where Jesus casts out a demon and the whole crowd is filled with awe.

Then the only transition we get from that story in the synagogue to this story is this, **Mark 1:29-30**.

Do you see what happened? Peter is called, Peter witnesses a miracle, and the Peter brings Jesus to his sick mother in law. Why? Because Peter is beginning to understand the uniqueness of Jesus.

Peter recognizes that Jesus has a power and an authority which has never before been seen and so immediately, not after counsel, not after weighing the cost, not after deliberation, immediately he brings Jesus to his mother in law because he knows Jesus is able to heal.

Now, as we will see, Peter doesn't yet have a perfect view of Christ. Peter is always getting in the way, always acting almost as an obstacle to what Jesus is trying to accomplish, but at this point Peter knows enough to know that this Jesus does God like things.

And Peter, the disciples, and the Mother in law just witnessed a God like thing. Now in the past year both my wife and I have had a couple instances of really bad fever. We get the shakes, we can't move, our bodies ache. And both of us, after receiving antibiotics were restored back to health. But you know what I didn't do after I took the antibiotics? Jump off the couch and start making dinner. Because I was still weak. I had been bed ridden for a couple days, I wasn't getting the nourishment I needed and my body needed to recover even though the fever was removed.

Yet look at what happened to Peter's mother in law: **Mark 1:31**. Jesus' healing is not like our healing. Jesus heals completely and restoratively.

News got out. We don't know if the "they" in this following passage is the disciples, or the townspeople, but somehow news got out of Jesus' miracle. Look at the following passage: **Mark 1:32-34**.

For a whole day, from sun up, to sun down Jesus healed. The people came in floods. They were gathered at the door of the house with an urgency and a passionate desire for this Jesus to heal them from their ailments. And for a whole day, Jesus graciously, and patiently healed them.

He healed their physical sicknesses, and he healed the spiritual sickness by casting out demons. Now we saw Jesus commanded the demons not to speak, and bear that in mind because we are going to come back to that.

But what I want you to know here, is that Jesus heals, and also that Jesus is gaining popularity.

Let's look at our next story: **Mark 35-39**.

Now what we have just read is the key to Mark's gospel. Mark wants to stress who Jesus is, and why Jesus came, and here Mark is reporting an event in Jesus' life which clarifies his purposes here on earth.

Purpose #2: Jesus Came to Preach

I want to spend some time on this because I think that this is hugely important to our text and to our lives.

But first I want to pause, because we see Jesus pause. We don't want to brush over what Jesus himself refuses to brush over. But amidst his rising popularity, amidst his most successful day of ministry, amidst a new buzz and a lot of people at his door, Jesus rose early in the morning and went to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

Jesus prayed. He didn't pray on his way to class, he didn't pray before his meal, he didn't pray when he was blanking on his math test, he carved out time in his day, before the sun rose, and God in the flesh withdrew from distractions to fellowship with his father.

You believers in this room, do you see the weight of this. In Christian circles the word communion is often robbed of its meaning as a verb, and plays as a noun when we celebrate communion at church. But there is no better word for what Jesus is doing here than communing with God.

He is actively engaging in real, impactful, communion with God. If Jesus the son of God, God himself recognizes the need to commune with God, how much more should we. And we shouldn't do this in a manner of legalism: Man I need to get in my Bible today because I have to. We should be driven to God out of desperation.

Jesus could not accomplish what he set out to do without the ministry of God. You can't either. It is for your joy, it is for your benefit, it is for your comfort, your encouragement and your good. Seek God in the quiet hour.

This is big for me. Because I had gotten really good, but now I have a child who wakes up early. But the reason I don't get up even earlier has nothing to do with my exhaustion, it has everything to do with my view of God.

He's too small. But our God is not small. You see we all have a desire to be heard, but we fail to realize the God of the universe hears our prayers. In Psalm 77:1 the Psalmist cries out: "I cry aloud to God, aloud to God, and he will hear me." Jesus himself cries out to his people in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me all who labor and who are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

If it was good for Jesus, it will be overwhelming to us.

And on the heels of Jesus' encounter with God, Peter comes. That Peter. And he says Jesus' everyone is seeking you. Why? Because they want to be healed. Of course they want to see Jesus. But they are not seeking Jesus to know him, they are not seeking Jesus to worship him, they are seeking Jesus to be healed and amused by him.

And Jesus says: **Mark 1:38-39.**

You see Jesus came to heal. But his healing is penultimate to his preaching. Jesus came to preach, why? Because the world needed his message.

What is Jesus' message? Look back at **Mark 1:15.** Jesus message is repent from your sins, because the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Jesus came to preach a coming kingdom. These words Peter recognizes later in the book of John as something else: **John 6:68-69.**

You see it is in Jesus message that we have salvation. Jesus knew that his healings were child's play. They were the fireworks of Gandalf. The world didn't need a healer, the world needed a savior.

When you look at Jesus, do you see the message of the gospel? Do you see the message of Jesus, the good news of repentance and salvation through Christ? Or do you see a religious figure, miracle worker, or good moral teacher? You see Jesus' healings don't save. But they do point to a Kingdom which exists without sickness and disease. But it is Jesus' teaching, his message, and his cross which save. Cling to those. Know those.

Jesus came to preach the gospel of salvation, and this purpose shapes all other purposes.

In closing we will look at the third story and purpose: **Mark 1:40-45**.

So here we see a man with leprosy, and leprosy is a death sentence not just physically but relationally. Leprosy causes you skin to fester, boil, and rot off of your face, but it is also highly contagious. So Jewish law instituted protection from lepers. If you had leprosy you were to be cast out of society. You lived outside of town, you couldn't talk to people, touch people, or be around people.

It was the OT equivalent of zombie movies.

But did you see what happened. And can you imagine the scene. Here we have Jesus, the celebrity of the day, walking down the street, and the diseased runs through the crowd.

You can imagine the horror of the disciples as this man, moved with desperation throws himself at Jesus saying, "If you will, you can make me clean."

You see, the leper never questioned Jesus ability. He questioned his willingness.

And you can imagine the stillness in the area. Here we have the pure miracle working son of God, and the lowliest, most despicable, diseased facet of humanity.

How will Jesus respond? And Jesus, reaches out his hand, touches them man, probably the first touch of a human he has felt in years, and says: "I will, be clean."

And immediately the leprosy left him and he was made clean.

Now we at this point we should not be amazed at the healing. It should be of no surprise to us that God does God like things. The one who creates is the one who has complete authority over his creation. The authority of Jesus is the authority over all things everywhere. This should not surprise us.

But what should drive us to our knees in worship is the reason for Jesus' healing. **Mark 1:41**. Moved with pity.

You see unlike the gods of Greek or Roman mythology. Our God doesn't rule via fear. Our God intervenes into humanities disease out of pity. He doesn't see our hidden worth, because we have none, he sees our wretchedness, and in compassion he heals us through his son.

This is **Purpose #3: Jesus Cleanses**.

You see look what happens next **Mark 1:43-44**. With the healings, Jesus healed, but with this disease Jesus cleansed. Just look at your text and see how many times clean or cleanse is used. That's because for leprosy, according to the law, there were layers of purification rituals that one would have to do to be declared clean. To meet the requirement of the law, the one who was diseased must prove his restoration to the priest. And Jesus not only healed him, in a word, he cleansed him.

Why is this miracle distinct from other healings, because it is symbolic of our spiritual disease, and Christ's perfect cleansing compassion. Look at **Romans 8:1-4**

Through Jesus this leper was made right in the eyes of the law. And through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, we who were dead in the law receive the full righteousness of the law through the person and work of Jesus Christ.

This is who Jesus is. This is his message. Repent, believe, be cleansed.

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In closing, look at our last few verses: **Mark 1:43-45**.

Now why did Jesus not want anyone to talk about it. Many people have debated this point, but I think it's is for two reasons: 1.) The people didn't yet know who Jesus was. They didn't see him rightly yet, in fact in Mark's gospel it is not until the soldier at the cross confesses that Jesus is the Christ that we see a clear confession of Jesus. That's because the only place we see Jesus as who he truly is, is on the cross.

And in light of this lack of knowledge Jesus didn't want people to know who he was, because his time had not yet come.

You see Jesus knew this new found excitement over him was passing. And for obvious reasons. People love healers. People don't have a problem with healers.

But Jesus wouldn't be tracked down and killed for being a healer, he would be tracked down and killed for being God.

This healer, came so that he could die and be our savior. And through his message, and his wounds, we are cleansed.